

20171015 The Book of Amos Survey

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A GLOBAL COURTROOM

AN INTIMATE CONDEMNATION

A DESIRED RELATIONSHIP

A JUST JUDGEMENT

A PROMISED RESTORATION

INTRODUCTION

Amos 1:1

The words of Amos, who was among the herdmen of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel, two years before the earthquake. ² And he said.

And here we have the prophet Amos, a man who was

- **not a prophet** neither was he
- a **prophets son**,
- he did not come from a line of preachers **but was called directly by God**,
- **he was a herd man and a gatherer of sycamore fruit**.
 - Both fields of occupation tell us that **it was a lowly vocation** and a humble origin.

He came from **the region of Tekoa**, these are a high plains area in the **Southern Kingdom of Judah**.

And he tells us that he “**saw words concerning Israel**”

So here we come to understand both that **he was a man of Judah** yet his words were directed toward the **Northern Kingdom of Israel**,

You will recall that **they were the first** to be taken into captivity by the Assyrian empire before the Babylonians came to take the Southern Kingdom of Judah.

“**in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel**”. Here he also gives us the timeline.

He preached during the reign of Uzziah King of Judah.

- **Uzziah was a Godly king**,
- **a great builder and fortifier of the nation**
- and **built and trained a great army** in the Kingdom.
- **His Reign was the second longest** reigns of all the Kings,
 - **he reigned fifty years** from the age of sixteen.
- **BUT, when his heart was lifted up**, you recall, **he went into the temple of the Lord** which was not for him to do,
 - **and he ran out of it** when the Lord judged him and afflicted him with Leprosy.

Contemporary with Uzziah in the south **was King Jeroboam in the north**,

- now **this is not** the first wicked king of Israel to which all the Kings of Israel and likened for wickedness, **but the Jeroboam II, the son of Joash.**

There **will be six more kings** in quick succession in Israel over only a period of 25 years before Israel is taken into captivity after the reign of Jeroboam.

Amos lived also contemporary with the Prophet Hosea, though began his preaching later, and contemporary with Isaiah, though he began his preaching earlier.

The ministries of Hosea and Isaiah overlapped both ends of the life of Amos

two years before the earthquake

That last part of verse one tells us more specifically **when the word he saw came to him, two years before the earthquake.**

- **All of Israel know the timing of this preaching** based on this particular event.

Its important also to know that both Israel and Judah **were in relative comfort during this time.**

- They were at peace,
- not afflicted by famine yet,
- luxury and leisure **ruled their days** and we would like to think,
 - gave them **time to spend** with the Lord,
 - growing in the **knowledge of him,**
 - **trusting** in him,
 - being **obedient** to him and
 - living in **faithfulness.**
 - But this is not the case.

We recall Ezekiel very case against Israel in the North, likening her to Sodom as he chastised Judah saying ⁴⁹**Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. (Ezek 16:49)**

The unfair treatment of the poor and the luxury of living is well reflected in the judgements that Amos presents against Israel at this time.

You will see that **clearly reflected in chapter 8**, just before God promised that **HIS WORD WILL NEVER AGAIN BE FOUND, EVEN THOUGH IT WILL BE SAUGHT AFTER.**

A GLOBAL COURTROOM

Turn to Amos 3:7

**Surely the Lord God will do nothing,
But he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.**

WATCHMEN

As we go through the pages of scripture and particularly as we read the **books of the Prophets** linked together with **the history of their witness** in the books of Kings and Chronicles, going all the way back to Exodus with Moses and **the Judges, all of whom worked as the prophets of the**

Lord, we see the simple truth of this statement in Amos 3:7.

**Surely the Lord God will do nothing,
But he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.**

Why is it important to know this?

It's important to know it for two reasons;

1. **It gives us great confidence** that we need not ever be **caught by surprise**.

What a joy it is that we can know and discern **not only the signs of the times** as Jesus made clear, but also that the Lord has given to us **his pure words to lead** us and guide us through **this maze called LIFE**.

Please, my dear brethren,

- **do not stop reading the word of God,**
- do not stop praying to your creator and saviour.
- **Go boldly to the throne of grace,**
 - God is not a man that he should lie, **he has told you to seek him**, Jesus even showed you **how** to seek him.

PLEASE, PLEASE read your Bibles and set time aside to pray each and every day without excuse. Not only will you grow in maturity and understanding.

You won't need special courses on;

- How to be a good parent
- How to manage your home
- How to be a good spouse etc

You will just continue to change INTO THE "**Likeness of his image**".

And **by reason of use have** your **senses exercised to discern both good and evil**. (Heb 15:14)

And most Certainly, unlike the blindness of Israel during the time of their Messiah, you will be able to **KNOW the signs of the Times**.

2. The second reason it is important to know **the Lord God will do nothing, But he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets**.
 - a. Is that we can **know The Lord** and how he **will respond in diverse circumstances**.

Nothing is more frightening to children as when either fathers or mothers come home, and unpredictable in how they will be.

Children around the world run and hide from a parent for the fear of not knowing what their behavior will be when they walk in the door.

If you live in a home that you have never had to worry about how mum or dad **or even a spouse** is going to walk through the door, **you are wonderfully blessed** and thank God for that.

But this is not the case for many, many children and spouses the world over.

God is a father who is predictable because he **will do nothing, But he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.** And we can read all they have written of him in perfect revelation in this book.

THE GLOBAL COURTROOM

Amos chapters 1 and 2 give to us a picture of the Justice of God in a Global Courtroom.

AMOS 1:2-9

² And he said,

The Lord will roar from Zion,
And utter his voice from Jerusalem;
And the habitations of the shepherds shall mourn,
And the top of Carmel shall wither.

³ Thus saith the Lord;

For three transgressions of Damascus,
And for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof;
Because they have threshed Gilead with threshing instruments of iron:

⁴ But I will send a fire into the house of Hazael,

Which shall devour the palaces of Ben-hadad.

⁵ I will break also the bar of Damascus,

And cut off the inhabitant from the plain of Aven,
And him that holdeth the sceptre from the house of Eden:
And the people of Syria shall go into captivity unto Kir, saith the Lord.

⁶ Thus saith the Lord;

For three transgressions of Gaza,
And for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof;
Because they carried away captive the whole captivity,
To deliver them up to Edom:

⁷ But I will send a fire on the wall of Gaza,

Which shall devour the palaces thereof:

⁸ And I will cut off the inhabitant from Ashdod,

And him that holdeth the sceptre from Ashkelon,
And I will turn mine hand against Ekron:
And the remnant of the Philistines shall perish, saith the Lord God.

⁹ Thus saith the Lord;

First we see that it is none other than the Lord who is bringing the Charges

THUS SAITH THE LORD or **SAITH THE LORD**

This very phrase appears in the entire Bible no less than 854 times.

The book of Amos takes up 5% of the use of this phrase occurring 43 times.

It is in this phrase that we can know who it is that heads this GLOBAL COURTROOM and brings the charges against the nations.

The Lord will roar from Zion,

And utter his voice from Jerusalem;

The same place from which **Jesus Christ** will have his seat and will govern the nations on his return, from Zion he will roar as a lion and from Jerusalem he will utter his decrees.

For three transgressions of Damascus,
And for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof;

Not for one slip up, nor for two, but for three and even for four. God makes clear that not only is he just, **but he is patient**.

He names the nation, here it is **Damascus, then Gaza, and Tyrus** and Edom etc. he goes through the nations that surround Israel until he comes to **Judah and Israel** herself.

We are reminded of the Book of Romans as Paul makes clear that there **are none righteous, no not one, that all have fallen short of the Glory of God**.

Both the gentile and the Jew stand condemned before a holy God, HOW SHALL WE DO? WHO CAN THEN BE SAVED?

THE WAY OF SALVATION is given us even in Amos, we will come to that shortly.

First, the Lord gives the reason for the charges;

Because they have threshed Gilead with threshing instruments of iron: (For Damascus)
Because they carried away captive the whole captivity, To deliver them up to Edom: (For Gaza)
Because they delivered up the whole captivity to Edom, And remembered not the brotherly covenant: (For Tyrus)
Because he did pursue his brother with the sword, And did cast off all pity, And his anger did tear perpetually,
And he kept his wrath for ever: (The Lord explains against Edom)

God never gives a charge against any man, woman or nation without reason.

There are those alive today who claim that when they see God they will give him what for! That, Like Job they think that they will “**Order their cause before him and fill their mouths with arguments**” (Jb 23:4).

But when God makes clear their error, and their consciences are fully informed, they will shut their mouths, **yea once they have spoken** but now they will have nothing to say.

No argument will be filled against the one who knows their very thoughts and all that is in their heart, their motivations will be found anything but pure.

- I will break also the bar of Damascus,
- And cut off the inhabitant from the plain of Aven,
- And him that holdeth the sceptre from the house of Eden:
- And the people of Syria shall go into captivity unto Kir, saith the Lord.

The charge now pronounced, **the justification given** and now we have the Judgement pronounced **and the sentence laid**.

This is how our Courts were to be modelled, this is the example of just judgement and how it is ordered and carried.

The greatest curse that will come upon the world is when we are given unjust judges and poor judgement.

These come up out of a people who have no foundation for what is right or what is wrong and in my view this is the fault of the Church and especially its pastors who have created doubt in the words of God, no longer showing to his children the precise nature of the father who gave them his words.

AN INTIMATE CONDEMNATION

3Hear this word that the Lord hath spoken against you, O children of Israel,
Against the whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying,
**²You only have I known of all the families of the earth:
Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.**
**³Can two walk together, except they be agreed?
⁴Will 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?
⁵Can a bird fall in a snare upon the earth, where no gin is for him?
Shall one take up a snare from the earth, and have taken nothing at all?
⁶Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid?
Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?
⁷Surely the Lord God will do nothing,
But he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.
⁸The lion hath roared, who will not fear?
The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?**

That phrase in verse 2

**²You only have I known of all the families of the earth:
Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.**

Speaks of the intimacy of the Lord toward his people.

- He has known them personally,
- he had delivered them personally,
- he tabernacled with them personally,
- he led them personally,
- he settled them personally.
- The Lord was with them and **knew them like no other nation**,
 - he dealt with them like no other nation.

They are the Chosen people of God and are not only known of him, **but also know him** like no other nation can.

To them where committed the Oracles of God, and they were held doubly accountable.

Chosen people **suffered from their errors** more than any nation through history.

As we see the dealings with the Lord we may come to have a mind like Tevye in Fiddler on the Roof

“Lord, I know that we are your chosen people, but once in a while, can’t you choose someone else?”

BUT, they are also blessed more than any other nation.

- No other nation on Earth can boast that they have the special consideration and **protection of God**.
- So blessed is Israel that even those who bless them **are blessed** and those who curse them **are cursed**.

Though God condemns the nations for their error, **his is an intimate condemnation of Israel, like a father to a son.**

- Punished for a cause,
- chastised for relationship.

In you are born again by your faith in Christ, know that this is doubly so for you. They had seen God, they walked with him, talked with him. But blessed are they who have not seen him.

Jesus spoke that of all the men and prophets that went before John the Baptist, he was the greatest.

For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he. (Luke 7:28)

This is the time of the gentiles, all who have been saved by faith does the Lord know intimately and the Lord says “**are greater than John in the kingdom of God**”.

Though you may be sternly chastised for your error, **know that the Lord deals with you as with sons**. The blessing that comes upon you is far greater when you turn back toward the father.

A DESIRED RELATIONSHIP

Amos 4:6-11

⁶ And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities,
And want of bread in all your places:

Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

⁷ And also I have withholden the rain from you,

When there were yet three months to the harvest:

And I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city:

One piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered.

⁸ So two or three cities wandered unto one city, to drink water;

But they were not satisfied:

Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

⁹ I have smitten you with blasting and mildew:

When your gardens and your vineyards and your fig trees and your olive trees increased,

The palmerworm devoured them:

Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

¹⁰ I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt:

Your young men have I slain with the sword, and have taken away your horses;

And I have made the stink of your camps to come up unto your nostrils:

Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

¹¹ I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah,

And ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning:
Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

Here we see how the Lord has dealt with his Son Israel.
Wonderful how the Lord expresses these judgements

And I also have given **you cleanness of teeth** in all your cities,
And want of bread in all your places:

Cleanness of Teeth, refers to nothing eaten that would dirty them, no food that remains between them or in any cavity. It's the **want of Bread** that gives us understanding that clean teeth is not a good thing here.

And the Lord goes through a short list of things that he has personally done to them and against them **and yet in verse 6 and 8 and 9 and 10 and 11 there is one purpose, one desire the Lord had that stands out above them all**

Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

All these are done that you would repent and return to me! How often are we seeing this as we go continually through this series of books?

All that the Lord desires is relationship, all he wants is the purpose for which he created man to be fulfilled in man, a loving and blessed relationship.

The reason he sent his son was to “**seek and to save that which was lost**”.

You are the sheep of his pasture,

You are the lost sheep he seeks after today and he will certainly leave **the ninety and nine** and seek after you till he find you.

Will you be found of Christ?

Why will you hide, why, to what end is it?

If you reject any relationship with the lord today and tomorrow, **and if all your days are done separated from God in life, you will be given that which you have lived for in death and be eternally separated together with those immortals that fell from heaven.**

All through this books so far we have seen the theme and are coming to know the wonderful nature and character of God. His desire is RELATIONSHIP.

And he knows that it is ONLY IN RELATIONSHIP with HIM that man will be fulfilled and BLESSED.

Only in Christ will man find his being and place and purpose, IT WILL NOT HAPPEN OUTSIDE IT.

If you have turned from the Lord, **returned unto me, saith the Lord!**

**RETURN
RETURN
RETURN UNTO ME SAITH THE LORD**

This is a message for us all.

A JUST JUDGEMENT

5Hear ye this word which I take up against you,
Even a lamentation, O house of Israel.
² The virgin of Israel is fallen; she shall no more rise:
She is forsaken upon her land; there is none to raise her up.
³ For thus saith the Lord God;
The city that went out by a thousand shall leave an hundred,
And that which went forth by an hundred shall leave ten,
To the house of Israel.
⁴ For thus saith the Lord unto the house of Israel,
Seek ye me, and ye shall live:

God laments that which will come upon Israel. This would not occur for yet a few decades but it will occur.

The Lord says

The city that went out by a thousand shall leave an hundred,
And that which went forth by an hundred shall leave ten,
To the house of Israel.

The word “Decimation” was a word used in the ancient times where **one person in ten** was taken and killed.

Here we find only one in Ten spared.

The catastrophe that would come upon Israel will be severe, so much so that those ten tribes shall no more rise as a unit or kingdom of people.

They will individually; but no more as a separate identified kingdom.

Yet consider again verse 4

⁴ For thus saith the Lord unto the house of Israel,
Seek ye me, and ye shall live:

Look at verse 6

⁶ **Seek the Lord, and ye shall live;**

Consider verse 8

Seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion

And what about verse 14

¹⁴ **Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live:
And so the Lord, the God of hosts, shall be with you, as ye have spoken.**

Look at verse 15

¹⁵ Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate:
It may be that the Lord God of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph.

If there is no turning back to the Lord, can he be justified in a Just Judgement?

Has he made it difficult for them?

Is it not the simplest of all options?

Is it easier to turn back to the Lord or to go through the reverse DECIMATION that would otherwise come?

Now consider what Amos records as a result of their choice

Amos 5:21

²¹ I hate, I despise your feast days,
And I will not smell in your solemn assemblies.
²² Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them:
Neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts.
²³ Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs;
For I will not hear the melody of thy viols.
²⁴ But let judgment run down as waters,
And righteousness as a mighty stream.
²⁵ Have ye offered unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of
Israel?
²⁶ But ye have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch and Chiun your images,
The star of your god, which ye made to yourselves.
²⁷ Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus,
Saith the Lord, whose name is The God of hosts.

All that they did they did in vanity. They had a display of righteousness but not according to knowledge. The feast days were kept not in accord with their hearts.

They went to Church each Sunday morning only to keep up appearances, they raised up their hands in worship only to sway and be entranced by another god, one who would help them forget their faithlessness and hypocrisy.

They honored the Lord with their Lips but their hearts were far from him and God was not mocked.

Samuel condemned Saul the first King of Israel saying

“Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices,
As in obeying the voice of the Lord?
Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice,
And to hearken than the fat of rams.” (1 Sam 15:22)

Turn to Isaiah 1:11

¹¹ To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord:
I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts;
And I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats.
¹² When ye come to appear before me,

- Who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?
¹³ Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me;
The new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with;
It is iniquity, even the solemn meeting.
¹⁴ Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth:
They are a trouble unto me;
I am weary to bear them.
¹⁵ And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you:
Yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear:
Your hands are full of blood.

How many there are even today who are just like this. SUNDAY CHRISTIANS is what they are called.

Someone once said that the definition of a hypocrite is a person who is not himself on SUNDAYS

Vain will be our sacrifices to the Lord, vain are our Oblations and ordinances, vain is our giving to God in the bag, or box or plate when nothing is done to relieve the trouble of the poor or our hands are withheld to help the needy.

A trouble it is to keep the Holy days and appointed feasts **when we despise and leave unforgiven family members who have troubled us.**

To what end do we spread forth our hands before the Lord **BUT close them to our family or friends?**

Prayer with iniquity we know will go unheard.

Leave your gift on the alter said Jesus, **first be reconciled to thy brother then come and offer thy gift.** (Mt 5:24)

Remember it's not those who are easy to love and forgive that we are judged by, but those who are difficult to love and forgive.

Consider here from verse 16 of our Isaiah passage

- ¹⁶ Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil;
¹⁷ Learn to do well;
Seek judgment, relieve the oppressed,
Judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.
¹⁸ Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord:
Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow;
Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

Always again we see the desire of the Lord, so pure and so simple is our God and father. RECONCILIATION and even a washing away of that which you have done.

Nothing to pay for, no work to do, simply wash and be cleaned, no great thing commanded of us that I am sure many, like Nahman the Syrian would do, no. **Though your sins be a scarlet, they shall be white as snow.**

A PROMISED RESTORATION

Amos 7:10-15 Is one of the few narrative passages in Amos where the word of God is openly rejected by the King

V12 Also Amaziah said unto Amos, O thou seer, go, flee thee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there: ¹³ But prophesy not again any more at Beth-el: for it is the king's chapel, and it is the king's court.

No more can we stand the word of God against us, preach it to Judah and not here, send the word of the Lord elsewhere for we do not want to be fed with this bread.

Scripture teaches that it is the Word of God that sustains us, scripture is likened to mana, that which we gather every day. Peter the apostle was charged to **Feed my sheep**, three times by Jesus. **But here the Head of the nation wants the people to starve.**

Turn forward to Amos 8:11-12 and see the pronouncement of God against them. Chapter eight shows us how Israel condemned them in their prosperity and leisure, their “**abundance of idleness**” that Ezekiel spoke of and how they treated the poor of the land. They were well fed with the food of the land and It's worth reading the potential effects of seeking fulfilment in all that does not satisfy.

¹¹ Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God,
That I will send a famine in the land,
Not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water,
But of hearing the words of the Lord:

¹² And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east,
They shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it.

We live in similar times. When the time comes that they seek after the word of the Lord, they might search for it, but they shall not find it.

Brethren, this word needs to be read and memorised, set yourself a routine to do so, there may come a time when even the book we hold in our hands today will be as it was only a few centuries ago, it actually remains a Banned Book on the list of Roman Catholic banned books.

Amos comes to a close again demonstrating the heart of the Lord.

Amos 9:13-15

¹³ Behold, the days come, saith the Lord,
That the plowman shall overtake the reaper,
And the treader of grapes him that soweth seed;
And the mountains shall drop sweet wine,
And all the hills shall melt.

¹⁴ And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel,
And they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them;
And they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof;
They shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them.

¹⁵ And I will plant them upon their land,

And they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them,
Saith the Lord thy God.

A time of great plenty is promised the people of God. No sooner are they reaping but the ploughman is preparing to plant. No sooner are they sowing the seed, but they are treading the grapes.

The land will be their own, never again to be removed from them.

If you are born again, your home is in heaven, your treasures are there well stored, gather them up while you are here and no matter what happens on earth, the treasure you have stored in heaven will be yours forever.

Man will take all that he can here, don't store your treasure here. Let that Gospel you share and the love you give, and the poor you help, and the forgiveness you offer, become the Gold, the silver, the precious stones that will never perish in heaven.

Look up dear ones, your redemption draweth nigh.