

Amos Prophecies Against Israel

Key Verses: *“Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah, I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet’s son; but I was an herdman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit: And the LORD took me as I followed the flock, and the LORD said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel.”*
—Amos 7:14,15

Selected Scripture:
Amos 7:7-17

AMOS IS NOTED AS BEING one of the earliest of Israel’s prophets. He belongs to a period shortly before Isaiah, and about two centuries prior to Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Amos declares himself to have been of humble background. His parents were not prominent, nor was he educated as a prophet. Like David, he was a shepherd, and also a farmer, whom the Lord called to proclaim the troubles sure to come upon Israel unless a change of course should turn aside the deserved punishment for their iniquities.

The burden of Amos’ prophecy was to the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel. However, the prophet’s message began with the adjoining nations. We can imagine Israel’s hearty approval when he forecast punishments to soon fall upon the Syrians, the Philistines, the nation of Tyre, the Edomites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, and Judah. However, when Amos spoke of the sins Israel had committed against God, and the just punishment which would result, their approval

doubtless turned to anger.—Amos 1:3-15; 2:1-16

In three visions, God showed Amos the symbolic results of his judgments upon Israel—a plague of locusts that would destroy their harvest, a fire which would consume a great part of the land, and finally a total overthrow represented by a plumb line, which would cut them off from God's favor. (Amos 7:1-9) Our Key Verse speaks to the loyalty and courage of Amos when he says, "The LORD said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel." Although his was an unpleasant message, Amos did exactly as the Lord instructed.

It is fitting that we conclude our lessons of God's use of certain holy ones to prophesy against Israel by considering Amos, for we can see the similarity of his calling to ours. Like Amos, God has not called many wise, mighty or noble according to the flesh during the Gospel Age, but the foolish, weak, base and despised among the world.—I Cor. 1:26-29

An important part of Amos' prophecy was quoted by the Apostle James in the council at Jerusalem. Speaking of God's ultimate purpose to save Israel and all mankind, he said, "After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up; That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things."—Acts 15:16,17; Amos 9:11,12

Although a limited spiritual fulfillment of this prophecy has taken place during the present Gospel Age, we are now living near to the time when it will fully come to pass. The building again of "the tabernacle of David" symbolizes the establishment of God's promised kingdom on earth, under the rulership of the greater David, Christ and his church. Under that kingdom arrangement, the "residue of men," all Jews and Gentiles alike, will be given an opportunity to "seek after the Lord." Let us be strengthened in our calling to proclaim that glorious coming kingdom. ■