

A Reading from the Book of Amos.

[BREATHE TWICE, READ SLOWLY]

This is what the Lord God showed me—a basket of summer fruit. He said, “Amos, what do you see?” And I said, “A basket of summer fruit.” Then the Lord said to me, “The end has come upon my people Israel; I will never again pass them by. The songs of the temple shall become wailings in that day,” says the Lord God; “the dead bodies shall be many, cast out in every place. Be silent!”

Hear this, you that trample on the needy, and bring to ruin the poor of the land, saying, “When will the new moon be over so that we may sell grain; and the sabbath, so that we may offer wheat for sale? We will make the ephah small and the shekel great, and practice deceit with false balances, buying the poor for silver and the needy for a pair of sandals, and selling the sweepings of the wheat.”

The Lord has sworn by the pride of Jacob: Surely I will never forget any of their deeds. Shall not the land tremble on this account, and everyone mourn who lives in it, and all of it rise like the Nile, and be tossed about and sink again, like the Nile of Egypt?

[Continue reading on the next page]

On that day, says the Lord God, I will make the sun go down at noon, and darken the earth in broad daylight. I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation; I will bring sackcloth on all loins, and baldness on every head; I will make it like the mourning for an only son, and the end of it like a bitter day.

The time is surely coming, says the Lord God, when I will send a famine on the land; not a famine of bread, or a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. They shall wander from sea to sea, and from north to east; they shall run to and fro, seeking the word of the Lord, but they shall not find it.

[PAUSE]

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

Let us read from Psalm 52 responsively by half-verse.

You tyrant, why do you boast of wickedness *

against the godly all day long?

You plot ruin;

your tongue is like a sharpened razor, *

O worker of deception.

You love evil more than good *

and lying more than speaking the truth.

You love all words that hurt, *

O you deceitful tongue.

Oh, that God would demolish you utterly, *

topple you, and snatch you from your dwelling,

and root you out of the land of the living!

The righteous shall see and tremble, *

and they shall laugh at the tyrant, saying,

“This is the one who did not take God for a refuge, *

but trusted in great wealth

and relied upon wickedness.”

But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God; *

I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever.

I will give you thanks for what you have done *

and declare the goodness of your Name

in the presence of the godly.

[STOP - RETURN TO YOUR SEAT]

A Reading from the Letter to the Colossians.

[BREATHE TWICE, READ SLOWLY]

Christ Jesus is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

And you who were once estranged and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his fleshly body through death, so as to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him—provided that you continue securely established and steadfast in the faith, without shifting from the hope promised by the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven. I, Paul, became a servant of this gospel.

I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am completing what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church. I became its servant according to God's commission that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, the

mystery that has been hidden throughout the ages and generations but has now been revealed to his saints. To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. It is he whom we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone in all wisdom, so that we may present everyone mature in Christ.

[PAUSE]

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.