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**C0901 – January 7, 2009 – Amos 1 – Introduction To Amos**

Alright, the Book of Amos. There's not much controversy over the Book of Amos like there was Jonah. I can only suggest that's because nobody reads it. This is one of the last books in the world getting attention tonight so I'm sure we have quite an angelic gathering.

Let's get re-oriented to "The Book of the Twelve." Amos is a part of twelve small books at the end of your OT. That's their location in the English Bible, that's not their location in the Hebrew Bible. Just keep in mind there are differences in the order of books. In your Bible Amos fits between Joel and Obadiah if that helps you find it. I'm not teaching them in the canonical order. We've already taught Joel and Obadiah. I'm teaching them in chronological order so we can at least see some of the flow of history, how these prophets link up and we can see some of that tonight with Jonah, Jonah and Amos were contemporaries and some of what Jonah prophesied sets up the economic background for Amos.

Now some people call these the Minor Prophets. They are not Minor Prophets. Jerome called them that in the early church and unfortunately the name stuck. And now everybody tends to neglect them and major on the big boys; Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel. So the term is a misleading one. It just refers to the shorter prophets, the Talmud says they were so small that the twelve scrolls sort of got lost in the scrollery bin rolling around down in the bottom so Ezra and his scribes compiled them into a single book and called it "The Book of the Twelve," and that's my preference. I like to avoid the connotation that they are less important than the Gospels or something. People inadvertently place more importance on certain parts of the Bible. It's real common with the Red Letter edition. People get the idea that the words of Jesus Christ in print are more important than the black letters. Not so.

Recently we've had the Green Letter edition of the Bible printed and this is the environmental edition of the Bible. So they've highlighted every verse *they* think is important and this is wrong. It's alright to demarcate something but don't fall into the trap of thinking those words somehow trump all the other words. "All scripture is God breathed" not just some scripture and therefore it's all equally important.

So the Book of the Twelve is a single unit in Jewish thought and that's one reason why in the Jewish canon of Scripture you don't have 39 OT books like you do in the English Bible, they have 20 or 22 depending on how they were combined. Just as they combined these twelve scrolls into one so they did with 1 and 2 Kings, they just had Kings, we were the one's who came along later and split Kings up. Brilliant idea that just confuses everyone. But it's not too terribly confusing if you realize your OT and the Jewish OT have the same content, not a shade of difference, both are based on the Masoretic text.

As per their place in the Hebrew canon, the Jews divided the OT into three sections; Law, Prophets and Writings. The Law, that's the Torah, the first five books of the OT. That's the base of everything else, without them the prophets are meaningless. Everything goes back to the Law. Then you have the Prophets. And we'll talk more about prophets in a minute because these are God's prosecuting attorney's; these are the guys who are calling the nation Israel back to the Law, Amos was calling Israel back to the Law. And third you have the Writings, this is the wisdom literature, Proverbs, Song of Songs, the Psalms and interestingly, Daniel, we think of Daniel as a prophet, the Jews categorized Daniel as a wise man. So you have these three basic divisions; Law, Prophets and Writings. We don't divide the OT up like this but Jesus and the NT apostles did and that's why I always harp on these divisions. The Book of the Twelve is in the second division, the Prophets.

Having placed them in the prophets who are the prophets? What was the function of a prophet? What was the function of the prophetic role in history? Turn over to Exodus chapter 4. First we just want to see who these guys were. In Exod chapter 3-4 is the burning bush event. YHWH and Moses have a little discussion out in the desert. I've always found it interesting that the desert seems to be God's favorite classroom. There's no distractions, there's no iPods, there's no TV's, no Radio, it's just you and Him, the creature and the Creator going head to head, and it's testimony that this is God's preferred

setting when He wants to get truth through our thick skulls. This was the classroom for Paul out in the deserts of Syria, it was the classroom for Jesus Christ out in the wilderness and here it's the classroom for Moses out in the deserts of Sinai. The Sinai is not where you schedule your next vacation, it's hot, it's dry, it's boring, I mean, the highlight of this guys week was a bush catching on fire, "Hey, look at that," and he races over to see this strange thing, that gives you the flavor of this guys life, he wanders a desert all alone for weeks on end, interesting life, but God sees this as the perfect classroom. And in these verses He's commissioning Moses to go back and lead the Hebrews out of Egypt. And Moses responds in verse 10, "Please, Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither recently nor in time past, nor since You have spoken to Your servant; for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue." I'm unfit for the service Lord; I'm not a public speaker. Apparently Moses had a little speech impediment, he wasn't an idiot, in fact many ancient historians credit Moses with inventing the alphabet because he couldn't speak well, necessity is the mother of invention, he was forced, literally, to come up with another way to communicate, but the point here is he's rejecting on the basis of his mouth, "I'm not your man God, choose someone who's got a mouth." Verse 11, "The LORD said to him, "Who has made man's mouth? Or who makes *him* mute or deaf, or seeing or blind? Is it not I, the LORD? <sup>12</sup>"Now then go, and I, even I, will be with your mouth, and teach you what you are to say." And they argue back and forth, Moses argues with God and apparently this was a characteristic of Moses, he liked to argue. Finally God gives him big brother Aaron, verse 16, "Moreover, he [that is Aaron] shall speak for you to the people; and he will be as a mouth for you and you will be as God to him." So God will speak to Moses, Moses will speak to Aaron and the people will get the message. Why do we come to this? Why do I bring up this passage? To show you that a prophet is God's mouthpiece. God, so to speak, channels His words through the mouth of the prophet. The prophet isn't generating the material. He's not the source of it. He's just a channel, he's a messenger, a mouthpiece. And that's what all twelve of these guys in "The Book of the Twelve" are; they are mouthpieces for the speech of God almighty. They're in the line of Moses, the prophetic line.

What did the prophets do? What was their basic function? To answer this we get into the Sinaitic Covenant. We've studied in the Framework the historical event of Mt Sinai where God gave his nation the Law. Before that, let's link this back to the earlier events. All the events in the framework are linked

together. That's why you can't play interpretive games with these, each event depends on the other events. They're all interconnected. So we go back to the Call of Abraham. Why did God call Abraham out? Because Noah and his sons got off the ark and they had the truths of Gen 1-9. It was crystal clear to these guys. But out of them came 70 nations and very rapidly the nations were suppressing the truths of Gen 1-9, they had carnal, depraved hearts and so they had the truth but they didn't like the truth and they distorted it. So don't ever fall for the line, "Why does your God only work with one people? All the other religions are open minded." No, no, it's quite the other way around, God already tried the "I'm going to work with everybody approach." And it didn't work. And so while this suppression is going on in every nation God graciously called Abraham out. A man who was to be the father of the Jewish nation and the fountainhead of a counter-nation. He didn't do anything to deserve that, he was a pagan like anybody else. It's just God's choice. The real question isn't, "Why did he choose Abram?" but "Why did He choose anyone?" That's the real mystery. Election is a gracious thing. Then we looked at the contract God makes with him in Gen 12. I'm going to give you a land, a seed and make you a worldwide blessing. Three promises which are basically the drive train of history. God is going to do this no matter what Abraham does, no matter what Isaac does, no matter what Jacob does, it doesn't matter what the nation of Israel does, God made a promise and God is going to keep his word. Remember, in Gen 15 God put those promises into an oath, it's really a terrifying passage to read, scholars call it a maledictory oath, that kind of an oath in the ancient world meant, "I will be damned if I don't do this. I will literally go to hell if I don't do this." God was putting a curse on Himself. So, obviously if someone were to make such promises they better control history and He does control history, He's sovereign, no matter what the Jewish people do, He's ultimately going to bless them and the world through them. The rest of Genesis is the story of this family; Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the twelve sons, this is the covenant line.

Then we come to the **Exodus** from Egypt. If there's going to be an Exodus there first has to be an Entracrus. Why did this family go down to Egypt? There was a famine in the land, they needed grain, "Yes." But why did God send them down to Egypt? What was happening with that family up in the land of Canaan? They had become promiscuous, spiritually dull. And the people who they lived among, the Canaanites, they were also a promiscuous people, a very idolatrous people, a very religious and sexually immoral

society. What happens if you put two promiscuous societies together? They start mixing, they start intermarrying. And what happens to the unique identity of Israel if they intermarry with Canaanite culture? Their identity gets lost. So God, to preserve their identity, sends them into Egypt, a non-promiscuous society. The Egyptians were separationists. They abhorred the Jews. They were not like the Canaanites at all in this respect. So God sent them into a society perfect for maintaining their identity; the superpower of Egypt. They had gone down to Egypt just seventy people and four hundred years later they came out two million people. They went in a family they came out a nation. That's the **Exodus**. Hosea says, "Out of Egypt I called My Son." So the nation Israel has this Father-Son relationship. It's an intimate, personal relationship. That's why Amos is going to say in chapter 3:2 "You only have I chosen among all the nations of the earth." It goes back to the Abrahamic Covenant. God chose Israel. He didn't choose France. He didn't choose America. He chose Israel and He made a contract with them. That's why Albright said, and it's a startling statement. Albright was a man who studied all of the ancient near east and at the end of it all he says, "Only the Hebrews made contracts with their god." Actually it was God who made a contract with them but that's absolutely unique. No other nation has ever had that or will ever have that. Israel is the only elect nation. And that's the background of the Exodus, that's why He called His Son out of Egypt. God chose them. Then they march to Mt Sinai to have their first national meeting with their God. He's not going to meet with them in Egypt, that was the world system. He takes them out of the world system and meets with them there.

What's the significance of the **Mt Sinai** event? What happens here that is so crucial to societies? God gives them His law. As any good father does, he lays down the law for his son, "Here's what I want you to do. Here's what I don't want you to do and here's why." Now that I've called you out and I did that all by grace, you didn't have to lift a finger, salvation is always by grace through faith. Now, having done that for you here's what I want you to do for Me." Deut 5, let's review briefly because we are so unfamiliar with the OT, it's very difficult reading for most Christians because all we've been taught is NT, NT, NT and we don't have a clue what the other 2/3 of the Bible is about which leads up to that and is the background for all of that. Why when we come to the Bible do we depart from conventional wisdom? When you take a math class you don't start with chapter 23. You start with chapter 1 and

work your way to chapter 23, then chapter 23 makes sense, but Christians never seem to learn and then we wonder why we're all screwed up. Maybe we should go back to chapter 1.

Now, the Law at Mt Sinai has been a debated section of Scripture. In the 1800's when you had the rise of theological liberalism over in Germany, there was a scholar named Wellhausen and he popularized the idea that the Law, the first five books, was basically thrown together by redactor critics, he called them J, D, E and P, and it's just randomly put together, there's no order here, no structure, just these authors compiling Hebrew mythology. Well in the 1930's conservative scholars, men who really believed the Bible discovered something startling. What they discovered as they studied Ancient Near Eastern texts is that the structure of the Sinaitic Covenant is paralleled in Ancient Suzerainty-Vassal Treaties. And they said, "Oh my, this is good," because the liberals had essentially won the day. But this said the liberals were way off. "This is not Hebrew mythology, this is an ancient suzerainty-vassal treaty." It's very organized, it's full of structure. And in the Ancient Suzerainty-Vassal treaties you observe the Suzerain and he's the great king, then you have the Vassal, he's the lesser king. Greater and lesser kings would enter into peace treaties. Nations still do this today, the weaker nations always align themselves with one of the superpowers because they want military protection and in return they provide services and goods, free trade route passage, etc...so this was done in the ancient and modern world. And there was a standard structure to these treaties in the ancient world. They always had six elements and what these scholars found in the 1930's was that the Sinaitic Covenant has these six elements.

Look at Deut 5, we've already looked at Exod 20. Let's look at the Ten Commandments in another passage, *deutero-nomos*, the second giving of the Law. The first feature in these treaties that they saw was the Preamble and in the Preamble the great king would identify himself. What does He say in verse 6? "I am the LORD your God." So there's item one, the Preamble where the great king identifies Himself.

Item two was the Historical Prologue, that is, in the beginning words there's some history cited, something has happened—the great king had done something for the lesser king. There was a motive given for keeping the terms of the contract. I've done this for you now you do this for me. And what had the

great king YHWH done for Israel in verse 6, "...brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery." Think about that for a minute. Who acted first? Israel or YHWH? YHWH did. Who owes who? See, that's a motive for obedience. Same thing is true in the Christian life. Who loved who first? Him or us? He did. There's this motive of gratitude for something the great king did.

Item three, the treaties contained certain Stipulations and, of course, the Ten Commandments here are the stipulations, what the great king required of the lesser vassal.

Item four, in the suzerainty-vassal treaty, Dual Copies of the treaty were made, one for each party's temple where it would be safeguarded and periodically reviewed. Here's what happened. The great king made these tablets in stone, engraved them in stone, they'd have two of them. One of the kings would take his and deposit it in his temple and the other one would take it and deposit it in his temple. So both nations had a copy of the treaty. How many tablets did Moses bring down from Mount Sinai? Two. Where were those tablets stored? Think about that. Where were they deposited and kept? In the tabernacle. One was placed in the Ark, the other was placed beside the Ark. Why was this done? So everyone has a copy of the terms of the contract? Why do you make a contract? To monitor behavior. We can always go back and say, "Alright, so and so king did or did not do what he agreed to do." And so it's a measure of each party's faithfulness or unfaithfulness to the terms of the contract. So it's important that both parties have a copy of the contract. What's the problem when we come down to the time of Amos? We're jumping ahead here just to cite a problem that's going to set us up for Amos' prophecy. Was the nation united in the time of Amos? No, the nation was divided, you had the northern kingdom and its ten tribes and you had the southern kingdom and its two tribes. If the contract is kept in the Temple and the Temple is in the city of Jerusalem which kingdom had access to the Temple? The southern kingdom. The boundary line was about 2 miles north of Jerusalem. Are you beginning to see the problem here for the northern kingdom? If the contract is down here in Jerusalem and I live up here in the north how do I access the contract?

Turn over to 1 Kgs 12:25. Jeroboam, the first king of the northern kingdom after the Kingdom Divided was, politically speaking, very shrewd. He'd been down in Egypt and while he was there he learned a few things about Egyptian policy and Egyptian worship. And when he returned he instituted that policy.

Verse 25, “Then Jeroboam built Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and lived there. And he went out from there and built Penuel. <sup>26</sup>Jeroboam said in his heart, “Now the kingdom will return to the house of David.” What’s he worried about? That the ten tribes of his kingdom are going to revolt and he’s going to lose his kingdom, this is political fear. Verse 27, “If this people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will return to their lord, *even* to Rehoboam king of Judah; and they will kill me and return to Rehoboam king of Judah.” He predicts this problem and the way the Egyptians solved this problem was they just built worship centers all along the Nile River. And so Jeroboam says, “The worship center is in Jerusalem in the southern kingdom, I’m trying to consolidate my kingdom in the north. I’m never going to get the peoples allegiance as long as they have to go down to Jerusalem to worship. “So,” verse 28, what does he do? “the king consulted, and made two golden calves,” took those right out of Egypt where he’d been for years, “and he said to them, “It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold your gods, O Israel, that brought you up from the land of Egypt.” <sup>29</sup>He set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan.” Dan is up here in the north, Bethel is here, just north of Jerusalem. What’s he doing? Setting up a convenient worship center. “There’s no reason to go all the way down to Jerusalem, I’ve built you two fine temples, if you live up north you can worship at Dan, if you live down south you can worship at Bethel. Worship in the name of convenience. Jeroboam ran the convenient store religion. You could get your religious fix at either one of them. This is what I call user-friendly religion. A very shrewd strategy. Problem. Do either one of those temples have the copy of the contract? Here I am a resident up north. I’m supposed to be living according to this contract I have with the great Suzerain. Do I have a copy of the contract at Dan or Bethel? Do I have access to His terms? No I do not. In the next verses Jeroboam institutes an Egyptian system of worship; they’ve got false gods, false priests, false feast days, it reflects perfectly the Egyptian system, self-contained in the northern kingdom, perfectly shielded from my national constitution down in Jerusalem. That being said, which kingdom do you think apostatized the fastest? The north or the south? The north.

Now, we’re a couple of centuries after Jeroboam I, this is during the reign of Jeroboam II, the false worship system is operating at full steam. Here comes Amos. Where do you think Amos delivers his address? Is he interested in speaking at Jerusalem? No, he’s interested in Bethel, the convenient worship



stop where you could get your religious fix. Turn to Amos 7:10. Watch this, “Then Amaziah, the priest,” he’s one of the false priests after the Egyptian style of worship. Where did he practice? “Bethel,” and he “sent *word* to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, “Amos has conspired against you in the midst of the house of Israel; the land is unable to endure all his words. <sup>11</sup>“For thus Amos says, ‘Jeroboam will die by the sword and Israel will certainly go from its land into exile.’” <sup>12</sup>Then Amaziah said to Amos, “Go, you seer, flee away to the land of Judah and there eat bread and there do your prophesying! <sup>13</sup>“But no longer prophesy at Bethel, for it is a sanctuary of the king and a royal residence.” In other words do you know where you are Amos, you’re right on the palace doorsteps of Bethel, right at the royal pavilion at the front door of the king. Now, you talk about guts, this guy went right at the political powers of the day with a bad report. And they didn’t like to hear bad reports. Jeroboam was a very popular king at the time. He had brought more prosperity than any northern king, period, this was the golden era of the northern kingdom. To see the economic boom Jeroboam was enjoying turn to 2 Kings 14:23. There’s a little note here about how the economy of the northern kingdom really got going, 2 Kgs 14. This was the most prosperous period for the northern kingdom, they were living it up, the rich people were getting richer, building new houses and they were oppressing the poor, making more money off them. How did the rich get so wealthy? Verse 23, “In the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah, Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel became king in Samaria, *and reigned* forty-one years.” That’s the king at Bethel Amos is trying to get through too. The guy had a long reign, forty-one years. <sup>24</sup>He did evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which he made Israel sin.” That means he didn’t tear down the worship centers at Dan and Bethel that the first Jeroboam set up. He continued in the Egyptian style of worship. That’s the religious side of things, verse 25 gives the economic side of things, “He restored the border of Israel from the entrance of Hamath as far as the Sea of the Arabah,” so we have an extension of the borders during Jeroboam’s reign. What that means economically is you bring a lot of trade routes into your kingdom and that translates into gold and silver. They were making money hand over fist. And who told Jeroboam to do this in verse 25? Jonah. And that’s why we said in the Book of Jonah he was a very popular prophet. Everybody loved Jonah because Jonah was the one who brought economic prosperity to the northern kingdom. And I also think that’s one of the reasons Jonah didn’t want to go to the Ninevites, he was perfectly happy up in Gath-

shepherd in his luxurious home. He had the good life. All his life he'd done good for the northern kingdom and he'd won popularity but if he went up to Ninevah and preached to the Assyrians and they repented then he's done a favor for the Assyrians but the Assyrians were the enemy. But Jonah brought all this prosperity to the north and he and Jeroboam were having a field day. Back to Amos 7. When you're in that kind of economic boom and some shepherd from the south comes in and says "You're going to die by the sword, your kingdom is going to go into exile." Do you think Jeroboam wanted to hear that? A lot of people don't want to hear that our economy is going down, but going down it is. Bad news but reality. The American dream is just that, a dream, our lifestyle is never going to be the same again. Most people don't like to think about that. You think Amaziah the priest of Bethel wants to hear that? Look at verse 12, "Would you get out of town, Amos, you're not even from here." So Amos has a choice, get out of town or preach the word. What does Amos do? Amos 3 verse 8. Verse 8. "A lion has roared! Who will not fear? The Lord GOD has spoken! Who can but prophesy?" In other words, "Hey, I'm just a mouthpiece here. I don't have much choice. And this is a great tactic to use when you're talking to an unbeliever and they attack you. "Why are you so intolerant? Why are you so narrow minded. You and your Bible" Yeah, it's my Bible that says that, not me, I'm just communicating what's in the Bible, you can reject it, fine, but don't blame me, I didn't originate this stuff, I'm just passing it on. That's all Amos does, "I'm just the mouthpiece of God here. I didn't say this. He said it."

Alright, we come to the fifth part, we took a lot of time on the fourth part, the dual copies of the treaty because the northern kingdom doesn't have access to the treaty, they went back to the Egyptian system of worship. The fifth part of these treaties was the Invocation of Witnesses. Deut 32, if the purpose of the treaty is to monitor behavior you have to have some third group to monitor the behavior. Some neutral party who can observe God and Israel. What does Deut 32 say? It's an invocation? "Give ear, oh heavens, and let me speak; And let the earth hear the words of my mouth." That's an invocation, actually to angelic powers, for the angels to monitor the behavior of the people in this covenant. Here is a revolution in understanding the OT. For years and years the liberals would say, "Oh Joel and Obadiah and Amos, all these prophets that wrote in the OT, they were social critics." And the idea that has been taught in schools has been that the rest of the OT is a bunch of social critics. Not so! The prophets of the OT spoke up because God came to them and spoke through

their mouths and said, “Come back, come back to the Sinaiatic Covenant, you’re breaking the law.” Let me show you exactly how that happens. Turn to Amos 2:4. This is in the section on Judah but it’s a good summary of the whole series of legal infractions accumulated by Israel. Here’s Amos at full blast here, “For three transgressions of Judah and for four I will not revoke its *punishment*, Because they rejected the law of the LORD And have not kept His statutes;” Look at that. Is Amos a social critic, trying to reform society, trying to make progress, trying to move forward with a new ethic? Or is he trying to get them to go back, go back to the old ethic of the law, back to the ethics of the Mosaic statutes? This is going back not forward. The prophets are not social critics. They are God’s prosecuting attorneys. They are prosecuting and bringing a case against the legal infractions of Israel. Israel is breaking the Law they are supposed to know, they’re supposed to have a public reading of the law every seven years. Yet here they are up in the north, they don’t even have a copy of the law. They erected a whole worship system built around the golden calf. They were entrenched in Egyptian religion. And Amos is prosecuting them as God’s attorney. You may not like attorney’s but the prophets are God’s prosecuting attorney’s. They’re calling for justice. What’s the famous verse of Amos 5. This is the key verse to the book some of you probably know it by heart, verse 24, “let justice roll down like waters And righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.” God isn’t saying something new here, He’s saying, “Hey, did you forget the terms of the contract because you guys are violating them all over the place.” And justice and righteousness are coming. What do we mean by those terms? These are attributes of God. We have God, He’s in the open box, Creator-creature distinction and He’s got these infinite characteristics, two of them are justice and righteousness. Righteousness, that’s the standard, His character is the standard of what is right and wrong. What’s the expression of His righteousness in the OT? The Mosaic Law. It’s a revealed standard. He’s telling us what the standard is. Justice, which is righteousness’ counterpart, that’s the execution of the standard. When the standard is violated God executes the sentence. “Let justice roll down like waters And righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.” There’s nothing new here presented by Amos. Society was bad but it wasn’t just that society was bad. Society was bad because they had been violating the terms of the contract, that’s why it was bad. We can be upset about how bad our society has become but is the problem really the social issues? Is the problem really abortion? Is the problem really the economy? The problem goes deeper than that, there’s a perversion deep down in the heart, a rebellion against the word of God. The

word of God as a philosophy of life, a way of thinking has been replaced by a false philosophy of life. The problem is not those issues, those issues are important but they are the fruit of deeper root, a deeper problem in the carnal heart. That's the problem and until you get the heart straightened out through the gospel of Jesus Christ you're not going to solve many of societies ills. Because the heart is desperately wicked, it's a mess down in our hearts. And we're naïve if we don't see this.

The sixth item in the Suzerainty-Vassal treaties is the Cursings and Blessings Formula. This occurs in two key OT chapters, can anyone tell me what they are? Lev 26 and Deut 28. Turn to Lev. Keep in mind a treaty. The great king, if the vassal king obeys no problem, blessing upon blessing but if he doesn't obey, he's going to have a little problem because the great king has the power to enforce. Verse 1, "Now it shall be, if you diligently obey the LORD your God, being careful to do all His commandments which I command you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth." How would we sum that up in 21<sup>st</sup> century terminology, "high above all the nations of the earth?" Israel will be the world superpower. Verse 4, "Blessed *shall be* the offspring of your body and the produce of your ground and the offspring of your beasts, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock." So we've got no infant mortality, agricultural prosperity. Verse 7, what do you see there? Military victory. Verse 12, here's one America should have paid close attention to, just for wisdom sake. "The LORD will open for you His good storehouse, the heavens, to give rain to your land in its season and to bless all the work of your hand; and you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow." Economic prosperity, a society that lends and doesn't borrow? We're the worlds number one borrower, the whole system is built on borrowed money. Think we might have a problem? It's stupid, but we've done stupid things because deep down we're greedy. Verse 13, the blessing will come but only if you listen Israel, listen to the commandment and observe the commandments. Obedience is the key. Verse 15, here's the shift, vv 1-14 the blessings v 15 to the end the curses and you can see there's a lot of verses. "But it shall come about, if you do not obey the LORD your God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes with which I charge you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you." Try verse 18 on for size. "Cursed *shall be* the offspring of your body and the produce of your ground, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock." The exact opposite of the verse 4 blessing; infant mortality rate will be high, breeding

rate will be poor. Verse 22, “The LORD will smite you with consumption and with fever and with inflammation,” in other words public health is going to be a wreck. Verse 25, what do you see there? Military defeat and everyone’s going to be scared to death, no national security. The long of the short of it is that there were five degrees of cursing, it’s clear in Lev 26. And Amos is calling the nation Israel back to this Law and to the Lawgiver. Return to Me the Lord says!

So, I hope we’ve gotten re-oriented to the Book of the Twelve, the Suzerainty-Vassal treaty is the key, this is rarely taught, I emphasize it because you can’t really understand the OT without it. Israel as a nation has contractual obligations. This is not made with America and so often we pull verses out of the OT and apply them to the US of A. Now, I know what we’re doing with the principle but be careful, the US of A is not a party to this contract. And we have to be careful about how we apply these things to our nation. Principles, yes there are principles but contracts, no. Promises of final restoration, no. That’s for Israel. Go ahead and read through Amos, it’s nine chapters, just read it through to get the flow of the book. Get familiar with the material and we’ll work with it. Keep in mind as you read that most of it is explained by the Mosaic and Abrahamic Contracts. After the nation Israel goes through all five degrees of cursing then there’s a restoration of the nation, they get the land and so forth. The other parts of the books, parts that deal with other nations we’ll have to sort those out independently.

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