

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

- 1) 02 Dec 2012 ..... Hosea 1:1-3:5 ..... Exposing a Broken Relationship
- 2) 09 Dec ..... Hosea 4:1-7:16 ..... Rebuking Destructive Behavior
- 3) 16 Dec ..... Hosea 8:1-10:15 ..... Deciding on Discipline
- 4) 23 Dec ..... Matthew 1:18-2:18 ..... Seeking the Savior
- 5) 30 Dec ..... Hosea 11:1-12:14 ..... Remembering Compassion
- 6) 06 Jan 2013 ..... Hosea 13:1-14:9 ..... Restoring the Repentant
- 7) 13 Jan ..... Amos 1:1-4:13 ..... Unseal the Indictment
- 8) 20 Jan ..... Gen 1; Ex 1, Ps 139; Mk 10 ..... Value of Human Life
- 9) 27 Jan ..... Amos 5:1-6:14 ..... Court is in Session
- 10) 03 Feb ..... Amos 7:1-17 ..... Can I Get a Witness
- 11) 10 Feb ..... Amos 8:1-9:15 ..... Let the Verdict be Read
- 12) 17 Feb ..... Jonah 1:1-2:10 ..... Pursuing Those Called to Tell
- 13) 24 Feb ..... Jonah 3:1-4:11 ..... Pursuing Those Who Need to Hear

INTRODUCTION

- 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
- Amos shares 3 of his 5 visions here in Chapter 7:
  1. A swarm of locusts (7:1-3)
  2. A consuming fire (7:4-6)
  3. The plumb line (7:7-17)
  4. The basket of ripe fruit (8:1-14)
  5. The Lord by the altar (9:1-10)

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</li> <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 would be 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> <li>• HOWEVER, 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>According to this passage and many, many others...YES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gen 18:22-33. 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>• Jer 18:8 “If that nation against which I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent concerning the calamity”</li> <li>• Jer 26:19 – Micah beseeched God and won a reprieve for Judah during the days of Hezekiah</li> <li>• Jonah 3:10 – Nineveh repented and won a reprieve</li> <li>• John 15:7-8 – God uses our prayers to accomplish His will, to bear fruit, and to render Him glory – SO PRAY</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>♦ Jer 14:11 “Do not pray for the welfare of this people.”</li> <li>♦ Jer 15:6 “You have forsaken Me...(and) you keep going backwards; I am tired of relenting!”</li> <li>♦ Ezekiel 14:20 “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>

Passage	Comments
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 lightning or by enemy actions</li> <li>• v4. “Consume the great deep” possibly alludes 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 ( אַנָּק ’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> <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?.....1Peter 4:17</li> </ul> </li> <li>• THEREFORE, 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. John 16:2</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; chose your words &amp; actions carefully before going against God’s chosen</li> </ul>

CONCLUSION/APPLICATIONS

- Prosperity (Materialism) led to Israel’s religious & moral corruption, with accompanying social injustice for the poor and vulnerable
- If Israel would have delivered justice and righteousness to the poor and 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

