

Commentary on Amos 8&9, by Chuck Smith 4.10.24

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March memory verse Ephesians 3:20 (NKJV) Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,

April memory verse Ephesians 3:21 (NKJV)

to Him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

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Now in chapter 8:

Thus hath the Lord GOD showed unto me: and behold a basket of summer fruit (Amo 8:1).

So now another vision, and in this vision he sees this summer fruit, apricots and peaches, plums, nectarines, cherries.

He said, Amos what do you see? He said, I see a basket of summer fruit. Then said the LORD unto me, The end is come upon my people Israel; I will not pass by them again any more. And the songs of the temple shall be howlings in that day, saith the Lord GOD: and there shall be many dead bodies in every place; and they shall cast them forth with silence (Amo 8:2-3).

So the devastation that's going to come. The songs of mirth within the temple are going to turn into howlings. Dead carcasses everywhere buried in silence.

Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy (Amo 8:4),

And here again God makes the indictment as He speaks against the oppression of the poor by the wealthy people at that time, "Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy,"

even to make the poor of the land to fail (Amo 8:4),

Taking advantage of the poor people.

Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the Sabbath, that we may set forth wheat (Amo 8:5),

The new moon was a Sabbath day. They were not allowed to work on the Sabbath day. So they detested the new moon. They really didn't like to see the new moon. "When will it be gone? I want to sell. Got to close shop today. Don't want to close shop; want to make a profit here." And they got to where they detested those ordained Sabbath days when they had to close shop. So greedy were they for gain that they became upset that

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they would have to close on the Sabbath day. You mean people could be so greedy for gain that they'd want to be open seven days a week? Terrible. No wonder God brought His judgment. "When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? The Sabbath that we may set forth the wheat."

and then they made the ephah small (Amo 8:5),

Now the ephah was a bushel basket, but they started making the basket smaller. Still charging you for a bushel, but you weren't getting a full measure. So they were taking and keep cutting down on the size of the bushel basket.

they made the shekel great [that was the weight], and they falsified the balances by deceit (Amo 8:5).

Now it came to the place where they would have two sets of weights; one by which they would buy, and the other by which they would sell. Without a national bureau of standards of weights and measures, things became very chaotic. Because they were taking advantage of people. They were cheating people. They would have the light weights by which they would buy your grain, and then in turning around to sell it, they had the heavy weights. Or vice a versa. False balances. In the Proverbs it says that they're an abomination unto the Lord.

That we may buy the poor for silver, the needy for a pair of shoes; and they were selling the refuse of the wheat? (Amo 8:6)

I mean, they were just really ripping people off, taking advantage of people, making people sell themselves for their food. These kind of things are an abomination unto God. Taking advantage of the needy and of the poor is something that God just does not abide.

The LORD hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works. Shall not the land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwells therein? and it shall rise up wholly as a flood; and it shall be cast out and drowned, as by the flood of Egypt. And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord GOD, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day: And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation; and I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness upon every head; and I will make it as the mourning of an only son, and the end thereof as a bitter day (Amo 8:7-10).

Now, when God here prophesied that the sun would go down at noon and darken the earth in a clear day, there are those who say that is only a figure of speech. That because of the desolation and devastation of their enemies, that it's like you say, "Oh, the sun really set on me yesterday." You're talking about the gloom and the sorrow that overcame you. There are others who believe that Amos was actually predicting certain eclipses that did take place in Israel there within the next twenty years or so. Bishop Usher speaks about three eclipses that took place in succeeding years. Each of them

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on the feast days: one on the Feast of Pentecost, another at the Feast of Trumpets at the following year, and then, and the following year again on the Feast of Pentecost. Thus, making the sun to go down at noon and darkening the earth on a clear day, and turning their feasts into mourning.

In 763 there was an eclipse of the sun which was about twenty-four years after this prophecy. However, the total eclipse was over Africa and it would not have been a total eclipse there in Samaria. However, we do read of one day which was a feast day, the Feast of Passover, in which it turned dark at noon on a clear day. It could not have been an eclipse, because Passover takes place at full moon, and it's impossible to have an eclipse on a full moon. That was the day that Jesus was crucified. You remember how it declares that darkness covered the land from the ninth hour onward, sixth hour there was darkness over the land? This could be a prophecy of that darkness of that time of the crucifixion of Christ. The sun to go down at noon and darken the earth on a clear day and turn the feast into mourning, the songs into lamentations, to bring up the sackcloth and all the loins. Baldness, which was a shaving of the head in grief over the dead.

And behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor thirst for water, but of hearing of the words of the LORD (Amo 8:11):

I believe that we are living in those days where there is a famine for the Word of God. The paradox is that there probably never more Bibles in print in any time in the history of the world than there is now, and more versions, and in more languages. The famine for the Word of God is that people would no longer be hearing the Word of God. It isn't that God isn't any longer speaking. It doesn't mean that the Word of God isn't there. It means that people are no longer hearing the Word of God.

You remember how Jesus over and over again said, "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying"? As He addressed Himself to the seven churches in the book of Revelation, to each church there was that repeated exhortation as He gave His message, then He would say, "He who has an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit says." But the truth is, there are many who do not have an ear to hear what God is saying. They just don't hear the Word of God. It isn't that God isn't speaking; it's just that they can't hear the Word of God. It's just a jumble of words; it just doesn't make sense. They don't have an ear to hear. "God's hand is not short that He cannot save, neither is His ear heavy that He cannot hear, but your sins have separated between you and God" (Isaiah 59:1-2). You see, the problem is never on God's side. It isn't that God isn't speaking, it's that we're not listening. It really isn't that God can't hear. Our lifestyles have made it inconsistent for God to respond.

Now because they weren't hearing the Word of God, because there was this famine for the Word of God, notice what the result was.

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And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from north even to the east, and they shall run to and fro and seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it (Amo 8:12).

This restlessness would ensue as they were searching trying to find that which would satisfy them. Look at the restlessness in the world today. How that people are wandering all over the world from sea to sea, from north to the east, wandering around the world, looking for something that will satisfy. If you don't hear the Word of God, if your heart isn't satisfied in God's Word, you're gonna find yourself just blindly searching here and there trying to find something that will fill that void within your life. This restlessness is always the consequence of no longer hearing the voice of God, or the Word of God in your hearts. That void causes the restlessness, and as a result,

The fair virgins and the young men shall faint for thirst (Amo 8:13).

It doesn't say the old people who are over the hill, and the elderly and decrepit are gonna faint, but the young virgins, the young men, those who are in the prime of strength will find that thirst, and faint as the result of that thirst. Because they don't have anything that will really sustain them and help them. The prime, those that are in their prime cannot really exist apart from the living Word of God. How much we need to hear and to heed the Word of God.

They that swear by the sin of Samaria, and say, Thy god, O Dan (Amo 8:14),

Dan was the religious center for the northern part of the kingdom of Israel. There is where Jeroboam made an altar and put a calf and said, "This is the god that delivered you out of Egypt. This is the god that you worship." And the people of Samaria, swearing by that god of Dan, "Thy god, O Dan,"

lives; and, The manner of Beersheba lives; even they shall fall, and never rise again (Amo 8:14).

Chapter 9

Now in chapter 9 the final prophecy of Amos, he said,

I saw the Lord standing upon the altar: and he said, Smite the lintel of the door, that the posts may shake: and cut them in the head, all of them; and I will slay the last of them with the sword: and he that flees of them shall not flee away, and he that escapes of them shall not be delivered (Amo 9:1).

So this great shaking of God. God said that though they try and flee, they're not going to escape. Though they seem to escape, they're not gonna get away.

Though they dig into hell, from there my hand will take them; though they climb up to heaven, from there I will bring them down: And though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them from there; and though they be hid from my sight

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in the bottom of the sea, from there I will command the serpent, and it will bite them: And thought they go into captivity before their enemies, there I will command the sword, and it will slay them: and I will set my eyes upon them for evil, and not for good (Amo 9:2-4).

So the judgment of God is gonna fall against apostate Israel. There is no escaping of it neither in the grave, nor in heaven, nor on Carmel, nor under the sea, nor even in captivity. There will the sword of God still pursue and they will be persecuted. God's hand against them for evil.

And the Lord GOD of hosts is he that touches the land, and it shall melt, and all that dwell therein will mourn: and it will rise up wholly like a flood; and shall be drowned, as by the flood of Egypt. It is he that buildeth his stories in the heaven, and hath founded his troop in the earth; he that calleth for the waters of the sea, and pours them out upon the face of the earth: Jehovah is his name (Amo 9:5-6).

He is the One who is now declaring that judgment that He's going to bring against the apostate nation.

Are ye not as children of the Ethiopians unto me, [totally heathen, totally pagan] O children of Israel? saith the LORD. Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt? and the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir? Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are upon a sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth; saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the LORD (Amo 9:7-8).

God will spare a remnant. God will not utterly destroy, for God has yet a marvelous purpose for Jacob, and for the people of Israel.

For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, and yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth. All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword, which say, The evil shall not overtake nor prevent us (Amo 9:9-10).

So God declares His judgment is going to come. They're going to be sifted; they'd be sifted throughout all of the nations of the earth. And surely as you look at the Jewish race, that did indeed happen to them. They were sifted throughout the nations, throughout the world, scattered throughout the world.

In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and I'll close the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old (Amo 9:11):

So the promise of the restoration of the Davidic kingdom, a promise of the restoration of the tabernacle of David. Now there are those who take this scripture and interpret as that there will not be a rebuilding, actually, of the temple in Jerusalem, but only of the tabernacle of David, so they will rebuild a tabernacle in Jerusalem. However, there are

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other scriptures that clearly declare the temple, giving its measurements, its walls and so forth. So that the tabernacle of David is speaking of the Davidic kingdom that God will raise up again. That Davidic kingdom which is fallen. He'll raise up the ruins. "I'll build it as in the days of old."

That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all of the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the LORD that doeth this (Amo 9:12).

And now God's future blessings, the Kingdom Age, something that we look forward to today.

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the plowman will overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that sows seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and the hills shall melt. 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; and they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled out of their land which I have given them, saith the LORD thy God (Amo 9:13-15).

So this promised restoration. The day will come. I wish that you could go over to Israel with us. I wish that you could see the vineyards that have been planted, the gardens that have been planted, the waste cities that have been rebuilt. Surely God has declared this restoration of the land and as you go over you can see these things of which the Lord spoke, as He has brought the people back again into the land, as they have rebuilt the waste places, as they have planted vineyards, and gardens, and fields, and orchards, and you can see God's Word fulfilled right before your eyes there in that land.

How faithful God is to His Word. When God said it, you better believe it, because you can be sure that it shall indeed happen. "God will not fail one word of His prophecy."

There are many times people who come along proclaiming a gift of prophecy and the ability to foretell certain events. They have accurately predicted things that did indeed happen, which does not really prove necessarily that their predictions were from God. In order that a person might indeed claim divine inspiration for his prophetic utterances, you would have to have one hundred percent accuracy. Because God doesn't make a single mistake. The Bible testifies of itself and says, "Not one word of the prophecy shall fail." Up to this point, He's batting a thousand. Not one single word of prophecy has failed. If He is batting a thousand up to this point, chances are He'll continue to bat a thousand right on out to the end of the game. You can bank on it. You better bank on it. "Let us take heed to the things which we have heard," the Bible says, "lest at any time we should drift away from them. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast," and it is, "and every transgression and disobedience receives a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect this great salvation that God has offered to us?" (Hebrews 2:1-3)

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Now God said concerning Israel, "There's no escape. I don't care. They try and hide in hell, I'll dig them out from there. If they try to climb to heaven, I'll pull them down from there. If they try to hide in the forests at Carmel, I'll find them. If they try to hide in the bottom of the sea, I'll send the serpent to bite them." No escaping even if they be carried into captivity, the sword will follow them there. There is no escaping from God.

How shall we escape? There is no escape except the one escape that God Himself has provided, and that escape is in Jesus Christ. And that is the great salvation. "How shall we escape if we neglect the great salvation?" You see, God has made the only way of escape and that is through Jesus Christ. And if you reject Him, then there remains only that fearful looking forward to the fiery indignation of God's wrath by which He will devour His adversaries. I mean, that's just as straight as you can put it. Right out of the scriptures.

God has kept His Word. You have every reason to believe He will go right on keeping His Word, and will complete that which He has started. Israel was punished, Israel was carried away captive into the nations, Israel was sifted by the nations, and yet God spared her. "They will not utterly be destroyed." And in a miracle in itself, Israel remained a national identity. The Jew remained a Jew though he had no homeland. And for two thousand years, sifted through the nations and still they remained a national ethnic group, identifiable ethnic group. As God said, "I'm going to spare a remnant of them, and then I will bring them back into the land, and bring them out from the nations where they've been scattered, I'll plant them again in the land. They will build the waste places, they'll plant their vineyards." They've done it. It's there, you can see it with your eyes. God has kept His Word. And God will continue to keep His Word, and that remaining portion of prophecy that has not yet been fulfilled will surely be fulfilled, and that glorious day will indeed come when Jesus will come again and establish the kingdom, God's kingdom, sitting upon the throne of David, and the whole picture will then be complete. We shall live and reign with Him upon the earth.

So, the prophet Amos, very interesting fellow. Fig picker, herdsman, and yet called of God, fulfilled his prophecy and left for us this glorious proof of the divine origin of the Word, as we can see today that proof in the land.