

THE INTERCESSORY PRAYERS OF AMOS

TEXT: AMOS 7:1-9

Introduction:

1. In the Bible, we see many instances of intercessory prayer – Moses (Exodus 32:7-14; Numbers 14:11-20) and Samuel (I Sam. 7:5-8; 12:19-25) are two notable OT examples (cf. Jer. 15:1).
2. In the NT, my favorite lessons in intercessory prayer are the Syrophenician woman (Matt. 15; Mark 7), and the church praying in Mary's house for Peter while he was in prison (Acts 12).
3. We often refer to the intercessory prayers of Elijah, and Jeremiah, and Daniel, but the intercessions of the prophet Amos (7:2, 5) are often overlooked.
4. This is probably because when we think of Amos we usually think of his scathing blasts of judgment (cf. 7:17).
5. In Amos 7 we have three visions. After these visions we have the confrontation between Amos and the wicked priest Amaziah (7:10-17).
6. After the first two Amos intercedes and God repented.
7. After the third vision, Amos did not intercede because by that time it was too late (7:8).

I. THE VISION OF THE LOCUST PLAGUE (7:1-3).

1. This is the first of a series of judgments upon Israel (cf. 7:1, 4, 7; 8:1).
2. The judgments are from the Lord – “he formed grasshoppers” (7:1).
3. “The king's mowings” (7:1) were the early portions of the harvest. “The latter growth” (7:1) refers to the final harvest of the growing season.
4. Amos interceded for his backslidden and rebellious countrymen – “O Lord GOD, forgive, I beseech thee: by whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small” (7:2b).
5. Amos was acknowledging that Israel (Jacob) could not survive without God's help.
6. The Israelites were trusting in the mountains of Samaria (6:1), but they did not consider the devastating destruction caused by the little locusts (7:1).
7. God in grace and mercy responded to Amos' prayer, and said, “It shall not be” (7:3). God's holiness is in conformity to His mercy.
8. Psalm 106:44, 45 says, “Nevertheless he regarded their affliction, when he heard their cry. And he remembered for them his covenant, and repented according to the multitude of his mercies.”
9. Jonah 3:10 says, “And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.”
10. God does not “repent” (7:3, 6) the way man repents.

11. The Scofield Bible says that in the NT repentance means “a change of mind...In the NT, such change of mind is often accompanied by contrition and self-judgment. When applied to God the word is used phenomenally according to O.T. custom. God seems to change His mind. The phenomena are such as, in the case of man, would indicate a change of mind.”

II. THE VISION OF FIRE AND DRAUGHT (7:4-6).

1. Amos had already warned of locusts and draught (cf. 4:6-9).
2. The waters of “the great deep” (7:4) would be dried up. This refers to the subterranean waters that fed the springs and rivers (cf. Gen. 7:11 – “the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up”).
3. Once again, Amos interceded (7:5; cf. 7:2).
4. God was not bent on destroying Israel. His intention was to turn them from their wicked ways by disciplinary judgments.
5. That is why Ezekiel 18:32 says, “For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.”

III. THE VISION OF THE PLUMBLINE (7:7-9).

1. A plumbline is normally used for construction, not destruction – to build, not to tear down.
2. However, it is used this way elsewhere in the Bible. “And I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab: and I will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it, and turning it upside down” (II Kings 21:13).
3. Isaiah 28:17 says, “Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place.”
4. Lamentations 2:8 says, “The LORD hath purposed to destroy the wall of the daughter of Zion: he hath stretched out a line, he hath not withdrawn his hand from destroying: therefore he made the rampart and the wall to lament; they languished together.”
5. Notice there is now no more intercession from the prophet Amos. God’s patience was exhausted (7:8).
6. Amos 7:9 refers to “the house of Jeroboam” (the second), and this prophecy was fulfilled when Shallum slew King Jeroboam’s son Zachariah and reigned in his stead (II Kings 15:10).

Introduction:

1. EM Bounds tells of a man named George Benfield, a driver on the Midland Railway, who was standing on the footplate oiling his engine, the train being stationary. His foot slipped, and he fell in the space between the lines. He

heard the express train coming on, and had only time enough to lie full length in between the rails when it rushed by. He escaped unhurt.

2. He returned to his home in the middle of the night and as he was going upstairs he heard one of his children, a girl about eight years old, crying and sobbing. “Oh, father,” she said, “I thought somebody came and told me that you were going to be killed, and I got out of bed and prayed that God would not let you die.”
3. EM Bounds said, “Was it only a dream, a coincidence? George Benfield and others believed that he owed his life to that prayer.”

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