

Amos

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Amos 3:1-8

Vss. 1-2

- It is difficult to know how much time has passed since the end of Ch. 2. Was it just a breath, a day, or a week? Surely not too much time had passed, for the prophet wants the judgement against Israel to be fresh in the ears of his audience.
- Like a Father castigating two wayward sons, Amos offers a word from God not to the Northern Kingdom of the Jews only, but to the entire family, the whole nation, the Southern Kingdom of Judah included.
- Of all the families of the earth, I have chosen you, God says. The problem seems to be that the Jews have mistakenly disconnected Privilege with Responsibility and Judgement. Israel believed that being "chosen" automatically absolved them of all guilt. They were free to live however they chose, indeed empowered to live so, because they were "chosen". But Amos is telling them that with great position (being God's chosen people) comes great responsibility and that far from being exempt from judgement, Israel's blatant disregard of their responsibility would bring even sharper judgement where not a single sin would be overlooked. Exodus 19:6 tells us that God told Israel before they had barely left Egypt that "you shall be for Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation". With great privilege comes great responsibility.
- There was a time when we in America understood that. The great families of America were *expected* to provide leadership, especially in times of war. They sent their sons to lead, rather than finding ways to keep their children out of uniform as is most often the case today. There is a reason why Theodore Roosevelt led the charge up San Juan Hill during the Spanish-American War and those same reasons still stood when his eldest son landed on Utah Beach in Normandy on D-Day. He was the only general who landed on the beach in the first wave, having demanded to go. At 56 he was the oldest soldier in the invasion and the only man with a son there as well, his son Quentin landing with the first wave on Omaha Beach. Teddy Roosevelt, Jr. had served as a combat commander for 4 years having already served 2 years as a combat officer in WWI. Teddy went through WWII with a bad heart and just 5 weeks after D-Day he passed away from a heart attack. A few weeks more he was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his work on Utah Beach. With great privilege goes great responsibility.

Vss. 3-6

- In these verses, Amos seems to be responding to unhappy crowd who were stung by the judgement on them. Here the prophet responds with a series of rhetorical questions designed to lead the crowd to the right conclusion. Amos wants them to see that there is a cause and effect related to their judgement.
- Do two walk together unless have made an appointment/ are agreed? Amos wants them to understand that Israel and God are no longer walking together because they are not agreed. They agreed to walk together in the days of Moses but now Israel has wandered off and find themselves lost and estranged from God.
- At the beginning of his sermon Amos declared that the Lord like a lion “roars from Zion”. Now again Amos points to a roaring lion. And why does the lion roar? Because he has his prey before him and Israel is now God’s prey, not God’s traveling companion.
- A trap and its capture: something has to trip the spring for the trap to close and no animal is going to pop the spring unless it goes after the bait. Cause and effect. You take the bait of sin and you will find yourself caught. Often sin carry’s its own consequences.
- If the alarm from the city walls sound (think tornado siren, air raid siren, tsunami warning, etc.) will not the people tremble, be frightened? And when there is a calamity that falls on the heads of God’s people, has not God Himself allowed it, if not caused it Himself?
- Cause and effect. Live as God’s people, as God’s chosen, under His direction, with all the benefits of such privilege, but at the same time bearing the responsibility that such privilege brings. Otherwise you will suffer the consequences of His judgement.

Vss. 7-8

- Here Amos presents his borrowed credentials. There are no surprise attacks from God. He does nothing without first sending His prophets. Isaiah hundreds of years before Christ foretold His coming in detail. Amos comes because God has revealed His plans of correction for the Hebrew family to bring them back onto the same path with Him.
- God is the Lion who roars from Judah. Let he who has ears to hear, hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches.