

Amos, a Courageous Prophet

Key Verse: *“And the LORD took me as I followed the flock, and the LORD said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel.”*
—Amos 7:15

Selected Scriptures:
*Amos 1:1; 2:6-16;
3:1-15; 7:10-17;
9:11-15*

Amos was a native of Tekoa, which was about six miles south of Bethlehem. Evidently, however, he traveled north into the territory of the ten-tribe kingdom and there undertook the majority of his ministry. Amos foretold the dire calamities that would come upon Israel because of its sin, and he suffered persecution because of his faithfulness.—Amos 2:6-16; 7:10-17

Through Amos the Lord said to Israel, “You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.” Then the question is posed, “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” (Amos 3:2,3) Here the point is that, since the Lord had made Israel his people exclusively, he expected undivided loyalty from them. If they would not worship and serve him in this manner, they would be punished severely.

In verses 11-15 of the ninth and final chapter of Amos, God, through the prophet, forecasts the restoration of Israel and the building again of the “tabernacle of David that is fallen.” In Acts 15:13-18, this prophecy is quoted by Apostle James, to which he adds, “Known

unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.” God has a due time for every feature of his plan. All creation is his charge, and all his purposes for Israel and all nations shall be accomplished.—Isa. 55:11

The Lord’s people today, as Amos, are not to be deterred into silence, but are to speak the truth in love, especially the hope of the kingdom of righteousness and peace. The conclusion of Amos’ prophecy, as well as James’ reference to it, will have its complete fulfillment with the establishment of God’s kingdom, under the reign of Christ, when the “residue of men” will be given the opportunity to call upon the Lord and be blessed.—Acts 15:16,17

Concerning this promised time soon to come, we read these words: “And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.” (Heb. 8:11,12) These promises will be first extended to Israel, and then will flow to every nation. All mankind will have the assistance of Christ and of his glorified church, together, the “royal priesthood.” (I Pet. 2:9) At this time, too, “The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD.” We also have the assurance that the knowledge of God will be made so plain that “the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.”—Isa. 11:9; 35:8

What a glorious prospect is laid before us for which we are to be ever thankful, and which was made possible by the Heavenly Father’s giving of his beloved son. (John 3:16; Rom. 6:23) Think for a moment what our world will be like with no more sin, killing, hatred, or “wars and rumours of wars.” (Matt. 24:6-7) Amos required courage to speak concerning Israel’s lack of faithfulness. Nevertheless, he also had joy, we can be assured, for the future hope of both Israel and the entire world of mankind. ■