

October 27, 2013 Sermon Application handout
“A Higher Calling”
Amos 2:4-3:15

I. Introduction

1. Before you begin, take time to pray and ask God to help you to have the kind of heart that is eager to help the needy, the downtrodden, and the poor.

2. As a way of introduction to this lesson, begin by reading 2 Sam. 12:1-15. How did David react to Nathan’s story (v. 5-6)? Who was Nathan the prophet really talking about? When David heard Nathan’s indictment and the consequences which ensued, how did David respond? Keep this in mind as you continue to read Amos as he will play a similar role in Israel’s life.

3. Review your lesson in Amos from last week. Where was Amos from? What message did he bring? Who did he give this message to? How do you think Israel reacted to these judgments against the nations who had brought heartache to Israel over the years?

4. Read Amos 2:4-16. Who is the seventh nation that Amos addresses in verse 4? What is the difference in their transgressions in comparison to the other nations mentioned before? What was their consequence for spurning the Mosaic Covenant (cf. 2 Kings 24:10-16; 25:1-12)?

5. So far Amos has revealed that the Lord is sovereign over all and can hold nations accountable for their rebellion against Him. According to verse 6, who does Amos draw the reader’s attention to?

6. If you have been keeping count, Judah is the 7th nation to be judged. Israel most likely thought that the Lord was done with His judgment against the nations because the number 7 represents completion. But like the story of David and Nathan in 2 Samuel 12, God is bringing some thing to their attention. What is it? Do you think they were shocked?

7. Look closely at verses 6-8. There is an idiom in verse 6 being used to provide emphasis in the text, “for three transgressions of Israel and for four...” In this situation, instead of just mentioning one transgression, how many indictments were made against Israel? In comparison to the other nations, what do you think God is trying to communicate to Israel? The other nations had blown it but Israel...?

II. Israel's Sins D _____(2:6-8)

8. Read Exodus 22:21-27; 23:6 for context. Who are the groups of people mentioned? How was Israel commanded to treat them?

9. Read Amos 2:6-8. Describe in your own words what Israel was indicted for. What do these 7 transgressions center around and why were they wrong?

10. Read Deuteronomy 15:7-11 and 16:19. How did Israel's transgressions violate God's Law?

11. Despite the great wealth and prosperity Israel experienced in Amos' day, Israel was using and oppressing their own people. Does it trouble you that Israel would rebel against God in such great measure? Especially in light of God being nothing but gracious towards them? How about you? Does it trouble your own heart when you consider your own transgressions against the Lord despite His graciousness towards you? Spend some time right now before moving onto the next section and confess your sin. Be amazed that for those in Christ, if they confess their sin, God is faithful and righteous to forgive those sins and to cleanse the believer from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

III. Israel's Past D _____ (9-13)

12. Read Amos 2:9-11. Instead of pronouncing judgment against Israel right away, God takes a unique turn. What does Amos remind them of instead?

13. When we find ourselves stuck in sin or discouraged; it is very important to remind ourselves of what God has done on our behalf. Read Ephesians 2:1-22. Now take a moment to remember when you were stuck in the desert of your own trespasses and sins, walking according to the course of the world, according to the prince of the power of the air. What does the rest of the chapter in Ephesians remind you of? What should be our motivation for repentance?

14. Unfortunately, despite God's gracious acts, according to verse 12, Israel continued to rebel against the Lord. What were the additional sins? Are you burdened by the fact that a people set apart by God who had been shown mercy responds by showing no mercy back? Does it grieve you that they who had been shown grace responded in disgrace? Elaborate why or why not.

IV. Israel's Judgments D _____ (2:13-3:11)

15. What word picture does Amos give to describe God's judgment in 2:13?

16. Think of a battle. If Israel were going to war with God, out of the entire army described in verses 13-16, why would they have no hope? What will happen to each person described? Did you happen to notice how many people were named? How do you think Israel is feeling now?

17. What eventually happened to Israel, 40 years later in 722 B.C.? Were they completely wiped out (See 2 Kings 17:1-23)?

18. God has spoken. Like a Mighty Warrior in battle, He has judged the surrounding nations including Israel for their rebellion against His authority. What attributes of God are being expressed in Amos 2:13-16? Does this motivate you to pray for our own nation? (See Romans 1:18-2:1-2)?

19. Read Amos 3:1-2. Why had God spoken against Israel? Why must they experience God's punishment?

20. Read Amos 3:3-6. List the 7 rhetorical questions. What is the obvious response to all of them?

21. Read Amos 3:7-11. How does God normally reveal His plan? Once the revelation has been spoken is judgment sure to follow?

V. Israel's Example D _____

22. What can believers learn today from Israel's history? What principles can be gleaned for their own lives for the glory of God? Read the verses below and write out some application.

Matthew 25:31-46:

James 1:27:

23. It is clear from Scripture, if we claim the name 'Christian', we must look out for the poor, the downtrodden, the needy, and the helpless. Below is a list of ministries at Calvary Bible Church that strive to help those in need. Consider how you might support and be involved.

- Avenues Pregnancy Clinic (www.avenuespreganancyclinic.com)
- Abort 73.com (www.abort73.com)
- Hope Again and/or House of Blessing (818-556-4840)
- Children's Hunger Fund or CHF (www.childrenshungerfund.org);

24. According to Matthew 28:16-20, everyone's primary need is salvation. All believers are mandated by Jesus Christ to preach the Gospel but they are also mandated to meet needs. Are you eager to be hands and feet for such a kind and loving God? What step will you take today?

RESOURCES

Specific Resources for Amos

Amos by Reed Lessing

Joel, Amos, Obadiah by Thomas Finley

Amos by T. J. Betts

General Resources for the Minor Prophets

The Minor Prophets by James Montgomery Boice

The Minor Prophets by Charles Feinberg

The Prophets of Israel by Leon Wood

Major Points from the Minor Prophets by John Blanchard

A Survey of Old Testament Introduction by Gleason Archer

Interpreting the Minor Prophets by Robert Chisholm Jr