

10/4/15

Amos 3-4

We come to the second division of the book of Amos, The words of the LORD. Amos 3-4

There are three discourses or messages delivered by the prophet Amos probably at Bethel. Amos 7:13

1) All three are prefaced by the words “Hear this word” the source and speaker is God. Amos 3,1; 4:1; 5:1

2) All three have Indictments of particular sins followed by a corresponding judgment by the word, “Therefore”. Amos 3:11; 4:12; 5:16; 6:7

3) All three deal with specific theme.

a) Israel’s privilege of knowing God in the past *results* in greater judgment. Amos 3

b) Israel’s perversion of social justice in the present and refusal to repent in the past left nothing but judgment. Amos 4

c) Israel’s pride in the past and present result in God’s promise future judgment. Amos 5-6

1)) The lamentation. Amos 5

2)) The woes. Amos 6

3.1-8 The indictment against Israel.

3:1-2 The One having the right to charge and punish Israel.

1) God through Amos called to hear the word that the LORD. spoke against Israel. vs. 1

a) The phrase “hear the words” is an imperative, not a suggestion.

1)) The words are authoritative and reliable and Inspired through Amos, God’s revelation.

2)) The LORD “Yahweh” is the covenant God they have betrayed.

b) Children of Israel is not limited to the Northern Kingdom alone, the context includes also the Southern Kingdom, indicated by what follows. vs. 1b

c) The charges are against the whole family delivered from Egypt. vs. 1c

* They were one nation when God brought out of Egypt for redemption. Ex. 3-12

b) Now they were a divided nation.

2) God through Amos reminded Israel of their special relationship to Him. vs. 2a

a) You Only have I know of all the families of the earth. vs. 2a

1)) The term “I know” is one of intimacy in marriage

2)) Israel is called the wife of Yahweh.

3)) Privilege and light brings greater responsibility.

- 3) God would punish Israel for all her iniquities. vs. 2b
- a) Failure results in greater judgment.
 - b) Abraham was an idolater when called by God. Gen. 11; Josh. 24:2

3:3-8 The reasonable argument for their deserving judgment.

- 1) There are four illustrations chosen and phrased in rhetorical questions to reveal their deserved punishment by God. vs. 3-6
 - a) The first rhetorical question, “Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?” vs. 3
 - 1)) The answer is NO!
 - 2)) This is the principle of spiritual oneness and fellowship with God and man. (Amos and God were agreed. but not Israel)
 - b) The second rhetorical question, “Will a lion roar in the forest, when he has no prey? Will a young lion cry out of his den, if he has caught nothing?” vs. 4
 - 1)) The answer is again NO!
 - 2)) A lion and young lion roar only after they catch their prey.
 - 3)) The LORD was roaring as a lion in judgment from Zion and

Jerusalem, having caught Israel.
Amos 1:2

- c) The third rhetorical question, “Will a bird fall into a snare on the earth, where there is no trap for it? Will a snare spring up from the earth, if it has caught nothing at all?” vs. 5
 - 1)) The answer is once again NO!
 - 2)) Israel had fallen into the snare of sin and sprung the snare and were trapped.
- d) The fourth rhetorical question, “If a trumpet is blown in a city, will not the people be afraid? If there is calamity in a city, will not the LORD have done *it*?” vs. 6
 - 1)) The answer in this case is YES!
 - 2)) God had blown the trumpet through and by the prophets and Nazarites, but they did not fear God.
 - 3)) God had been bringing judgments of famine, draught, plagued the harvest with locust, defeat by their enemies and destroying some like Sodom and Gomorrah, but they did not repent. Amos 4:6-11
 - 4)) All four rhetorical questions deal with sounds heard and cause and affect to reveal their inexcusability before God.

3:7-8 The right application of the four illustrations and rhetorical questions.

- 1) God always warns before He brings judgment. vs. 7
 - a) God reveals his words through His prophets.
 - b) God holds Himself accountable to warn before He judges.
 - c) Noah, Sodom and Gomorrah and the Great Tribulation.
- 2) God the lion had roared, God had spoken, His prophet could do nothing but prophesy. vs. 8
 - a) But no one feared or repented! Amos 1:2; Joel 3:16
 - b) The Lord had spoken as Amos prophesied.

3:9-10 The invitation to the heathen to come a bear witness of the sin of Israel.

- 3:9** The proclamation is to two nations.
- 1) First in the palaces at Ashdod, one of the cities of the Philistines, the perennial enemies of Israel. vs. 9a
 - 2) Second in the land of Egypt. vs. 9b
 - 3) They were to assemble on the mountains of Samaria and see her destruction and injustice of oppression over the people.

* Samaria was the Capitol of the Northern Kingdom during Ahab and Jezebel.

3:10 The proclamation of two evils.

- 1) The people didn't know how to do right. vs. 10a-b
 - 2) The Kings, rulers and wealthy stored up violence and robbery in their palaces. vs. 10c
 - 3) The evil is revealed by the LORD "Yahweh", this is not slander nor gossip, but absolute truth!
- * Samaria was a place of wealth, luxury and corruption.

3:11-15 The judgment of Israel declared.

- 3:11** The judgment would come by a Gentile nation.
- 1) The pronouncement is righteous from the Holy One, "says the Lord God." vs. 11a
 - 2) The word "therefore" looks back to verses 1-10 for this reason.
 - 3) The adversary all around the land to sap the strength of Israel and plunder her palaces would be Assyria. vs. 11b-d

3:12 A remnant will be saved to reveal God's faithfulness to His covenant.

- 1) The illustration is one of a shepherd who retrieves a portion of the carcass from the mouth of a lion, be it two legs or an ear. vs. 12a-c
- 2) The people would be taken captive from Samaria to a foreign land, as they dwell in the city of Samaria on the corner of a bed or edge of a couch committing their lewd sexual practices. vs. 12d-e

3:13-15 The judgment of God to fall upon Israel.

- 1) The imperative command to Amos was to “Hear and testify against the house of Jacob,” Says the Lord GOD, the God of hosts.” vs. 13
 - a) Jacob represent self-will, resourceful and rebellious.
 - b) The God of host remember is the “Captain of the armies of heaven.”
- 2) The total destruction was certain. vs. 14
 - a) The perfect time, “That in the day I punish Israel for their transgressions.” vs. 14a
 - b) The religious centers would be destroyed, “I will also visit *destruction* on the altars of Bethel; And the horns of the altar shall be cut off And fall to the ground.” vs. 14b-c
 - 1)) The horns represent strength.

- 2)) All the material prosperity was taken by Shalmaneser King of Assyria besieged Samaria for three years. 2Kings 17:5-6

4:1-5 The indictments against the women at Samaria.

- 4:1** The sins of the woman at Basham were celebrated with wine.
- 1) The woman are called by God to listen to the judgment that is coming, in view of their own sins. vs. 1a
 - a) The phrase “Hear this word” is an imperative command, as God deals specifically with the sins of social injustice.
 - b) The imperative command appears two other times.
 - 1) To hear their high privilege of being known by God by the Exodus of Egypt, bringing about a heavier judgment. Amos 3:1
 - 2) To hear the lamentation of God over sure judgment. Amos 5:1
 - 2) The women are called “cows of Bashan” in the mountains of Samaria using sarcasm. vs. 1b-c
 - a) Bashan means “fruitful” and was the territory on the East side of the Jordan given to half of the tribe of Manasseh.

- b) The area was chosen because it was very fertile to raise health fat cattle.
 - c) These women who had become wealthy and prosperous from their corrupt sinful lifestyle, at the expense of the people.
 - d) Samaria was the capital of the Northern Kingdom, luxurious and beautiful during the reign of Ahab and Jezebel.
- 3) The particular sins of these women are given. vs. 1d-h
- a) They oppressed the poor. vs. 1d
 - b) They crushed the needy. vs. 1e
 - c) They commanded their husbands to serve them alcoholic drinks, enticing them to drink together. vs. 1f-h
 - 1)) The women were celebrating their sins in a drinking debauchery.
 - 2)) Their husbands were girly-men, catering to the sins of their wives!

4:2-3 The sins of the women were sworn to be punished.

- 1) The certain judgment of God for these women is by the oath of holiness. vs. 2a
 - a) “The Holy One of Israel” is one of His titles.
 - b) “**Woe** is me, for I am undone! Because I *am* a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of

- unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The LORD of hosts.” Is. 6:5
- 2) The women would be taken captive by the Assyrians as well as the men. vs. 2b-d
- a) The word “Behold” is an exclamation of attention to something not expected, in this case that God was about to judge their sins.
 - b) The manner would be taken away with fishhooks, this being the practice of the Assyrians who would carry off their captives with fishhooks through their lips, as well as their posterity. 2Chron. 33:11
- 3) These women would be led in a straight line as captives through the breeched walls of the city and trans-populated to Harmon. vs. 3
- a) This was the custom of Assyria to dislocate people from their nation, family and culture, in order to discourage them from rebelling and loose their identity and be absorbed into other cultures.
 - b) Harmon “harmown” means high fortress. but is not know which one or where it stood.
 - c) The absolute authority is stated, “Says the LORD.”

4:4-5 The sins of the people did not stop them from being religious.

- 1) Amos uses sarcasm and irony to reveal their corrupt worship offered at two worship centers. vs. 4
 - a) There are two imperative commands, “**Come** to Bethel and **transgress**.” vs. 4a
 - 1)) Bethel means “house of God”, located about 12 miles north of Jerusalem, where God appeared to Jacob as he was fleeing from Esau. Gen. 28:13
 - 2)) Transgress instead of confessing.
 - b) The third command, “At Gilgal **multiply** transgression.” vs. 4b
 - 1)) Gilgal was where Joshua crossed the Jordan and manna ceased and God commanded the circumcision of Israel and means rolling away the reproach of Egypt. Josh. 5:1-12
 - 2)) They were multiplying their shame by many transgressions, but God would not roll away their reproach or shame!
 - c) The fourth imperative command, “**Bring** your sacrifices every morning, Your tithes every three days.” vs. 4c-d
 - 1) “Your sacrifices”, “Your tithes” bought with oppressive corrupt gain.

2) The tithe was to be once a year and the second every three years. Lev. 27:30; Deut. 14:28

3) God did not acknowledge them!

- 2) Amos continued with his irony to reveal their corrupt religious worship. vs. 5
 - a) The fifth and sixth imperative command, “**Offer** a sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven, **Proclaim and announce** the freewill offerings.” vs. 5a-c
 - 1)) The offering of thanksgiving was voluntary and a sign of fellowship with God, but it was not to have “leaven” a type of sin, this was an insult to God, in view of heir sins of social oppression and robbery from the poor. Lev. 2:11; 7:12-14
 - 2)) The loud proclamation of their freewill offering was heard only by man, not God, it only intensified their sin!
 - b) Their praise by man was their focus, outward religiosity, “For this you love, *You* children of Israel!” Says the Lord GOD.” vs. 5c-e

* The authority behind this hypocrisy is God’s, “Says the Lord God.”

4:6 The use of famine by God was to turn them, but they refused to repent.

- 1) Famine is described figuratively and literally, twice for emphasis.
 - a) “Also I gave you cleanness of teeth in all your cities.” vs. 6a
 - b) And lack of bread in all your places.” vs. 6b
 - c) Nine time the personal pronoun “I” appears between verse 6-11, God did everything to turn them!
- 2) God did it that they might repent, “Yet you have not returned to Me,” Says the LORD.” vs. 6c-d
* Deut. 4:29-31; 30:2-10

4:7-8 The used of draught by God was to turn them, yet they still didn’t repent.

- 1) God allowed rain to fall in a very unnatural way. vs. 7
 - a) God interrupted the seasonal rain, “three months to the harvest.” vs. 7a-b
 - b) God selected particular locations to rain and not others, so the dried up. vs. 7c-e
* Early and latter rains, March-April and Oct.-Nov. Deut. 28:22, 30, 39, 40
- 2) Two or three cities searched out for water at other cities, rather than turning to God, leaving them thirsty.” vs. 8a-b

* Lev. 26:19; Deut. 28:22-24

- 3) They did not respented to the chastening of God, “Yet you have not returned to Me,” Says the LORD.” vs. 8c

4:9 The use of devastating their crops by God was to turn them, yet they did not repent.

- 1) God struck all their agriculture with disease, “I blasted you with blight and mildew.” vs. 9a-e
* Deut. 28:22; 30, 30, 39, 40
- 2) The locust devoured *them*, as the plague in Joel.” vs. 9f
- 3) They refused to repent, “Yet you have not returned to Me,” Says the LORD.” vs. 9g-h

4:10 The use of plagues, war and pestilence to turn them, yet they did not repent.

- 1) God sent plagues, “after the manner of Egypt.” vs. 10a
- 2) God allowed their “young men I killed with a sword”, in war and their horses taken as booty. vs. 10b-c
* Jonah fits in this time period when the Assyrians were making raids on the north and he hated them, that is why he did not want to go to Nineveh.

- 3) God sent pestilence evident by the stench of the rotting bodies, repugnant to their smell. vs. 10d
* Lev. 26:25; Deut. 28:49-57
- 4) They did not repent, “Yet you have not returned to Me,” Says the LORD.

4:11 God went to The final extreme God us was to destroy entire cities, yet they did not repent.

- 1) Just as He had in the past, “I overthrew *some* of you, As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.” vs. 11a-b
- 2) Some repented identifies as, “like a firebrand plucked from the burning.” vs. 11c
* John Wesley saw himself as a firebrand plucked out from the fire for His purpose as a child when the house was burning.
- 3) They refused to repent, “Yet you have not returned to Me,” Says the LORD.” vs. 11d-e

4:12-13 The judgment of Israel pronounced.

4:12 They would have to face God with and about their sin.

- 1) The verdict of God is conclusive, “Therefore thus will I do to you, O Israel.” vs. 12a-b

- 2) The verdict is complete judgment, a hostile encounter, “Because I will do this to you, Prepare to meet your God, O Israel!” vs. 12c-e
 - a) For judgment and death by their own choosing.
 - b) According to the covenant of blessings and cursings. Lev. 26:21, 23, 24, 27, 28, 40, 41

4:13 The One they would face was their God.

- * This is a doxology ascribing all glory to God.
- 1) The Omnipotent One Who Created all things, “For behold, He who forms mountains, And creates the wind.” vs. 13a-b
 - 2) The Omniscient One Who knows all things, “Who declares to man what his thought *is*.” vs. 13c
 - 3) The Omnipresent One that sustains all things, “And makes the morning darkness, Who treads the high places of the earth.” vs. 13d
 - 4) The One that can defeat all, “The LORD God of hosts *is* His name.” vs. 13e