

Amos 2:9-16; 3:1-15

The book of Amos is about the nation of Israel and surrounding gentile nations. The timeframe it's talking about - 750 B.C. - is parallel to what our nation is going through today. Most of the happenings today are not good. We need to take heed and wake up before terrible things happen. Too many people have the idea that we're too big to fail. That's not true. Anything can fail - size doesn't matter. Today we've seen GM, Citigroup, AIG insurance all fail, along with many banks. The founding fathers of America based our country on the bible and God's word, but we've turned away from His word, and we will crumble as others have done before us. God will judge this nation harshly just as he judged the nation of Israel when they turned away from God and His word.

Setting: Amos was a simple herdsman who came from a simple family and a simple life. God chose this simple man for a wonderful job. When "Israel" is mentioned in this book, it is not the nation of Israel but rather the 12 tribes of Israel. He comes from a small village about 10 miles south of Jerusalem. At that time, things were prospering for the people, and things had become so great and so corrupt that God decided to judge the people. God at that time never judged people without some warning beforehand. During the time of Amos, many prophets were warning people of pending judgment. Today there are many people warning others of pending judgment who are being ignored and stifled by corrupt people right here in America. The name "Jesus" is highly offensive to many, and this is very dangerous

9 ¶ Yet destroyed I the Amorite before them, whose height was like the height of the cedars, and he was strong as the oaks; yet I destroyed his fruit from above, and his roots from beneath. The Amorites were mean giants, but they were destroyed by God. God tells the people I destroyed the giants, and I will judge and punish you.

10 Also I brought you up out of the land of Egypt, and led you forty years in the wilderness, to possess the land of the Amorite. God is reminding them what He did for them in the past. It wasn't them that helped themselves: it was God delivering them.

11 And I raised up of your sons for prophets, and of your young men for Nazirites. Is it not even thus, O ye children of Israel? said Jehovah. The Nazirites were to help the Israelites, to guide them.

12 But ye gave the Nazirites wine to drink, and commanded the prophets, saying, Prophecy not. Instead the Israelites gave the Nazirites wine and got them drunk and corrupted them, then told them not to prophesize. They didn't want to hear it. They didn't want to hear what God had to say anymore.

13 Behold, I will press you in your place, as a cart presses that is full of sheaves. Sheaves = Harvest grain. This is how Israel is making God feels. So many people think God doesn't have feelings, but He does. He is not just sitting up there all powerful playing with man like pieces on a chess board. He has feelings and His feelings get hurt when we misbehave with our family, friends, neighbors, business associates, etc. God loves us, but we are hurting His feelings and He will punish us when we make Him feel that way.

14 And flight shall perish from the swift; and the strong shall not strengthen his force; neither shall the mighty deliver himself; God gives an illustration here. Since we hurt His feelings so bad, He says He doesn't care how fast we run, how strong we are; we will not escape His judgement. It's like a parent disciplining his children – watch out!!

15 neither shall he stand that handles the bow; and he that is swift of foot shall not deliver himself; neither shall he that rides the horse deliver himself; It doesn't matter what kind of weapon you got, or what kind of horse or car you have; you won't be able to escape judgement.

16 and he that is courageous among the mighty shall flee away naked in that day, saith Jehovah. No man will be left standing when God's judgement comes. You may run naked out of the area, but you won't escape.

Amos 3:1-15

1 ¶ Hear this word that Jehovah hath spoken against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family which I brought up out of the land of Egypt, saying, God says this is not just for Israel, but for all the 12 tribes.

2 You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities. God is going to punish the tribes as He would punish close family, like a husband, wife, or child.

3 Shall two walk together, except they have agreed? Walking together, the tribes have the same attitude against God.

4 Will a lion roar in the forest, when he hath no prey? will a young lion cry out of his den, if he have taken nothing? Now God describes what's going to happen when judgement comes: a lion roars when he takes his prey, and God will roar when He delivers judgement.

5 Can a bird fall in a snare upon the earth, where no gin is set for him? shall a snare spring up from the ground, and have taken nothing at all?

6 Shall the trumpet be blown in a city, and the people not be afraid? shall evil befall a city, and Jehovah hath not done it? The trumpet is the sound of alarm. Get concerned, get ready, when you hear this loudness of God's judgement coming. The people are corrupted and evil and God is going to do something about it. It cannot continue.

7 Surely the Lord Jehovah will do nothing, except he reveal his secret unto his servants the prophets. God loves His people and will issue a warning through His prophets that judgement is coming. He will not blindside us. We will have ample warning to straighten up our attitudes and behaviors.

8 The lion hath roared; who will not fear? The Lord Jehovah hath spoken; who can but prophesy? The truth sometimes hurts, but it needs to be said in a diplomatic manner. Be tactful when telling a painful truth, but definitely don't lie or hold back the truth.

9 ¶ Publish ye in the palaces at Ashdod, and in the palaces in the land of Egypt, and say, Assemble yourselves upon the mountains of Samaria, and behold what great tumults are therein, and what oppressions in the midst thereof. God says Here's what I want you to do: tell the gentiles of the bad behavior of Israel. The Israelites were behaving worse than the heathens who did not have the word of God at that time.

10 For they know not to do right, said Jehovah, who store up violence and robbery in their palaces. This is what the Jewish leaders were doing at that time: robbing the poor violently.

11 Therefore thus said the Lord Jehovah: An adversary there shall be, even round about the land; and he shall bring down thy strength from thee, and thy palaces shall be plundered.

12 Thus said Jehovah: As the shepherd rescues out of the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear, so shall the children of Israel be rescued that sit in Samaria in the corner of a couch, and on the silken cushions of a bed. God says You're leading luxurious lives with these cushy couches and nice surroundings, but I'm going to take you out.

13 Hear ye, and testify against the house of Jacob, said the Lord Jehovah, the God of hosts. Anytime you see "God of Hosts", this means war.

14 For in the day that I shall visit the transgressions of Israel upon him, I will also visit the altars of Beth-el; and the horns of the altar shall be cut off, and fall to the ground. These altars had four horns and they would take blood sacrifices and rub the blood on the horns. God is going to destroy these altars. God will destroy any power the people think is in these false idols.

15 And I will smite the winter-house with the summer-house; and the houses of ivory shall perish, and the great houses shall have an end, said Jehovah. God will destroy their palaces, their summer horns, houses with lush inlays of ivory. And He did.