

Amos 7:1 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.*

Amos 7:2 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.

Amos 7:3 The LORD repented for this: It shall not be, saith the LORD.

This chapter begins with a series of visions given to the prophet Amos. In the first vision he sees a swarm of locusts coming to devour the main part of the harvest in Israel. This causes Amos to seek God's mercy on behalf of the people. He knew the covenant promises, and he realized that the crops represented the people of Israel. He didn't see how Israel could survive such a destruction since they were so small in comparison to other nations. YHWH's response? He took pity on His people and assured the prophet that the vision would not be fulfilled.

We should never discount the power of a single earnest prayer.

Amos 7:4 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.

Amos 7:5 Then said I, O Lord GOD, cease, I beseech thee: by whom shall Jacob arise? for he *is* small.

Amos 7:6 The LORD repented for this: This also shall not be, saith the Lord GOD.

It's interesting to note that there is no time sequence given regarding the occurrence of these visions.

In the next vision Amos sees YHWH ready to send judgment by fire. The first devours the great deep including a portion of Israel. I would assume that the "great deep" would be a reference to the host of larger nations that were first conquered by Assyria before they conquered the Northern Kingdom. Again, the prophet intercedes in prayer for the people asking for God's mercy for the same reason as previously. Again, the LORD grants the request of the prophet.

Amos 7:7 Thus he shewed me: and, behold, the Lord stood upon a wall *made* by a plumbline, with a plumbline in his hand.

Amos 7:8 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:

Amos 7:9 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.

In the next vision, Amos sees the Lord standing by a wall that had obviously been built using a plumbline to assure that it was straight, and in His hand is a plumbline. He asks Amos what he sees, and Amos correctly responds that he sees a plumbline. Considering the previous two visions, he was more concerned with what the Lord was holding that might possibly be utilized against the people than he was on the wall by which He stood. The LORD now tells Amos that He is going to judge the people of Israel according to His standards; and if

they don't measure up, He is no longer going to delay judgment. He is going to eliminate idol worship from among His people and see that their areas of worship are destroyed. He is going to bring the sword of judgment against the royal family of King Jeroboam.

I think it is obvious that the plumbline represents God's word. The wall should have represented the people, but, sadly, it did not. In no way did the people of Israel measure up when judged against the covenant agreement they had made with the LORD.

Amos no longer felt he had the right to seek God's mercy yet again.

(8/12) I think it is important to note that God sends these visions to Amos knowing that Amos will intercede in prayer on behalf of his nation. He wants us to understand that He hates sin and that sin calls out for His judgment. However, He also wants us to understand His great mercy and longsuffering in light of the power of prayer and His love for His people. Still, we must understand that His patience has its limit, and the judgment of sin is sure. Without this judgment His mercy and patience are meaningless.

Amos 7:10 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.

Amos 7:11 For thus Amos saith, Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of their own land.

Amaziah was evidently the chief priest of the sanctuary at Bethel. He sent a message to King Jeroboam telling him that Amos was trying to stir up trouble against him among the people. His words were evidently causing fear among the people. Amos was declaring that King Jeroboam was going to be killed and the people taken captive out of their land.

As usual, notice how those that rebel against God always twist the word of God to suit their own purpose. God's judgment had been directed at the "house of Jeroboam" not toward only Jeroboam, but Amaziah knew that subtle change would more quickly rouse the anger of the king.

Amos 7:12 Also Amaziah said unto Amos, O thou seer, go, flee thee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there:

Amos 7:13 But prophesy not again any more at Bethel: for it is the king's chapel, and it is the king's court.

Amaziah then takes it upon himself to command Amos to go back to Judah to live and declare his prophecies. He commanded Amos not to speak a message against the king at Bethel again. He reminded Amos that this was Jeroboam's kingdom, with the implication that he would be in trouble if he spoke out against him again.

Amos 7:14 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:

Amos 7:15 And the LORD took me as I followed the flock, and the LORD said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel.

Amos answers boldly and clearly according to the truth of God's word. He doesn't try to be politically correct or soften the message so as not to hurt anyone's feelings. Amos declares that he is but a lowly shepherd and fruit gatherer. He had never considered becoming a prophet. But God had come to him and told him to go prophesy to the people of Israel (the Northern Kingdom). Amos was sure of his call and sure of his message and committed to obeying YHWH.

Amos 7:16 Now therefore hear thou the word of the LORD: Thou sayest, Prophecy not against Israel, and drop not *thy word* against the house of Isaac.

Amos 7:17 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 then goes on to declare God's message. My paraphrase—"Because you are telling me not to declare the truth of God's word against Israel, you are going to suffer for it. Your wife is going to become a harlot in the city and your children are going to be killed. Your land is going to be divided as spoil by those that conquer it, and you are going to die in a heathen land. The people of Israel are going to be removed from the land and taken into captivity.