

Yahweh shows! Appeal to Him! | Read Amos 5.18-7.17**INTRODUCTION**

1. This is the third lesson in this current summary/survey of the Book of Amos. Our first lesson was [Yahweh roars! Listen to Him!](#) The second lesson was [Yahweh calls! Return to Him!](#) As you study each of these first two lessons, you will find that we have titled each one after key words and expressions that are found in each section of Amos's prophetic messages from Yahweh.
2. Now this third lesson is titled **Yahweh shows! Appeal to Him!** That is because in this next section, Amos is going to write about five separate visions that Yahweh showed him as prophetic forewarnings of judgments He is about to bring upon Israel because of their transgressions and iniquities. So each of these messages will begin with the preface **"This is what the Lord GOD showed me..."** / see **7.1, 7.4, 7.7, 8.1, and then "I saw the Lord..." in ch 9.1.**
3. And then I have titled Amos's responses as **"Appeal to Him!"** because that is what Amos did when Yahweh showed him these ominous visions. / see **ch 7.2 & 5.** He appealed to Yahweh to **'relent'** by showing mercy and forgiveness for Israel's sins and **'please cease'** and avert His destructive judgments Yahweh had determined to bring upon Israel.
4. But before we get to the first four of those five visions, this larger section we have chosen for this study will be prefaced with **three messages of 'woe'** which will serve as attention-getters to let Israel know that these judgments are about to be announced. / see **ch 5.18, 6.1, 6.4.**
5. So, in this lesson we will at least point out: **three 'woe' messages** and then **the first three "This is what the Lord GOD showed me..."** messages...

I / ch 5.18-27 / THE FIRST 'WOE' TO THEIR SELF-DECEPTION & DELUSION

They were living and worshiping in what would become a fatal self-deception and self-delusion... / see 1 Thessalonians 5.1-3

1. This three-fold pronouncement of **'woe'** or grief or mourning is echoed again in **Revelation 8.13** and is indicative that these three judgments that are coming upon them will be, not just disastrous, cataclysmic, and catastrophic, but they will be utterly, thoroughly, and finally destructive – so destructive there will be nothing left. It will be the end of the northern kingdom Israel.
2. **v 18 / "Woe to you who desire the day of Yahweh! Why would you desire the day of Yahweh?"**
3. Let's remind ourselves that this expression **'the day of the LORD'** is used throughout the Scriptures, both OT and NT, to describe an event or a season in which Yahweh interrupts and intervenes in man's human affairs in such a way that He leaves no doubt that HE has done it. It is undoubtedly HIS Day. It is also used to describe the final events of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.
4. So the people of Israel in those final few years of their very existence say they are desiring **'the day of the LORD'** – that they are looking forward to it – can't wait until it comes. Isn't that a good thing?
5. Their only problem was that they were assuming that just because they were Israel, that if days of danger did, in fact, come [which they doubted they would] that Yahweh would swoop down to save them. That **'the day of the LORD'** would be a day of salvation for them ... and a day of destruction upon their enemies. After all, they were Israel, weren't they? The covenant nation ... Yahweh's chosen, special, favored people.
6. **vv 19-20 / Yahweh has bad news for Israel – it won't be a day of salvation for them, but rather a time of darkness and gloom.** In fact, it will be like someone who narrowly escapes from one jeopardy [lion] only to be met by another [bear] ... or maybe does escape them both and runs home, out of breath, and as soon as he gets into his house, huffing and puffing to get his breath again, he slams and secures the door behind him, thinking he's safe, and then leans up against the wall ... only to be fatally bitten by a poisonous snake! In other words, "Judgment is out to get you – and you will not escape alive!"

7. vv 21-23 / What does Yahweh have against them? What have they done wrong? In fact, they were being very ‘religious’ with all their outward ceremonial services – they were observing feasts, they were ‘going to church,’ they were making and giving offerings, they were singing their songs and playing their instruments. **But they were doing all these outward shows of their ‘religion’ to ‘buy’ the favor of Yahweh and make themselves feel good about themselves. Their hearts were not in any of it, and even the forms of their worship were corrupted with their own traditions and substitutions in the place of what Yahweh had commanded them in His covenant [see 1 Kings 12.25-33].** Listen to what Yahweh says about their ‘religious services’: **“I hate, I despise ...I take no delight in ...I will not accept them ...I will not look upon them ... Take away from Me ... I will not listen ...”**
8. v 24 / Then Yahweh gets to the root of their faithlessness: they were offering to Him vain, empty, lip-service-only kinds of outward religious services – **but in their otherwise daily lifestyles, practices, and conduct, they were cheating, oppressing, and abusing their neighbors every way they could in order to exercise their privilege, their power, and their injustices against those who were poorer and weaker than they were. Yahweh commands them / see Matthew 23.23-24.**
9. vv 25-27 / Yahweh concludes this woe by reminding them that all the forty years they wandered in the wilderness, He didn’t require and they didn’t offer Him sacrifices – only the love, loyalty, and faithfulness of their hearts and worship of Him. But when **‘the day of Yahweh’** does come, it will be their adopted gods of the Babylonians and Assyrians they will be holding up as He leads them into exile **beyond Damascus**, that is, into Assyria.

II / ch 6.1-3 / THE SECOND ‘WOE’ TO THEIR SELF-CONFIDENCE

They were assuring themselves of their perpetual safety and security by their self-confidence in their military prowess and superiority...

1. v 1 / **“Woe to those who are at ease in Zion, and to those who feel secure on the mountains of Samaria...”** Kinda reminds you of Mad magazine’s iconic mascot, Alfred E. Neuman, whose slugline was “What, me worry?” But his smug self-confidence was just an expression of his doltish ignorance and denial of any serious reality.
2. v 2 / These kingdoms Yahweh names were among some of Israel’s conquests and victories. However, Yahweh warns them that in **‘the day of Yahweh’** which will come upon them to destroy them at the hands of their enemies they will fare no better than did the kingdoms they themselves had defeated.
3. v 3 / Yahweh calls them to wake up to their own danger, their faithlessness toward Him, their injustices toward their neighbors ... their smug and proud self-confidence was only hastening the violent destruction they were bringing on themselves.

III / ch 6.4-14 / THE THIRD ‘WOE’ TO THEIR SELF-PRIDE & PLEASURE

They were entertaining themselves in their pride, wealth, and luxurious living [at the expense of those they were oppressing] only to suffer utter destruction at the hands of the nation Yahweh will raise up against them.

1. vv 4-6 / **“Woe to those who lie on beds of ivory and stretch themselves out on their couches, and eat lambs from the flock and calves from the midst of the stall, ⁵ who sing idle songs to the sound of the harp and like David invent for themselves instruments of music, ⁶ who drink wine in bowls and anoint themselves with the finest oils, but are not grieved over the ruin of Joseph!”** Just look at their self-absorbed lifestyles ... and then remember that they were enriching themselves from their abuses of others / **see ch 4.1; 5.10-13; 5.24; 6.12**
2. v 7 / However, these very ‘rich and famous’ among them will be the first ones who will be stripped and ripped away from their luxurious parties and revelries and taken off into exile.

3. **v 8** / Yahweh reiterates and denounces again His abhorrence and hatred of all their self-absorbed pride and riotous pleasures – He will give them over to their enemies who will treat them much worse than they have treated those whom they abused and oppressed.
4. **vv 9-14** / Yahweh repeats again in gloomy detail just how utterly deadly all their coming judgments will be upon them ... and why? **But you have turned justice into poison and the fruit of righteousness into wormwood [bitterness] / v 12.**

IV / ch 7.1-3 / THE FIRST VISION ‘SHOW’: LOCUSTS

1. This is the first of the visions of the coming judgments on Israel – this and the next ‘**showed me**’ are ‘event’ visions ... utterly destructive events that Yahweh will bring upon them.
2. These locusts will swarm upon their land and crops after their first harvest called ‘**the king’s mowings.**’ These were the first harvests that they were required to turn over to the king as taxes or required revenues. After they gave the king his share, then they would plant and harvest what came later for themselves to live on...
3. Except that, there wouldn’t be any crops to follow – Yahweh would send swarms of locusts to totally devour and strip everything that grew after that ... absolute and total devastation.
4. **v 2** / This is why we have titled this lesson: **Yahweh shows! Appeal to Him!** because that is what Amos does: he appeals to Yahweh: “**O Lord GOD, please forgive! How can Jacob stand? He is so small!**” What makes this appeal to Yahweh so significant is that: [1] Amos is a prophet after Yahweh’s own heart. He appeals to Yahweh because Amos knows He is a God of forgiveness and mercy! Also [2] Amos appeals to Yahweh to forgive and have pity on Israel even though they are persecuting him for delivering this message even as he delivers it / **see ch 7.10-17 ... just a few verses later on in this chapter. / see also how Jesus prays the same way for rebellious Israel and Jerusalem in His own day [Matthew 23.37-39; Luke 19.41-44].**
5. And, true to His character and promises to have compassion on His people, Yahweh does ‘**relent.**’ “**The LORD relented concerning this: ‘It shall not be,’ said the LORD.**”
6. There are numerous examples of Yahweh’s ‘relenting’ to execute His immediate judgments on those He is warning / **see Exodus 32.14; Jonah 3.10.**
7. Does God change His mind when He ‘**relents**’ [this same word is translated ‘**repent**’ in KJV]. How does God ‘**relent**’ or ‘**repent**’? It is not a change of His mind or character – but rather a change in His immediate course of action. It is always an expression of His willingness to forgive if we repent of our sins, confess and admit to our transgressions against Him, and return to Him in love and faith. God’s ‘**relenting**’ is always an extension of His mercy toward us, giving us an opportunity to repent ourselves.

V / ch 7.4-6 / THE SECOND VISION ‘SHOW’: JUDGMENT BY FIRE

1. Here is another vision of a judgment ‘event’ that Yahweh threatens to bring upon Israel. This one, too, will totally devour, devastate, and eat up the land in destruction.
2. Yet once again, Amos intercedes for Israel and appeals to Yahweh: “**O Lord GOD, please cease! How can Jacob stand? He is so small!**”
3. And yet once again, Yahweh relents in compassion and mercy: “**The LORD relented concerning this: ‘This also shall not be,’ said the Lord GOD.**”

VI / ch 7.7-9 / THE THIRD VISION ‘SHOW’: THE PLUMB LINE

1. **vv 7-8a** / Anybody who has ever built anything that needs to stand straight up and not fall over has used a plumb line. A plumb line is a string that has a weighted stone or metal plumb-bob on the end of it to make the string hang straight down. You attach the string to the top of your wall or post and let the string hang down. Your vertical construction needs to be as straight up and down as the plumb line. Otherwise it’s going to lean with the weight of the wall or building ... and fall.

2. **vv 8b-9** / Yahweh pronounces to Israel that He is measuring [and has measured] them against the ‘plumbline’ of His own Holiness, righteousness, and justice. They don’t measure ‘straight’ and haven’t for generations. They have repeatedly and egregiously bent, distorted, transgressed, and violated His holy and just requirements for their faithful obedience to Him and His gracious covenant...
3. And so, because of their not measuring up to His standards of measurement – that is, loving Him, trusting Him, fearing Him, and worshiping Him only – and because they have egregiously, presumptuously, and insistently disobeyed Him in their treatments of others ... therefore, His Holiness gives Him no other recourse but to destroy them in keeping with His patient forewarnings. He will bring desolation upon their ‘high places’ of idolatrous worship, upon their ‘religious’ sanctuaries, and against the house of their king Jeroboam II.

VII / ch 7.10-17 / SHOWDOWN AT BETHEL: “GO HOME!”

1. **v 10-11** / This passage is pivotal to understanding much of the context of this book and these messages. Bethel was their primary center of worship in the northern kingdom Israel / **see 1 Kings 12.25-33**.
2. But to make the immediate connection between this hostile encounter Amos had with the chief **priest of Bethel**, just note that the last thing out of Amos’s mouth was **“Then the Lord said,...and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword” / v 9**. This was Yahweh’s specific pronouncement of judgment against King Jeroboam II and his monarchical family.
3. So this **Amaziah the priest of Bethel** sends an urgent message to King Jeroboam II to the effect that **“this upstart prophet from rural Tekoa in the southern kingdom Judah is not just saying bad things about you and calling you out by name, but ‘Amos has conspired against you in the midst of the house of Israel.’”**
4. Of course, this immediately got King Jeroboam II’s attention: [1] conspiracies, coups, and assassination plots against kings of both kingdoms were common occurrences and a constant threat; and [2] Jeroboam II’s own house/family/dynasty was in power as a result of an assassination. His great-grandfather, Jehu, had assassinated the then-king Joram to put their family in power / **see 2 Kings, chs 9-14**. [NOTE: that Amaziah the priest of Bethel conveniently lied about Amos’s personal intentions of leading an insurrection against Jeroboam II and left out the part that Amos was only preaching the messages that Yahweh had sent him there to deliver to Israel.]
5. **vv 12-13** / So Amaziah serves this ultimatum to Amos: **“O seer, go home back to Judah where you came from, stay there, and prophesy there if you want to ... but don’t ever come back here. This is our turf, I’m the priest here, Jeroboam II is king here ... and besides, we already have our own religion here!”**
6. **vv 14-17** / That’s when Amos replied with Yahweh’s authority ... let’s just let him speak for himself: **Then Amos answered and said to Amaziah, “I was no prophet, nor a prophet’s son, but I was a herdsman and a dresser of sycamore figs. ¹⁵ But the LORD took me from following the flock, and the LORD said to me, ‘Go, prophesy to my people Israel.’ ¹⁶ Now therefore hear the word of the LORD. “You say, ‘Do not prophesy against Israel, and do not preach against the house of Isaac.’ ¹⁷ Therefore thus says the LORD: ““Your wife shall be a prostitute in the city, and your sons and your daughters shall fall by the sword, and your land shall be divided up with a measuring line; you yourself shall die in an unclean land, and Israel shall surely go into exile away from its land”** ... and Yahweh has more to say: **“Amos, keep on preaching!”**
7. Everything Amos had just preached was from the mouth of Yahweh, at His commission, and by His authority. So Yahweh just doubles down and reiterates what He had just pronounced. Amaziah’s objections were overruled – Yahweh’s word will stand ... it shall be done as He had said.

“Therefore this I will do to you, O Israel; because I will do this to you, PREPARE TO MEET YOUR GOD, O Israel!” / ch 4.12