

Summary of the Book of Amos

by Sherry and Gerald Cumby

When men forget God, their society heads for a dark turn downward, even to their ruin. As this happens and for mankind's good, a prophet comes on the scene to call us to our senses. He speaks for God as God has inspired him.

Although the prophet's coming is good news, the bad news is that people seldom ever listen to the prophets. The reason...the people are enjoying living in their sin. It happened then and it happens now. The message was clear in the Old Testament and the New, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Although God rarely picks a well-known preacher to serve as a prophet, this does not mean that we should not heed to the message of the messenger (pastor/evangelist). When God sends us a prophet, He probably will not send someone that says he is a prophet. Yet, the Holy Spirit will reveal His plans to the prophets.

Amos 3:7, "Surely the Sovereign LORD does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets."

Take the prophet Amos as an example. Amos was a prophet of God who made a living as a shepherd and tending fig trees in Tekoa in the hills of Judah. He lived in the 8th century B.C. during the reign of Jeroboam II and his ministry only lasted a few days around the year 750 B.C.

Amos was about as unlikely a prophet as you would ever find. He had no degree after his name and no obvious qualifications for the job. However, God decided it was time to come on the scene and say something to the sinful society of which the world had become; so, he used Amos for this task.

Amos began his prophecy with a fascinating theme. He used a Hebrew idiom: For three transgressions and for four, and then he began to outline what was coming and *why* it was coming. Although Amos was an untrained man of God, The Lord called him and instructed him to go to Bethel and preach in the sanctuary.

People of the area were either extremely wealthy or lived in a poverty-stricken state. The justice system was corrupt, the religious system was being operated through pride and arrogance, and even those within the sanctuary were being misled through deceitful practices. He preached

against the wealthy and spoke up for the poor who were being exploited by greedy merchants and those who operated through dishonest gains. Amos was willing to stand up and preach boldly that destruction was coming from Egypt and Assyria because of their sinful society.

Comfortable living conditions made people believe their society was fine. People were reluctant to repent or feel alarmed because things were relatively quiet on the political front with neighboring countries. The religious leader at Bethel was Amaziah who quickly rejected the message of Amos. Amos was urged to return to his own country and city; however, he refused and explained that he was only there because God had instructed him to be there to preach his timeless message. He preached judgment on Judah and Israel due to their rejection of the Law of Moses (Amos 2:4) and their lying spirits. His “Thus says the Lord...” (2:4) testimony was evidence that he spoke forth the word of the Lord. He was bold to even use the words of the Lord in front of the religious leaders.

God reminds the people through Amos that He chose Israel from all the nations on the earth through whom He would bless all nations; yet Amos preached that all twelve tribes were guilty (3:2) of sinful acts against the Lord. The Lord’s call was for the chosen people return to Him (4:8). They were urged to seek good and not evil in order to live in the fellowship of the presence of God with sincerity of heart (5:14). God gave the assurance that He would preserve a remnant of His people(9:8); yet a great shaking was coming. Just two years later, a great earthquake shook the earth under them. Amos preached that comfort can be taken in the fact that God Himself would restore Israel on their land and they will not be rooted out again.

God is a great God who loves His people but hates their sin. So, it is today. We can rest assure; God loves us. His love does not blot out our sins, but does cover sin as a whole. Oh, the blood of Jesus. It washes us white as snow.

What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus!