Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 431 – Grasshoppers In The Beginning Through Captivity (Amos 7:1-17)

1. What was the first thing in this chapter that caused the Lord to change His mind?
   Amos' appeal regarding the "grasshoppers" sent that greatly reduced the number in Israel: *"(1) Thus hath the Lord GOD shewed unto me; and, behold, he formed grasshoppers in the beginning of the shooting up of the latter growth; and, lo, it was the latter growth after the king's mowings. (2) And it came to pass, that when they had made an end of eating the grass of the land, then I said, O Lord GOD, forgive, I beseech thee: by whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small. (3) The LORD repented for this: It shall not be, saith the LORD"* (**Amos 7:1-3**).

   - The Lord showed Amos the prophet what He had formed (**Numbers 12:6**, **Ezekiel 1:1**, and **II Peter 1:20-21**).
   - What Amos saw was that the Lord sent grasshoppers [locusts; Strong's # 1462]. This is language than can be literal (**Exodus 10:14**). It can also refer to an invading force (**Joel 1:4-7**).
   - The Lord did this just as the grass had been mowed and started growing again. This imagery is fascinating to consider. It can mean too many things for me to comment. What it meant to Amos was strong enough to get him to plead with God.
   - Amos then asked the Lord to forgive as did other prophets in similar situations (**Exodus 32:11-12**, **II Samuel 24:10-25**, **Jeremiah 14:7-9**, **Ezekiel 9:8**, **Ezekiel 11:13**, and **Daniel 9:1-19**).
   - Amos pleaded that once reduced to a small number, how could Israel arise. Isaiah puts this forth and turns these questions to the people (**Isaiah 51:17-23**).
   - The Lord repented, changed His thinking; pitied and had compassion for His people. Remember, this is something Solomon asked God to agree upon long before this time (**II Chronicles 6:12-42**). God agreed to this (**II Chronicles 7:11-15**).

2. What was the second thing in this chapter that caused the Lord to change His mind?
   Another appeal from Amos after the Lord showed him the devouring fire on the deep: *"(4) Thus hath the Lord GOD shewed unto me: and, behold, the Lord GOD called to contend by fire, and it devoured the great deep, and did eat up a part. (5) Then said I, O Lord GOD, cease, I beseech thee: by whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small. (6) The LORD repented for this: This also shall not be, saith the Lord GOD"* (**Amos 7:4-6**).

   - Like verse 1, the Lord is revealing a vision to Amos. Think of books such as Ezekiel, Daniel, and Revelation when considering this language (**Daniel 2:19**, **Ezekiel 11:25**, and **Revelation 4:1**).
   - The Lord decided to contend [plead; strive] with fire (**Isaiah 66:16**, **Ezekiel 38:22**, **Amos 1:4-7**, **Amos 4:11**, and **Amos 5:6**).

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- In this vision, the fire devoured the great deep. This is in reference to the depths of the sea (**Isaiah 51:10**).
- Amos wonders how the small will arise. The remnant can/will rise from the fire of God's judgment (**Isaiah 1:1-9** and **Zechariah 13:8-9**).
- What did Amos' appeal do to the Lord? It caused Him to change His mind. Again, we see this works. It has happened long ago (**Exodus 32:14**). Think about how we pray for all men (**I Timothy 2:1-4**), in asking the Lord to be longsuffering with this world so that they can be saved according to His will (**II Peter 3:9-14**).
- In contrast though, the Lord did reach a point wherein He told the prophet Jeremiah to cease praying for the people (**Jeremiah 7:16**, **Jeremiah 11:14**, and **Jeremiah 14:11**).

3. Was the vision of the Lord with a plumbline good news for Israel?

No: *"(7) Thus he shewed me: and, behold, the Lord stood upon a wall made by a plumbline, with a plumbline in his hand. (8) And the LORD said unto me, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A plumbline. Then said the Lord, Behold, I will set a plumbline in the midst of my people Israel: I will not again pass by them any more: (9) And the high places of Isaac shall be desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste; and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword"* (**Amos 7:7-9**).

- The Lord is standing with a lead weight on the end of a line. The concept is, He was measuring judgment (cf. **II Samuel 8:1-2**, **II Kings 21:12-13**, and **Lamentations 2:8**).
- This Jeroboam is not the Jeroboam that was the first king in the division of Israel. Rather, this is the latter. This is Jeroboam the son of Joash (**II Kings 14:23-28**, **Hosea 1:1**, and **Amos 1:1**).
- During his 41 year reign, God said He was going to lay waste and rise against His house with a sword. At what point He changed His mind, how much desolation came about, etc.; we don't know. We do not have much of a historical record to rely upon of that period of time.
- Rising against with the sword, etc. is language God used to describe His judgment through the hands of enemy invaders (**Leviticus 26:25** and **Jeremiah 6:22-25**).

4. Was Amaziah the priest of Bethel in favor of the prophecies of Amos?

No: *"(10) Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, Amos hath conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel: the land is not able to bear all his words. (11) For thus Amos saith, Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of their own land. (12) Also Amaziah said unto Amos, O thou seer, go, flee thee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there: (13) But prophesy not again any more at Bethel: for it is the king's chapel, and it is the king's court"* (**Amos 7:10-13**).

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- Amaziah was a priest in Bethel. This tells us he was an unscriptural priest. Do you remember when the first king of Israel named Jeroboam set up high places and established a new, unscriptural priesthood in Bethel **(I Kings 12:25-31**). If you read of the kings of Israel, you see they continued in Jeroboam's transgressions until those ten tribes in Israel were put away from the Lord (**I Kings 16:26**, **I Kings 16:31**, **I Kings 22:52**, **II Kings 3:3**, **II Kings 10:29**, **II Kings 13:1-2**, **II Kings 13:10-11**, **II Kings 14:23-24**, **II Kings. 15:8-9**, **II Kings 15:23-28**, and **II Kings 17:21-23**).
- Amaziah appeals to the king to stop Amos from teaching. This is <u>like</u> what happened to Elijah, Micaiah, Jeremiah, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, Daniel, Jesus, Stephen, etc. (**I Kings 18:17**, **I Kings 22:1-40**, **Jeremiah 18:18**, **Jeremiah 26:8-11**, **Daniel 3:1-30**, **Daniel 6:1-28**, **Luke 23:1-2**, and **Acts 6:8-7:60**).
- Amaziah tells Amos to go to Judah. He wants him out of the land of Israel. Again, this is something we can see happens to faithful teachers (**Nehemiah 6:1-14**, **Matthew 8:28-34**, **Luke 13:31-35**, **Acts 4:1-5:42**, **Acts 16:25-39**, etc.).

5. How compliant was Amos with the will of Amaziah?

Amos chose to obey God instead: *"(14) Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah, I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was an herdman, and a gatherer of sycomore fruit: (15) And the LORD took me as I followed the flock, and the LORD said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel. (16) Now therefore hear thou the word of the LORD: Thou sayest, Prophesy not against Israel, and drop not thy word against the house of Isaac. (17) Therefore thus saith the LORD; Thy wife shall be an harlot in the city, and thy sons and thy daughters shall fall by the sword, and thy land shall be divided by line; and thou shalt die in a polluted land: and Israel shall surely go into captivity forth of his land"* (**Amos 7:14-17**).

- Amos starts his response by stating he was just a herdman and gathered fruit (**Amos 1:1**).
- His point, this wasn't his choice of vocation. God put him in this position of a prophet (i.e. **I Samuel 3:19-20** and **Jeremiah 1:4-19**).
- This should remind any of the children of Israel of men such as David (**Psalms 78:70-72**; cf. **II Samuel 23:1-2**).
- Israel just did not want a true prophet (**Isaiah 30:9-11**, **Jeremiah 5:31**, and **Micah 2:11**).
- How could a man forbid the prophesying of the will of God and think such would be overlooked (**II Chronicles 25:14-16**)?
- Therefore, God's message through Amos was, since you don't want His word punishment is forthcoming (**Hosea 4:6**).
- The giving of his wife as a harlot (**Jeremiah 8:8-11**).
- His children falling by the sword (**Job 27:14-15** and **Hosea 9:13-14**).
- Besides the coming captivity, Amaziah was sentenced to death in a polluted land (**Ezekiel 4:13**).

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