

AMOS AND THE CORRUPT PRIEST AMAZIAH

TEXT: AMOS 7:10-17

Introduction:

1. Ever since Cain killed Abel, the children of the devil have hated the children of God.
2. First John 3:11, 12 says, “For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.”
3. We see this often in the Bible. You may recall how the false prophet Zedekiah smote Micaiah the prophet on the cheek, and said, “Which way went the Spirit of the LORD from me to speak unto thee?” (I Kings 22:24).
4. Zedekiah was one of the false prophets employed by King Ahab. King Ahab hated Micaiah, and complained about him to King Jehoshaphat. He said to Jehoshaphat, “I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil” (I Kings 22:8).
5. It was this same wicked King Ahab, who said to Elijah the prophet, “Art thou he that troubleth Israel?” (I Kings 18:17).
6. Elijah replied, “I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim” (I Kings 18:18).
7. During the days of Amos the prophet, Jeroboam II was the king of Israel. Like all the kings of Israel, beginning with the first King Jeroboam, Jeroboam II was a wicked and ungodly king.
8. But the focus here is not on King Jeroboam; it is on his corrupt priest Amaziah, and his confrontation with Amos the prophet. Amaziah's priesthood was unscriptural and therefore illegitimate.
9. The first King Jeroboam began this illegitimate priesthood (I Kings 12:26-33). That is why some expositors believe the judgment in Amos 7:9, “against the house of Jeroboam,” could be referring to the first King Jeroboam, the man responsible for destroying the religious unity of Israel.
10. It is probably referring to King Jeroboam II, though it could apply to the first King Jeroboam. The dynasty of Jeroboam II came to an end when his son and successor, Zachariah, was assassinated by the usurper Shallum.
11. Shallum only reigned for one month before he himself was murdered by the brutal and barbaric Menahem.

I. AMAZIAH'S REPORT

II. AMAZIAH'S REBUKE

III. AMAZIAH'S RECOMPENSE

I. AMAZIAH'S REPORT (7:10, 11)

1. Amaziah resorted to the usual dirty tricks employed by religious racketeers, when he tried to get Amos in trouble with the authorities by accusing him of high treason (7:10, 11).
2. The religious leaders tried similar tactics with Pontius Pilate. Matthew 27:23 says, "And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done?"
3. In Luke 23:2, we read that the religious leaders began to accuse our Lord, saying, "We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King."
4. The religious leaders did the same thing to the apostle Paul. In Acts 24, read that "a certain orator named Tertullus" informed the governor against Paul, saying, "For we have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes" (Acts 24:5).
5. Amaziah's report against Amos was unfair and untrue. Amos did not "conspire" against King Jeroboam (Amos 7:10).
6. Amaziah took Amos' words out of context. Amos condemned the idolatry in Israel, but he was not guilty of any conspiracy.
7. Amaziah was wrong to say, "For thus Amos saith..." (7:11). Amos said, "Thus saith the LORD" (2:6; 3:11, 12; etc.).
8. Amaziah was unknowingly paying Amos a compliment by saying, "The land is not able to bear all his words" (7:10b). In other words, Amos' preaching was very effective, and sinners were convicted.
9. Our Lord said in Matthew 10:22, "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake."
10. The apostle Paul said, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (II Tim. 3:12).
11. There will always be false prophets like Amaziah, and they will always resent true Bible preachers.

II. AMAZIAH'S REBUKE (7:12-15)

1. Amaziah wanted Amos to leave the northern kingdom of Israel, and return to his native land (7:12, 13).
2. The reference to "eating bread" (7:12) indicates Amaziah was suggesting that Amos was preaching for money. Since Amaziah obviously was in the ministry for money he assumed others were too.
3. Amaziah's authority was the ungodly King Jeroboam – "But prophesy not again any more at Bethel: for it is the king's chapel, and it is the king's court" (7:13).

4. Amos' authority was God – “And the LORD took me as I followed the flock, and the LORD said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel” (7:15).
5. God called Amos to preach but unregenerate hirelings like Amaziah cannot comprehend that.
6. Amaziah never seriously considered that Amos' preaching was right and that the king was wrong. Amaziah was going to take his stand with the ungodly king rather than with the godly prophet.
7. Amos declared that he was a simple herdsman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit: when the LORD called him to prophesy to the people of Israel (7:14, 15).
8. Amos was letting Amaziah know that he was not a professional religionist – what we would today call a “clergyman.”

III. AMAZIAH'S RECOMPENSE (7:16, 17).

1. Amos' stinging rebuke was from the LORD – “Now therefore hear thou the word of the LORD” (7:16).
2. For the opposition Amaziah gave to Amos, the LORD would bring ruin upon himself and his family.
3. Amaziah's wife shall be a harlot in the city (7:17). Matthew Henry said this was “a just punishment upon him for promoting spiritual whoredom.”
4. Amaziah would live to see his sons and daughters “fall by the sword.”
5. Amaziah would be stripped of all his estate, and it would fall into the hands of the enemy, and be “divided by line” among the Assyrian soldiers.
6. One of Amaziah's accusations was accurate. Amos was accused of saying, “Israel shall surely be led away captive out of their own land” (7:11), and Amos repeated it (7:17).

CONCLUSION

“Stopping the mouths of God's ministers will not stop the progress of God's word, for it shall not return void” (Matthew Henry).