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C0923 – June 10, 2009 – Amos 7:10-17 – God's Man Vs. Man's Man

Alright, turn in your Bible to the Book of Amos. Amos is a curious man who comes from the town of Tekoa in the southern kingdom of Judah. He was a rancher, a breeder and a botanist by profession but he had a tremendous respect for and knowledge of the word of God. He was an excellent historian, he was a strategic communicator, he knew how to target his audience and he had a lot of courage to say the things he said. The message he brought was not a pleasant one, it was sharp, it was judgmental, it was powerful and it caught Israel's attention.

We don't know exactly why the Lord called this man. This man was not from Israel, he was from Judah. Israel did have at least one other prophet at the time, Hosea, whom we'll study next, but the Lord saw fit to take this man from behind his flock and place him in the midst of a corrupt kingdom that was in rebellion against the word of God. It may well be that at this time there was no one in the whole northern kingdom who would stand up and speak the word of God to this people and so an outsider, Amos, was sent in to proclaim it.

Last week we covered chapter 7, vv 1-9, the first three of five visions; the vision of the locust, vv 1-3, the vision of the fire, vv 4-6, and the vision of the plumb line, vv 7-9. Israel in the final vision would not escape judgment, she had been measured by the Lord and she was not plumb, she was not righteous and therefore the Lord was not going to pass over her any longer. In the first two visions Israel did escape those calamities because the righteous Amos prayed to the Lord and the Lord changed His mind. We dealt with that theological difficulty. If you missed that explanation then I encourage you to get that CD and resolve some of these deeper theological issues that surface in the Book of Amos. There's some very interesting

theology in the Book of Amos. Obviously its largest contribution is in the Doctrine of Divine Discipline. That's on virtually every page. And if you're a parent and you're trying to learn how to discipline your children and raise them in a godly home then I suggest you request Lesson 15 titled *Seek God and Live* because in the first 5 or 10 minutes we cover the principles God used to discipline His Son Israel and we make application to how earthly fathers should discipline their children in like manner, following God the Father's example. This is the great contribution of this book in practical terms. But it also contributes to several other theological issues. It contributes strongly to the Doctrine of Election in chapter 3:2 - how the Lord chose Israel, and how that choice makes her subject to divine discipline. It contributes to the Doctrine of God in chapter 3:6 - how the Lord is sovereign in bringing calamities upon nations, yet the Lord is not evil but just. It contributes to the Doctrine of Man in chapter 5:4, 6 and 14 - how man is commanded to seek God and live yet he cannot seek God in His own flesh. And chapter 7:2-3 and 5-6 contributes to the Doctrine of Prayer and the Doctrine of God - how God at times reveals prospective plans to a man to illicit a human response, the faithful intercessor and how human prayer becomes an essential means to fulfilling the plan of God yet it does not change the essential nature of God. These are important questions to ponder and so we have a very interesting book preserved for us.

Tonight we get to go ringside. Two fighters are going to slug it out. Amos, the man of God and Amaziah, the man of Jeroboam. So there's a conflict and when the word of God is taught the word of man will eventually contest it. The carnal mind is at enmity with God, it does not subject itself to the law of God; nor is it able to do so. That's the nature of man and therefore when Amos preached the word of God in the northern kingdom it was only a matter of time before the carnal word of man overtly rises up against it.

The man of God in America has faced a similar situation. As we've become an increasingly pluralistic society there has been an increasing rebellion against the word of God manifested by the removal of prayer from schools and displays of the Ten Commandments. The base has shifted from a biblical base to a pagan base and we're reaping the consequences of that as our freedoms erode. Biblical principles promote freedom. Pagan principles promote oppression. And what has happened and is happening in our nation is very similar to what had happened and was happening in the northern kingdom.

The biblical base of God's Law given at Mt Sinai had been removed and replaced with a pagan base of Man's Law. When this happens, mark my words, finally someone will not permit the word of God from being spoken and a law will be written and passed that outlaws the word of God. This is the way it has always been in history, this is the way it was in the northern kingdom and this is the way things are going in North America.

The man of God in the Church has also faced a similar situation. As churches bring more and more of the world's philosophy into the church they become increasingly pluralistic and we find increasing rebellion against the word of God in the churches. Seemingly we can take any verse out of its context to support our pet sin; whether it be male-femininity or female-masculinity, heterosexual immorality or homosexual immorality. It's one thing to accept sinners into the church, which we gladly do, it's a wholly other to accept sinful practices in the church and even to debate them. But this is the result when the word of man rises up against the word of God.

When that happens we all have a question to face and that is, "Whose word are we going to follow? Are we going to follow God's man who proclaims the word of God as ultimate or are we going to follow a man's man who proclaims the word of man as ultimate. That's the conflict we face so let's read v 10-11. The man's man, **Amaziah**, is about to challenge the man of God, Amos. But first he reports to Jeroboam, king of Israel.

10Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent word to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, "Amos has conspired against you in the midst of the house of Israel; the land is unable to endure all his words. 11"For thus Amos says, 'Jeroboam will die by the sword and Israel will certainly go from its land into exile.' "

All the men of God were accused like this. The death sentence was passed on Jeremiah; the Lord of Glory was crucified on a cross. Stephen was stoned to death outside the city; the apostles turned the whole world upside down. Why were they hated and accused and killed? Because they spoke the word of God and the people didn't like it. All the great men of God are finally maligned publicly, isolated and left destitute. All for what? For holding firmly to the word of God. It's not an easy job to be called to minister the word of God. You're often alone in this endeavor. Of course, one man and God is always a

majority. But in the temporal things of life the prophets, apostles and teachers of the word of God are finally those whose character is soiled and left destitute. But God says in Heb 11, those who finish the course, those who endure the hardship and operate by faith are “men of whom the world was not worthy.” They walk in the darkness and they spread the light. But men loved darkness more than the light because their deeds were evil. And so it is with Amos. He stands alone from a human perspective.

So let's detail out Amaziah's report in v 10. Amaziah was **the priest of Bethel** which is definite, so there were probably a number of priests but he was the chief priest and therefore he was in charge of the chief sanctuary which was at **Bethel**. Now, **Bethel** had a famous history among the Jews. It was located about 12 miles north of Jerusalem. And in ancient times it was known as Luz until Gen 28 when Jacob had his dream of a ladder reaching from earth to heaven and angels ascending and descending the ladder. And the voice of God came to Jacob and confirmed the Abrahamic Covenant of a land, seed and worldwide blessing at this place. And Jacob said, how awesome is this place, surely this is the house of God and the gate to heaven, and so he re-named it **Bethel** which means “house of God.” And so Bethel was sort of like a national monument. The history of the city took a turn in 926BC after the kingdom divided and Rehoboam was given the southern tribe of Judah and Jeroboam I was given the ten northern tribes of Israel. Now the Lord had promised to Jeroboam that he would secure his kingdom and even promised him an everlasting dynasty if he obeyed the word of God. But Jeroboam didn't believe the word of God so to get security for his kingdom he resorted to human works. Always when we don't trust the word of God we resort to trusting our own flesh and trying to build security for ourselves. What Jeroboam feared was that the males of Israel would have to appear before the Lord three times each year and that was to happen in Jerusalem. And he was afraid that if they went down to Jerusalem their loyalty would be to Rehoboam and eventually Jeroboam would lose his kingdom. So rather than trusting that the word of God was true and rather than obeying the word of God, Jeroboam took matters into his own hands. What this shrewd politician did was set up two alternate sanctuaries or temples for the ten tribes so the men could appear before the Lord there, although the Lord wasn't there in the sense He was in Jerusalem. And what Amos is referring to in this verse is that Amaziah was the priest at this sanctuary in Bethel. The other sanctuary was in the far north at Dan. So you

had one in the far north at Dan and one in the far south at **Bethel**. At those sites Jeroboam set up the golden calf and the people would come and worship YHWH through the golden calf. So he was building a new religious system, a system that was half the word of God and half the word of Jeroboam. He also set up an alternate religious calendar and he established priests from any tribe, not Levitical, but any who would, and the word of God says He did this all out of the imagination of his heart. And the Lord says this was sin for the people. What we call it academically is syncretism. I like to call it accommodation - we accommodate to the surrounding culture, but to put it bluntly it is sin. Whenever you try to mix the word of God with the word of man you get sin. Now that system was put in place about 926BC. Amaziah is priest in that system in 762BC, so it's been about 150 years, and things are a lot worse. Most scholars think that by this time they had moved from accommodation to capitulation. In other words, they had totally rejected the word of God; they no longer worshipped YHWH at all, not even through the golden calves. And this is the downward trend of apostasy. It starts with a people that are loyal to the word of God. Then they start to accommodate to the word of man. Then finally they capitulate to the word of man. That's the trend. It's like a spectrum but you can divide it up into these three phases; loyalty to the word of God, accommodation to the word of man, capitulation to the word of man. So if this is the trend then over time there are smaller and smaller truth circles and that's what we call apostasy.

So they're in deep apostasy by this time and Amaziah is the leader of the apostates. And what happens when people go apostate? What do they not want to hear? They don't want to hear the word of God. And so at last Amaziah has had enough of Amos and so in v 10 he **sent word to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying**, and here are the charges, **“Amos has conspired against you in the midst of the house of Israel; the land is unable to endure all his words.”** Two charges, conspiracy and treason. The culprit is Amos and he's down here in the midst of the house of Israel, that's **Bethel**. **Bethel** was the central temple. Jeroboam lived up in Samaria. Samaria was the capital city. Samaria is where all the oppression and tumult in the Book of Amos is so rampant. Samaria was the Gotham City of the northern kingdom, very corrupt; all the big players lived and thrived on that city. It was full of social chaos. But Amos doesn't make his address in the midst of the social chaos of Samaria. He makes his address in Bethel. Why do you think that is? Why not go to where the crime is the worst? Maybe Amos could

go in and say, alright, you're obviously unhappy, here's a few government handouts. You need some money; you need food stamps. Let's set up an education program because the problem in the end is you just don't have enough information. If you knew more that would mean less social chaos. Amos didn't believe in that, Amos believed the absence of the word of God was the problem. That's the root; the crime is only a fruit. You can't enforce from the outside a moral order that can be sustained for any length of time. The change has to be from the inside. So Amos had stationed himself at the root of the problem. It was the center of the religious system which had now capitulated totally from the word of God and was preaching only the word of man. They needed to ditch the whole system of false religion and return to the word of God. So if you want to fix the crimes of oppression and tumult up in Samaria first we have to fix the root of false religion in Bethel, since that is the dissemination point of the false doctrine. And so right off the bat the first guy in the religion department, Amaziah comes out with these accusations. His livelihood is built on false religion. He's preying on the people and I'm afraid there are many ministers in this world who are doing just that, preying on the people's lives, their money and if someone comes in and preaches the word of God then they'll leave me out to dry and I'm not going to let that happen.

So he **sent word to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, "Amos has conspired against you in the midst of the house of Israel;** that charge of conspiracy is a charge that Amos is planning to assassinate the king. So it's a serious charge. The other charge, **the land is unable to endure all his words,** is a charge of treason against the king since it was his kingdom. Amaziah is saying you're unpatriotic Amos. Well, maybe he was, but first of all Amos was a man of God not a man of man.

Verse 11 is his proof of these charges **"For thus Amos says, 'Jeroboam will die by the sword and Israel will certainly go from its land into exile.'"** Now, had Amos said these things? Actually God had said these things, not Amos. Amos was just a messenger of these things. In fact, he did not even say **Jeroboam will die by the sword.** In v 9 what did the Lord say? That He was going to rise up against, not Jeroboam himself, but "the house of Jeroboam." Which may include Jeroboam but it certainly involves his sons. So it is the Lord who is coming against the house of Jeroboam, not Amos. Amos is not an assassin but a messenger. So the first charge is a false

charge but probably Amaziah wants to give the king a report that sheds the worst possible light on Amos. The second charge is accurate, Amos had said that **Israel would certainly go from its land into exile**, he said that in 5:5 when he said “Gilgal will go into captivity.” Gilgal was a synonym for Israel.

In vv 12-17 is the open conflict. Now Amaziah is going to charge out of the sanctuary and try to get rid of Amos. What we have here is a conflict between the word of man and the word of God and we get to sit ringside. There are two kinds of fighters; if you watch much boxing or martial arts you know that some fighters specialize in attacking and others in counter-attacking. The fighters who attack, men like Mike Tyson, we tend to like these kinds of fighters, and they go all out trying to knock you out in the first round. Mike Tyson was one of those fighters, they're very exciting to watch, very dangerous and that's Amaziah. He's an attacker. Amos he's a counter-attack fighter. The counter-attack fighter uses the energy of the attacker and turns it against the attacker. It's a position that is less aggressive, less expenditure of energy; it waits for the proper timing and then strikes suddenly unawares, that's Amos. Amos is going to let Amaziah come at him with everything he's got and then Amos is going to turn it on him and crush him.

So the attack comes in vv 12-13. **Then Amaziah said to Amos, “Go, you seer, flee away to the land of Judah and there eat bread and there do your prophesying! ¹³“But no longer prophesy at Bethel, for it is a sanctuary of the king and a royal residence.”** Uh, oh, now you've done it Amos, you've stepped on people's toes, and not just any toes, the toes of men in high places. And you don't want to do that, that's a no, no. So three commands, notice they're all commands, Amaziah is attacking with authority; **Go, flee and eat bread there**. Now it's very interesting he calls Amos a **seer** since that was a term used of a prophet. The word meant to see into the future. So on one hand Amaziah admits Amos can see into the future but if he really thought Amos could see maybe he should have listened to what he was saying. So **Go**, first command, **flee away**, second command, Amaziah was one of the many who forbade the prophets from speaking. As the nation went further and further into apostasy the less and less they permitted the word of God to be spoken. Chapter 2:12, it was the law of the land that prophets could not prophesy in the northern kingdom. People who, at enmity with the word of God, will eventually make it illegal to speak the

word of God. We see it in society at large when we see prayer removed from schools, the Ten Commandments removed from public buildings. But we also see it in churches, even evangelical churches when we see churches or denominations debating issues that the word of God is very clear on. Issues like can a woman serve as an elder and teach the word of God to the congregation? That's become a very big issue in many denominations. You would think that the answer to that is quite clear from the word of God. So the issue must not be the word of God but the word of man, what men think, or what women think I guess. But the word of God has been cast aside a long time ago. That no longer is the authority, what man says is the authority. Or we debate whether homosexuality is a sin. The word of God is very clear on that. The word of God is not against homosexuals any more than it is against liars, but it is against homosexuality as much as it is against lying. Now do we expect liars to stop lying and become truth tellers? Of course we do. That's the word of God in Eph 4. And do we expect homosexuals to stop committing homosexuality and become heterosexuals? Of course. That's the word of God. In fact, Paul says some of the Corinthians were homosexuals. Corinth was like the San Francisco of the ancient world, and yet he says they recovered and stopped. It's a sin just like lying or stealing. So the very fact churches are debating this at all is a sign that the word of God has been cast aside. The third command is, **eat bread**. All three of these are basically saying get out of here. But this is an interesting one, **eat bread** is an idiom for "go make a living." We're not going to pay you any money for preaching like that down here. We don't like what you have to say. Why don't you go back to Judah where you can get a paycheck for preaching the word of God? Now that's not just a command, that's an attack on Amos' motive. Amos, you're just here to get a paycheck. You didn't come out of genuine concern for the people, you're just preaching for financial gain. Which is probably exactly what Amaziah was doing.

The sad thing is that there are many who preach for financial gain. One of the signs of that is that they often preach on financial giving. I never preach those things unless they're in the text before us. "God's work done in God's time never lacks God's support." That's sort of been my motto. But it's sort of tricky because it doesn't say God's work never lacks financial support. It most certainly does. Amos is a key example. Here's a man doing God's work but he's not getting paid for it. Amos won't see a dime from the northern kingdom. Another thing about that saying: it may be that God's work is being

done but it's not God's time for the work to be effective in the hearers. Jeremiah was a prophet like that. He did the will of God, he taught the word of God but the people rejected. God didn't give them ears to hear or eyes to see and so they didn't like Jeremiah. And lastly we could say about this saying just what is God's support? Does it mean the pastor gets \$250,000 a year or the church has a big budget? Not necessarily. That may be but it may also be that God gives the man of God support by putting steel in his bones to say the kinds of things that must be said. The word of God has many hard things for people to hear. Most people don't want to hear them as bluntly as the Bible puts them. Amos is very blunt, he's not saying pleasant things and so finally the high priest isn't going to take it anymore and he says, look, if you want to make some money you're wasting your time here, go down south, maybe they like that kind of preaching, we don't.

Now, another thing we glean from this if we put ourselves in Amos shoes is that this might be a temptation. Go back to your homeland where people like to hear what you have to say, where they will even pay you money for it. I don't know any pastors that enjoy preaching to an angry audience. We want people to like us. I don't know any preacher who would prefer to preach to 50 people over 2,000. Most of us like a lot of people to hear the word of God. And I don't know any pastor that wouldn't enjoy making a lot of money. And Amos you can have it all if you go back to Judah. So Amos may have been tempted to leave. But having a big audience, having a happy audience, having a lot of money, those things aren't really the issue are they? The real issue is what God has called you to do. And are you going to fulfill that ministry or not? Are you going to finish the race or not?

And in v 13 you can see Amaziah's true loyalty. **“But no longer prophesy at Bethel, for it is a sanctuary of the king and a royal residence.”** You've overstepped your bounds here Amos. This is Jeroboam's territory. Your message isn't welcome, it contradicts that. What's the presupposition? What's underneath that reason? That we're all here to please the king and build his kingdom. We're here for man and man's purposes. But the question we should all be asking ourselves is “Why are we here? Why did God bring you and me into this world? Is it to build our empire or that of another human being? Is it to make our name great?” No, we're here to worship God. We're here to please Him. We're here to build a godly culture starting with ourselves, our marriages, our families and our churches.

And now Amos has been rejected and he's come under the king's administration and the king's priest is issue commands to leave. But who had sent him to **prophecy at Bethel**? The Lord had. Now if he were to leave Bethel who would he be following? The word of man. If Amos did this he would be in rebellion. How's he going to respond? When people say we don't want the word of God around here, what's the minister to do? Turn to 2 Tim 4. Here's the same thing in the NT, we have instruction on this point. Here, Paul tells Timothy, verse 3, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but *wanting* to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires," Who's Amaziah? Isn't he the teacher after their own desires? Who's Amos? He's the man of sound doctrine. And more and more Paul says they won't want to hear the man of God, they'll want to hear the man of their own desires. How should the man of God respond? Verse 5, nobody reads v 5, but v 5 answers when you're rejected "...be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry." You know, you just keep going, you don't quit, and you don't give up. I can tell you, in my circles the number one temptation every pastor has is to quit. But Paul says, don't quit, endure hardship, fulfill your ministry. Keep going.

And finally the counter-attack. **Then Amos replied to Amaziah, "I am not a prophet, nor am I the son of a prophet; for I am a herdsman and a grower 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 hear the word of the LORD: you are saying, 'You shall not prophesy against Israel nor shall you speak against the house of Isaac.'** ¹⁷**"Therefore, thus says the LORD, 'Your wife will become a harlot in the city, your sons and your daughters will fall by the sword, your land will be parceled up by a *measuring* line and you yourself will die upon unclean soil. Moreover, Israel will certainly go from its land into exile."** The word of God is going to win. It may not look like it at the moment, you may suffer hardship in this world, but if you rebel against the word of God you will lose in the end. Heads God wins, tails you lose. Tails God wins, heads you lose. God cannot be defeated, nor can those who take refuge in Him and His word. They may be attacked in this world, they may be beat up, but in the end they will come out on the winning side. Paul says if you fulfill the ministry the Lord will reward.

Let's detail out the counter-attack strategy used by Amos, v 14, **Then Amos replied to Amaziah, "I am not a prophet, nor am I the son of a prophet; for I am a herdsman and a grower of sycamore figs.** In other words, I don't need your money; I have an independent source of income. I'm not here out of self-interest; I've got my own business. And that means he's there of his own accord. One of the teachers I listen to occasionally, who is now passed away, said that he often thought it would be best if all ministers of the word of God were independently wealthy, that way they would teach the word of God as it is. That way they would teach the word of God fearlessly. Many preach a little bit of the word of God here and a little bit of the word of God there but they don't teach it the way it's written because they know if they did that they might offend the elders or the deacons and tomorrow they'd be out of a job. And so they don't say the hard things. I admire a pastor who has the guts to get up in the pulpit and be faithful to the word of God and lay it out there. I suspect a lot of the bickering people do is just because they don't like having their toes stepped on. "It doesn't feel good; you didn't make me feel pleasant today. Won't you leave well-enough alone?" But here's the other side of it. When a man has been called to minister the word of God, whether he is a prophet, an apostle or a teacher, if they do their job right then they will preach the word of God as it is without softening it. Frankly I think people are afraid of the word of God.

Here's what Soren Kierkegaard said about the word of God. I don't like much of what he said, but he had a point here, "The Bible is very easy to understand. But we Christians are a bunch of scheming swindlers. We pretend to be unable to understand it because we know very well that the minute we understand we are obliged to act accordingly. Take any words in the New Testament and forget everything except pledging yourself to act accordingly. My God, you will say, if I do that my whole life will be ruined. How would I ever get on in the world? Herein lies the real place of Christian scholarship. Christian scholarship is the Church's prodigious invention to defend itself against the Bible, to ensure that we can continue to be good Christians without the Bible coming too close. Oh, priceless scholarship, what would we do without you? Dreadful it is to fall into the hands of the living God. Yes, it is even dreadful to be alone with the New Testament."

Well, it's dreadful to be alone with any part of it. If it's preached fearlessly then I might lose my job, people might leave. So teachers are afraid to put it all out there. Amos wasn't, he had an independent source of income. And that frees a man.

Now this verse is one of the most troubling for commentators. The difficulty is reconciling the idea he says I am not a prophet with the fact that he's prophesying. What do you mean you're not a prophet? What he probably means by saying **I am not a prophet** is that I am not a professional prophet. Centuries before Samuel had established a school of the prophets. It was sort of like a prophetic guild where they gathered together to organize the words of God, to test prophets and their writings. It was a vocation and they were paid for this labor. And Amos says, I'm not one of those, I'm not from the school of the prophets, I don't get paid to prophesy in Judah, that's not my vocation, I have other means of making a living. **Nor am I the son of a prophet.** That is, his father was not a prophet. Sons usually followed in their father's vocation in which case Amos would have become a member of the prophetic guild and would have become a professional prophet that way. Amos rejects both; I am not a professional prophet in any sense of the term, that's not how I make my living he says, **for I am a herdsman and a grower of sycamore figs.** Actually when we compare with 1:1 we learn that Amos had three agricultural vocations. He was a sheepbreeder, he bred his own sheep, he was a shepherd, he had his own herd and he was a **grower of sycamore figs**, or better, a sycamore-fig nipper, this was a kind of fruit that grew in the lower elevations near the Shephelah, the Dead Sea and the Arabah. In the dry season the shepherds would have to take their herds down into these lowlands where these trees grew. The only problem was the sycamore figs weren't usually ripe, they required you to prick the surface with a pin and that would cause them to ripen and sweeten so they were edible. This seems like one of the jobs Amos took on to support his herds during the dry season. So he didn't .

15 “But the Lord took me from following the flock and the Lord said to me, ‘Go prophesy to My people Israel.’ And further, I'm commissioned to be here by a higher authority. I'm not here to please Jeroboam, I'm here to please God. I have a higher rank than Jeroboam. The prophets corrected the kings. It used to be this way in Colonial America; men who held political office were corrected by the pastors and teachers of the word of God.

Consistent with the OT and NT the highest calling is to be a minister of the word of God. If someone called me to be a king it would be a step down to take it. The highest calling is to minister the word of God. That's why when it comes to the judgment seat of Christ in the NT who will face the strictest judgment? The teacher, Jas 3:1. "Let not many *of you* become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment." With great privilege comes great responsibility. And so Amos says, I outrank your king because the Lord called me. **He took me from following the flock and...said to me, 'Go prophesy to My people Israel.'** So I didn't have much choice in the matter. I'm here because He put me here. And if you compare v 15 with verse 12, maybe draw a line in your Bible if you do that kind of a thing, but draw a line from v 15→v 12 you can see what Amaziah told Amos vs what God told Amos and you'll see their in diametric opposition. They both say "Go" but they say "Go" in opposite directions. I'm here because the Lord sent me here. His people need to hear His word.

And finally, vv 16-17, is very interesting. V 16, You say this, v 17, YHWH says this. Just watch how the Lord protects his ministers. Verse 16, **"Now hear the word of the Lord: you are saying, 'You shall not prophesy against Israel nor shall you speak against the house of Isaac.' 17** **"Therefore,** result clause, this is what happens when you tell a minister of the Lord not to do his job. You don't tell a minister not to do his job. If he's teaching the word of God you better be very careful because you're interfering in the Lord's work. **Therefore, thus says the Lord, 'Your wife will become a harlot in the city, your sons and your daughters will fall by the sword, your land will be parceled up by a measuring line and you yourself will die upon unclean soil. Moreover, Israel will certainly go from its land into exile.'**" Five judgments, four directly on Amaziah and his family, one on the whole nation **Israel**. It is a fearful thing to go against the Lord's minister. And what we mean here is when you're trying to stop a real minister from teaching the word of God. We don't mean the man who is not even called to minister the word. There are a lot of men today who are going into the ministry only for the money, like Amaziah. Just yesterday my wife read a news heading that with the increase in unemployment young people are heading to divinity school because when people suffer economically they tend to go to church. That's not a reason to go to divinity school, those aren't real ministers of the word of God, and they're ministering to their own needs. I've said before and I say again, if you can do anything else in life do it, only if

ministering the word is the only thing you can do should you do it. And if you've been called to minister to the word of God and you don't do it then the Lord is going to discipline you heavily. I've seen it countless times. So what we're saying is that a man who is truly called to minister the word and is ministering the word should not be opposed. Here's the judgment. As for Amaziah his **wife would become a harlot in the city**. In other words Amaziah wouldn't be able to support her so she would have to resort to prostitution to support herself. Second, **your sons and your daughters will fall by the sword**, this is the end of Amaziah's seed. His line will come to an end. Third, **your land will be parceled up by a measuring line** which means he'll lose all his personal land holdings. The way I think this happens today is the man of God is told, "You can preach the Bible as religious, but don't bring it to bear on political things, don't let it touch social things, don't bother with education, don't touch on art or music. Those are secular, keep them separate from the sacred. As long as you stay religious everything will be fine." I fear that's a great many believers. They want to keep the word of God in a little box, all tucked away so it doesn't interfere with their life. Men of God do not have the luxury of obeying the word of man. They have the responsibility to preach the word of God as applied to every area of life. And a man who does not preach the word to every area of life is not doing what he was called to do.

So, we see in the end that the word of God wins out and Amos was a faithful minister of the word of God. Next week chapter 8.

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