

December 8, 2013 Sermon Application handout

“Israel’s Future Hope”

Amos 9

I. Introduction

1. Before you begin, take time to pray and thank God for being a promise keeper!
2. As we come to the last chapter in Amos, take time to review your lessons from the previous chapters. Do you remember where Amos was from and what his vocation was? What city did Amos get called to? Why was this city an important area to declare a message from God? Was this message an easy one for Amos to preach? Why or why not? What do you observe taking place throughout the book? Did Amos’ hearers get the message? How were the people interpreting things? How did they perceive Amos?
3. As you will recall from the last three chapters, God gave Amos five visions. The first was a swarm of locusts, the second a vision of a great fire, the third a plumb line, and the fourth a basket of summer fruit. Read Amos chapter 9. What is the 5th and final vision that incidentally serves as a climax to the other four visions?

II. God’s judgment is U_____ (vv. 1-10)

4. Jump ahead to Amos 9:10. Based on what is stated in this verse, why must God give Amos one last vision to tell them that God’s judgment is coming no matter what?
5. According to Amos 9:1, how does this vision begin? What are some of the differences from the previous four visions?

A. God is O_____ (vv. 1-4)

6. Read Amos 1:1-4. As you read this section, what attribute of God is very evident (cf. Psalm 139:7)? Based on this, why would it be impossible for these people to avoid judgment?

7. Read 1 Kings 12:26-33. What altar did Amos see God standing next to in his vision? What is the significance of this altar? What was being carried out at this altar 170 years ago, before Amos? What is God declaring and why? How does this further connect the attribute mentioned in the question above?
8. Read Psalm 33:13-14; 46:1; Proverbs 5:21; and Isaiah 57:15-16. How does knowing that God is everywhere and is not limited by time and space deter you from sin? How does knowing that you can return to God in repentance and faith without even having to move give you hope?
9. Many people, like in Amos' day, believe that God is confined to space and time; that if they are clever enough or fast enough or resourceful enough they can escape God. But Psalm 139:11-12 reminds us that we cannot hide from God, there is no place in this universe that God cannot find a person. So if you have not turned from your sin and placed your faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ and confessed Him as Lord, today is the day of your salvation! Don't be foolish enough to think you can slip through the cracks or avoid His gaze or hide from Him.

B. God is O_____ (vv. 5-6)

10. Read Amos 9:5-6 (cf. Amos 4:13). What do these verses tell the reader about God? What attribute is being displayed? What is God doing?
11. Read Job 38:8-11, 42:2; Genesis 1:3, 6, 9; Psalm 33:6, 36:6; Daniel 2:21; John 19:11; and Rev. 19:1. Based on what Scripture says concerning God and this particular attribute, why would it have been important for the people in Amos' day to have this high view of God? Again, why was their judgment unavoidable?
12. What about you? Do you believe that you serve a God that is infinite, sovereign, and has power over all things at all times and in all ways? How is God's power exalted in the believer today (see 2 Cor. 12:9; Eph 3:20; 2 Tim 1:12; and Jude 24)?

C. God is J_____ (vv. 7-10)

13. Read Amos 9:7-10. What does God say He will do (v. 7)? How will God deal with their sin (v. 8)? Why is it important that God deals with this sin; what attribute of God does this address?
14. According to verses 7-10, what were the people deluded into thinking? How did their low view of God dictate their thinking?
15. God indeed is a God of justice but He is also a God of Grace. What wonderful gem of grace do you behold in verse 8? Who would survive the eventual destruction of the monarchy (9:8)? What illustration did Amos use to make this clear?
16. There is a view out today known as “easy believism.” This term basically means that a person may receive Christ as Savior but never manifest any evidence of a changed life. This is not only a dangerous teaching but it is also contrary to the Scriptures; true conversion will always result in growth and a life of good works (James 2:20). Israel suffered in the same way; they mistakenly took God’s grace as something they deserved because of something inherently special in them. In other words, they thought God would overlook their sin because they were “Israel.” There is an important principle to glean from Amos which is, “We must be vigilant to **never** presume upon God’s grace as an excuse for sin!” Take a moment to examine your heart: How are you doing? Have you gone so far as to willingly sin and then say with great resolve, “I know it’s wrong but God will forgive me anyway?” If so, Beloved, you are in great danger. No one who truly loves God and has experienced His grace would ever believe that. Don’t presume upon God’s grace; go to Him now and ask for His forgiveness.

III. God’s Restoration is C_____ (vv. 11-15)

A. The Description in Amos

17. Read Amos 9:11-15. Who is God talking to? What would Yahweh initiate after the judgment had fallen upon them? What does this say about God even if they were not the intended audience?

18. Edom is mentioned in Amos 9:12 as a way to represent “the nations.” The idea is that when Israel is restored under Messiah’s reign, not only will “faithful” Israel be restored but also believing Gentiles! Through the Gospel, they too will become fellow heirs and partakers of the promise. How does this give you hope?

19. After describing the messianic kingdom, what does Amos stress to Israel next in verses 13-15 (cf. Jer. 31:31; Joel 3:18)? Will this be permanent (v. 15; 2 Samuel 7:10)? Has this promise been fulfilled to Israel yet?

20. How is this Old Testament description of the messianic kingdom similar to what Jesus says in John 10:28? How does this give you hope today even if you are experiencing difficulty?

21. Although the new covenant promises were made to Ethnic Israel, all believers today will receive the blessings of this new covenant through Christ’s death. We serve a faithful and sincere God who will keep all of the promises He has made. Just consider this for a moment:
 - God promised to send a Deliverer and **He did!**
 - God promised that this Deliverer would give His life on the cross as a payment for sin and **He did!**
 - God promised to forgive any who would confess their sins to Christ and **He does!**
 - God promised to grant eternal life to any who would repent from their sins and put their trust in Jesus and **He will!**

22. As you contemplate the entire book of Amos, what were some of the important lessons you learned from this faithful herdsman from Judah? How have you changed as a result of this study? If you were to share what you have learned, what would you say impacted you the most and why?

23. End this lesson by spending time in prayer. Thank God for His promises to restore Israel one day. Praise God that He keeps His promises to you. Praise God that He will not go back on His Word because He cannot lie.

RESOURCES

Specific Resources for Amos

Amos by Reed Lessing

Joel, Amos, Obadiah by Thomas Finley

Amos by T. J. Betts

Additional Resources on Israel and the Church

Has Israel Replaced the Church by Michael Vlach

Continuity and Discontinuity ed. By John Feinberg

Dispensationalism, Israel and the church ed. By Craig Blasing and Darrell Bock

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

The Ultimate Priority on Worship by John MacArthur

Knowing God by J.I. Packer