

**LESSONS THIS QUARTER**

1) 04 Sept 2022	Amos 01-02	Listen to God
2) 11-Sept	Amos 03-04	Turn to God
3) 18 Sept	Amos 05-07	Seek God
4) 25 Sept	Amos 08-09	Hope in God
5) 02 Oct	Jonah 01-02	No Escape
6) 09 Oct	Jonah 03-04	No Compassion
7) 16 Oct	Hosea 01-03	The Unfaithful Bride
8) 23 Oct	Hosea 04-07	The Hollow Promises
9) 30 Oct	Hosea 08-12	The Sin Harvested
10) 06 Nov	Hosea 13-14	The Restoration Promised
11) 13 Nov	Micah 01-03	Leaders Needed
12) 20 Nov	Micah 04-06	Humble Beginnings
13) 27 Nov	Micah 07	Hope Found

**INTRODUCTION TO AMOS 5 & 6**

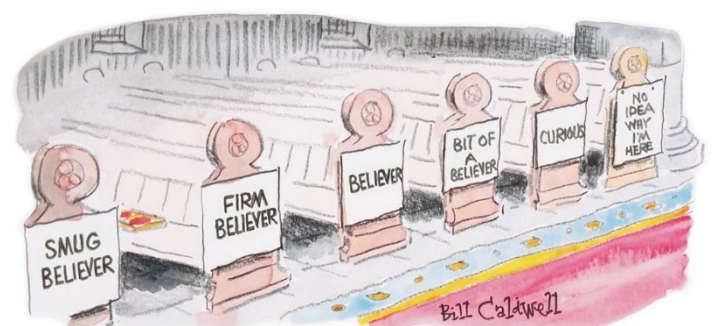
- The question of, why would God punish Israel so severely for their sins is not nearly as significant as "Why did God wait so long to punish Israel – till they 'turned justice into poison'?"

Passage	Comments
Amos 5:1-13	<p><b>God's Simple Solution for Israel – "Seek Me &amp; Live"</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>v3. God intends to leave a remnant of about 10%. <b>The Israelites would experience a 90% casualty rate – for soldiers and families</b></li> <li>v4. God's Remedy: "Seek Me and Live" – <b>Why would Israel prefer death to life?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unfortunately, those who end up in Hell prefer to be there than spend 1 minute with a holy God</li> <li>Jesus said in <b>John 5:40</b> that the wicked "are unwilling to come" to Him so that they may live</li> </ul> </li> <li>v6. Again, God repeats the message "Seek the Lord that you may live" or else destruction</li> <li>v7. God's key attributes: <b>Justice and Righteousness</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Psalms 89:14</b> "Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne"</li> <li><b>Jeremiah 9:24</b> "I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things"</li> </ul> </li> <li>v10. The wicked abhors those who have integrity and who contend with the wicked ..... <b>Prov 28:4</b></li> <li>v11-12. The rich are wicked when they rob the poor and pervert justice – there end is annihilation                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Can someone be Rich and Righteous?</b> YES – BUT they are rare like Job .....cf. <b>1Tim 6:17-18</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>v13. <b>Principle to Live By</b> – Know when to speak, when to shut up, when to be bold, and when to flee: "The wise man keeps silent during evil times" (teaching fools is a losing battle, so when they rule it is best to be scarce)                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Prov 22:3.</b> <i>The prudent sees the evil and hides (or prepares) himself</i></li> <li><b>Prov 28:28</b> <i>When the wicked rise, [good] men hide; But when the wicked perish, the righteous increase</i></li> <li><b>Mat 10:23</b> "But whenever they persecute you in one city, flee to the next"</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Low Key Approach Promotes God's Kingdom Better than having a High Profile	<p>Yes, we are to contend with the wicked, and defend the weak. Yes, we are to be bold in our witness – BUT we are not commanded to be flamboyant about it.</p> <p>A low key approach is often times the wiser approach. Jesus came to us as a poor baby in a manger with little fanfare. Even His miracles and resurrection were low-key as He minimized exposure to the high &amp; mighty Herod, Pontius Pilate, Priests, Pharisees, &amp; Sadducees</p> <p>Also, being confrontational doesn't work when wicked fools rule (<b>Prov 29:9</b>), – So the wise abide their time</p>

Passage	Comments
5:14-27	<p><b>Judgment's Timetable May Prevent Repentance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>vv14-15. Seek good and not evil – Hate evil, love good, and "PERHAPS God will be gracious to the remnant"                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We must realize God has a timetable for judgment</li> <li>If we don't avail ourselves of His mercies early when they are plentiful, all bets are off as time progresses</li> <li>God eventually has to shut the door..... <b>Mat 25:10</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>vv18-20. "<b>The Day of the Lord</b>" to the Jew meant any time the Lord opted to visit man with judgment; To us modern Christians it signifies the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ</li> <li>vv21-23. God HATES false worship from the rich and from the poor. God doesn't need to have our money or need to hear our singing; He wants to see our HEARTS</li> <li>v24. God emphasizes Justice &amp; Righteousness again                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>God requires justice, love, &amp; kindness ..... <b>Micah 6:8</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>vv25-26. God brings up the past that Israel had been unfaithful from Day 1 of their marriage covenant</li> <li>v27. THEREFORE, the only remedy left to try is exile</li> </ul>
6:1-7	<p><b>The Rich May Have it Easy, But it Comes at a Cost</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Having money does not provide security                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Prov 11:4</b> <i>Riches do not profit in the day of wrath</i></li> <li><b>Prov 18:11</b> <i>A rich man's wealth is his strong city, and like a high wall in his own imagination</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>It is rare for the rich and the poor to be on good terms                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Job 12:5</b> <i>He who is at ease holds calamity in contempt (i.e., the rich look down on the poor)</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>v7. A special punishment awaits the wealthy wicked – they will be at the head of the exile line for all to see</li> </ul>
6:8-14	<p><b>Justice is Turned into Poison</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>v8. God "loathes" Israel's Pride. If you think about it, all sin is due to pride. "I don't need God – I can manage"</li> <li>v9. Again, God emphasizes a 90% casualty rate</li> <li>v10. "Keep quiet. For the name of the Lord is not to be mentioned" (Interpretations abound for this phrase)                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Don't bring God's holy name in this desecrated place</li> <li>Don't entice God to bring more calamity on us</li> <li>What more can God do to us – His name is bad luck</li> <li>An unholy people should not invoke God's holy name</li> </ul> </li> <li>vv12-14. "You have turned justice into poison"                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Prov 17:23</b> <i>The wicked accepts a bribe in secret to pervert the ways of justice</i></li> <li>The only way to correct this is to remove the wicked from power, and God did it through exile</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**CONCLUSION / APPLICATIONS ON AMOS 5 & 6**

- Thank God for His enduring patience with us sinners.
  - But we must realize God's patience doesn't last forever.
  - God's people always need to discern how to contend with wickedness in society, and even know when it is time to flee



**INTRODUCTION TO AMOS 7**

- Amos shares 3 of his 5 visions here in Chapter 7:
  - **A swarm of locusts (7:1-3)**
  - **A consuming fire (7:4-6)**
  - **The plumb line (7:7-17)**
  - The basket of ripe fruit (8:1-14)
  - The Lord by the altar (9:1-10)
- God told Amos that time was up and "I will spare (Israel) no more."
  - ♦ Can we tell if we are nearing the end of God's patience with us in our day and age, individually, nationally, globally?
  - ♦ We should be able to discern such, since He has given us prior warnings here in Amos and throughout the writings of the Prophets

Passage	Comments
Amos 7:1-3	<p><b>Vision #1 – A Swarm of Locusts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God gave Amos a prophetic vision of a swarm of locusts devouring Israel's food supply                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ And the damage would be done to the people's supply of food after the political leaders got their food first ("...after the king's mowing")</li> <li>♦ The result → nationwide starvation, and possible rioting against the monarchy since they were well fed</li> <li>♦ In essence, a total economic collapse with political upheaval would theoretically bring Israel to their knees and humbled submission before their God</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>HOWEVER</b>, Amos prayed for God not to do it since God's intent seemed too brutal – and God relented</li> </ul>
Can we persuade God to change His Mind and do something different?	<p><b>According to this passage and several others...YES:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Gen 18:22-33.</b> Abraham beseeched God not to destroy the righteous with the wicked in Sodom &amp; Gomorrah; and God listened and first removed Lot and his family</li> <li>• <b>Jer 18:8</b> "If that nation against which I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent concerning the calamity"</li> <li>• <b>Jer 26:19</b> – Micah beseeched God and won a reprieve for Judah during the days of Hezekiah</li> <li>• <b>Jonah 3:10</b> – Nineveh repented and won a reprieve</li> <li>• <b>John 15:7-8</b> – God uses our prayers to accomplish His will, to bear fruit, and to render Him glory – <b>SO PRAY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Including praying for peoples' salvation.... <b>1John 5:16</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>BUT there are limitations.</b> God eventually will bring corrective or punitive judgment on those who refuse to repent, and no amount of praying will help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ <b>Jer 14:11</b> "Do not pray for the welfare of this people."</li> <li>♦ <b>Jer 15:6</b> "You have forsaken Me...(and) you keep going backwards; I am tired of relenting!"</li> <li>♦ <b>Ezekiel 14:20</b> "Even though Noah, Daniel and Job were in [Judah's] midst, as I live," declares the Lord GOD, "they could not deliver either their son or their daughter. They would deliver only themselves by their righteousness."</li> </ul>
7:4-6	<p><b>Vision #2 – A Consuming Fire</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This prophecy again attacked the food supply. The fire could be extreme drought conditions or nationwide brush fires set by lightening or by enemy actions</li> <li>• v4. "Consume the great deep" could allude to underground aqueducts drying up → No water, No food</li> <li>• Again, Amos pleads with God, and God relents</li> </ul>
7:7-9	<p><b>Vision #3 – The Plumb Line</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vv7-8. The Hebrew word for "plumb line" is actually an unknown word (אָנָק 'anak') only used here. The plumb line rendering came from the KJV translators, and all other translations have kept it for lack of a better word</li> </ul>

Passage	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vv8-9. The intent of the passage is clear – it was time for judgment to begin – "I will spare them no longer"; and judgment starts with the holy places (shrines) before it hits the political areas of society                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Uhm – Where does judgment begin? ..... <b>1Peter 4:17</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>THEREFORE</b>, if a nation has economic, social, or political challenges, where should a solution be found?</li> <li>• Unfortunately, God's house is the last place people and politicians visit for an answer</li> <li>• And God did not give Amos a chance to plead for them</li> </ul>
7:10-17	<p><b>No Good Deed Goes Unpunished</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amos prevented Israel from receiving more dire consequences than what was delivered – and he was made out to be the bad guy by the religious leader of the day</li> <li>• vv10-13. Amaziah, probably the high priest of Bethel, took action to try to rid Israel of Amos' godly influence, probably thinking he was doing God a favor. <b>John 16:2</b></li> <li>• vv14-15. Amos rebuts the rebuke of prophesying for profit by explaining how God specifically picked him for duty while he was minding his own business at work</li> <li>• vv16-17. ...and Amos proclaims a unique prophecy from God just for Amaziah's false meddling – that he would die in a foreign land, his kids will die on the battlefield, and his wife will be forced into prostitution</li> <li>• <b>Application:</b> Discern a situation &amp; choose your words &amp; actions carefully before going against God's chosen</li> </ul>

**CONCLUSION / APPLICATIONS ON AMOS 7**

- Prosperity (Materialism) led to Israel's religious & moral corruption, with accompanying social injustice for the poor and vulnerable
- If Israel had delivered justice & righteousness to the poor & weak, God would not have had the need to bring such harsh judgment on them
- **BUT**, once sin is given a foothold, there is a tendency to spiral out of control. **THEREFORE**, do not give sin an opportunity to enslave
- ...and are we ready to stand in the gap, like Amos, and pray for God's mercy and grace in the lives of others?

**NEXT WEEK: Amos 8-9.** Amos shares his last 2 visions with us about the basket of ripe fruit (Vision #4) and the Lord standing by the altar (Vision #5); and he ends on a very positive note with Israel being restored to an Edenic Promised Land. But first, the Exile must happen.

