

Amos 8-9

REVIEW...

- Amos gave Israel 2 Woes in light of their rejection of Word of God – his 3 sermons from chapter 3-5!
 - o The first Woe was to the leaders – because they led the people to rebel against God...
 - o The second Woe was to those who denied the day of doom – the judgment of God...
 - o Their denial led to more sin - kept the people from seeing the need to repent!
 - o Instead the people just lived for the moment / pleasure / prosperity – no thought of eternity!
 - o But it was foolish of Israel to think there were no consequences – judgment was coming!
- God gave 3 visions to Amos – showing the different ways He could destroy Israel...
 - o After the first 2 visions Amos pleaded with the Lord to forgive / stop...
 - o So the Lord relented – and did not destroy Israel with locusts / or by fire...
 - o But the 3rd time Amos said nothing – God would judge Israel by the plumb line of His Word!
- Amaziah – the priest of Bethel – lied to the king that Amos was conspiring against him and Israel!
 - o He demanded Amos go back to Judah – stop prophesying against the nation of Israel...
 - o Amos clarified – he was not a prophet / or the son of a prophet – but God did send him...
 - o And the wife of Amaziah would become a prostitute / his children would die in battle...
 - o His land would be given to someone else / and he would die in a foreign land...
 - o Oh – and yeah – Israel would be carried away captive because of their sins!

THE FALL AND RISE OF ISRAEL...

- **1st – A FAMINE IN THE LAND... vs. 1-14**
 - o 1st – The vision of summer fruit... vs. 1-3
 - God showed Amos a 4th vision – a basket full of summer fruit...
 - When God asked Amos about the basket – He told him the end had come for Israel...
 - Summer fruit was the last fruit of the year to be gathered – no more crops afterwards...
 - It was also fruit that could not be preserved – it had to be eaten as soon as it ripened...
 - The thought being Israel was done producing good fruit – and was ripe for judgment!
 - This wealthy prosperous nation would be brought to its knees – broken!
 - If you are like me – there are times you wonder why God does not judge us yet...
 - God is VERY patient when it comes to sin – He wants everyone to be saved – II Peter 3:9
 - But also in spite of all the wickedness – there are still fruits of righteousness...
 - There are still Godly men and women who are living for and serving Jesus...
 - But that does not mean judgment will not come – God is not mocked – judgment is coming!
 - God would not pass by the sin of Israel anymore...
 - The songs (*happy days*) in their Temple were gone – to be replaced by mourning...
 - Dead bodies would be everywhere – thrown out in silence because there were so many...
 - There would be no ceremony – no funeral – there would be more dead than living!
 - Speaking of the absolute devastation that was about to befall the nation!
 - When the black plague hit London in 1348 – nearly half of the city died in 18 months...
 - The result of so much death was people just thrown into pits often stacked 5 people deep!
 - o 2nd – Hear this - the charges against Israel... vs. 4-6
 - God gives Amos a breakdown of the moral flaws of the people...
 - They take advantage of those in need – ignore the plight of the poor...

- If someone is hungry and we say - God bless you - what good does that do - **James 2:16**
- We are called as believers to practically reach out in love / help out those in need...
- How can we say we represent Jesus - we Love someone - and not be willing to help!
- They are greedy – only think about money...
 - They despise the ‘new moon’ – a monthly day to celebrate the Lord – **Numbers 10:10**
 - They cannot wait for the Sabbath to be over – because work was forbidden – **Exodus 20:10**
 - Many years ago it used to be that all the businesses closed on Sunday...
 - They did so because it was important to set aside a day to worship the Lord...
 - But slowly that began to erode as people realized Sunday was another day to make money!
 - People thought it was a better to open the malls – and close the churches!
- They use dishonest weights (*ephah was a measurement of weight / shekel money*)...
 - This might seem a minor offense – just a little bit of cheating to get an extra buck...
 - But the Lord calls it an abomination – **Deuteronomy 25:13 / Proverbs 11:1 / 20:23**
 - We tend to think taking paperclip from the company is not a big deal...
 - But the guy who stole millions from his company – probably started with a paperclip!
 - Sometimes the minor offenses are the most important – because they reveal the heart...
 - People start out small because they are afraid of getting caught...
 - But if we check our heart in the little things – it will keep us from greater sin!
- They buy the poor for silver / needy for a pair of sandals - see people only as a tool!
 - This is speaking of slavery – seeing people as a commodity to be traded for gain...
 - There has been some speculation about what the Bible teaches about slavery...
 - While the Bible does acknowledge slavery – does God view it as right or wrong...
 - The simple answer is – God views it as a great evil – a sign of the wickedness of the heart...
 - He created all men to be equal – **Galatians 3:26** – and will judge those who mistreat others!
- They sell the bad wheat – perhaps wheat mixed with chaff...
 - In the Philippines bad merchants often mix the rice with very small pebbles...
 - The purpose is to increase the weight of the rice so they can charge more!
 - It forces people to sift out their rice before cooking it – or end up with broken teeth!
- o 3rd – Hear this - the consequences for Israel... vs. 7-10
 - The Lord had sworn – He would not forget any of the ‘works’ (*sin*) of Jacob...
 - Because the people did not mourn their sin – there was no regret for their wickedness...
 - The suggestion is that if the people had repented – there was still hope...
 - It was their indifference to their sin – that would ultimately be their undoing!
 - It is not sin that keeps people from the Lord – Jesus took care of that on the Cross...
 - It is their unwillingness to repent of their sin – and ask for forgiveness!
 - As a result the people would be wiped away...
 - Amos paints a vivid picture using familiar Biblical images of sorrow and devastation:
 - The flooding of the Nile Egypt - rises as much as 20’ every year during the seasonal floods!
 - The sun would go dark at noon – perhaps referring to an eclipse...
 - Feasts would turn to mourning / songs into weeping / all would end up in sackcloth...
 - All would shave their heads in sorrow – as if they had lost their only son!
 - All of this simply because Israel had too much pride to turn back to the Lord!
 - Did you ever wonder why so many people reject the Gospel message...
 - They have LOTS of excuses – they blame science / evolution / other religions...
 - But the truth is all of these excuses are paper thin – easily debunked...
 - The real reason is they do not want to give up the sin in their life...

- They would rather have their sin - than eternal life with God in Heaven!

o 4th – A famine of the Word... vs. 11-14

- The days were coming – when God would send a famine...
 - Not a famine of food or water – but a famine of the Word of the LORD (*Yahweh*)...
 - Speaking of the 400 years of silence – between Malachi and Matthew...
 - When there were no prophets in Israel or Judah – no one declaring the Word of the LORD!
 - They did not want to hear the Word of the LORD – so God gave them what they wanted!
- People would wander from sea to sea – from the Mediterranean to the Dead Sea...
 - They would run to and fro – from north to east (*notice not south to Jerusalem*)...
 - But the Word of the LORD would be nowhere to be found – because they did not want it!
 - As a result the young women and men would faint from thirst – a thirst for the Lord!
 - **Psalm 63:1** – “My soul thirsts for You... In a dry and thirsty land where there is no water.”
 - And all those who swore by the gods of Dan (*golden calf*) – would fall and not get up again!
- It is sad that you can still search from sea to sea today and not find the Word...
 - And for the same reasons – people do not want to hear the truth...
 - They want their ears tickled – tell them what they want to hear – **II Timothy 4:3**
 - As a result too many pastors today spend too little time teaching the Word...
 - Instead they tell funny stories to entertain – sprinkled with the occasional Bible verse!
 - They are more interested in filling pews – than creating saints!
 - But it is not our words / or funny stories – people need to hear...
 - They need to know about the hope of Heaven / or the horror of hell!
 - But the ones who should be teaching them - the pastors - do not!
 - The biggest problem in the church today – there is a famine in the Land!

▪ 2ND – THE DESTRUCTION OF ISRAEL... vs. 1-10

o 1st – No where to run... vs. 1-4

- God showed Amos a 5th and final vision – the Lord standing by the golden calves (*altar*)...
 - People thought they were safe in the temple of the golden calves – but God was there...
 - And He commanded the columns of the temple to be hit – cause the foundations to shake...
 - The temple would collapse and killing those who were worshiping inside!
- God would then hunt down anyone who survived...
 - Those who escaped the sword (*war with Assyria*) – would not get very far...
 - If they tried to hide in a cemetery (*dig into sheol*) – the Hand of God would find them...
 - If they tried to climb up to heaven (*mountain top – Carmel*) – God would bring them down...
 - If they tried to hide from His sight in the bottom of the sea – the serpent would bit them...
 - Even once they went into captivity – the sword would find and kill them...
 - Because the Lord had set His eye to harm and not help them!
- There is no place we can go to escape from the Lord...
 - **Hebrews 4:13** - “There is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things *are* naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we *must* give account.”
 - I am sure just like in Israel – people think there are ‘safe places’ from the Lord...
 - Perhaps they run to the bar / or to the ‘safe places’ on the college campus...
 - Thinking surely God would never come to a place like this – but He is there!
 - That can either be a VERY unsettling thought – if we are trying hide from the Lord...
 - Or it can be a VERY comforting thought – to know the Lord is always with us!
 - **Psalm 139:7-12** – “Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You *are* there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You *are*

there. If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, And Your right hand shall hold me."

o 2nd – The diaspora of Israel... vs. 5-10

- Just in case there was any doubt that God was capable of executing His Judgments...
 - He is the Lord GOD of Hosts – Adonai / Yahweh / Tsabaw (*military commander*)
 - A title used 33 times in the Old Testament (*this is the last time*) to declare His power!
 - He is the one who touches the earth and it melts (*volcanoes*)...
 - He causes the ground to rise like the Nile River – then sink again (*earthquake*)...
 - He built his house in Heaven (*sky*) / He constructed the plates (*strata*) of the earth...
 - He calls for the waters from the sea – and pours them down on the land (*water cycle*)...
 - The LORD is His name – distinguishing Him from all other 'gods' on the earth!
- Did Israel think they were better than others (*Ethiopians*)...
 - Yes God brought them out of bondage of Egypt – but they were not alone...
 - God rescued the Philistines from Caphtor (*Crete*) / and Syrians from Kir (*Mesopotamia*)!
 - Now the eyes of God were on this sinful nation – but He would not completely destroy it...
 - God would sift them among the nations – diaspora – but the righteous would not be lost...
 - But all the sinners WOULD perish – those who doubted the judgment of God!
- Too many Christians get the impression they are untouchable...
 - Once saved always saved - they have nothing to fear from His judgment...
 - But Israel - the chosen people of God – were broken off cause of unbelief – **Romans 11:20**
 - How much more will he also be willing to break us off if we do not continue to live by faith!
 - **John 15:2** – “Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away...”
 - A branch apart from a tree dies – just as apart from Jesus we die spiritually...
 - There is no middle ground in the Christian walk – we are either growing in Jesus...
 - Or we are slowly dying – caught up in the care of this world!
 - If you plug a light into a cinder block – nothing happens – only a socket has power...
 - In the same way we often try and plug our lives into the world...
 - Then we wonder why we have no power – why we are always in the dark
 - It is only when we plug into Jesus – that the light comes on!

▪ 3rd – THE RESORATION OF ISRAEL... vs. 11-15

o 1st – The tabernacle of David... vs. 11-12

- On that Day – God would raise up the Tabernacle of David that had fallen down...
 - That day is not speaking of rebuilding the Temple – either Zerubbabel or Herod...
 - Is it talking about the promise God made to King David - **II Samuel 7:16**
 - The Lord promised the House of David would stand forever – referring to the Messiah!
 - The tabernacle Amos is talking about – is Jesus Christ – **John 1:14** (*tabernacled*)!
 - Jesus would repair the damage done by sin – restore men to God as in the 'days of old'!
- But this promise was not just for the Jews...
 - Jesus would take possession of Edom (*LXX – mankind*) – all the gentiles called by His name!
 - In **Acts 15** the church faced a challenge – did gentiles have to become Jews to be saved...
 - Paul and Barnabus made a special trip to Jerusalem just to resolve this issue...
 - After hearing about the work they did on the 1st missionary journey...
 - James (*brother of Jesus*) – head of the church in Jerusalem - addressed the counsel...
 - God always meant for the Gospel to go to the Gentiles – and he quoted **Amos 9:12!**

o 2nd – The rebirth of Israel... vs. 13-15

- The days were coming – after the 1st advent of the Messiah – when Israel would be reborn...

- The land would once again flourish – when grain will grow faster than it can be harvested...
- When Israel would return again to their land – rebuild their cities / plant their crops...
- God would plant Israel in their land – and they will never again be removed!

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