

## BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, Oct. 28, 2012

Passage: Amos 7:1-17

Memory Passage: Romans 8:36-37

### DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

### READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Amos 7:1-17.** As you read, divide this chapter into sections. Give each section a title and cite your reasons for dividing the text the way you did (e.g. content, repeated words/phrases, change of speaker, change of topic, etc.).
- (b) What similarities do you observe in the first 2 visions (vs. 1-3 & 4-6)? Of what are you reminded when you read about the locusts destroying the crops? What do you learn about the extent of the destruction each one of these judgments bring?
- (c) How does Amos' intercessory prayer (vs. 2 & 5) affect God's actions (vs. 3 & 6)? What do you learn about God's character in these 2 exchanges? What do you learn about prayer? How would you answer this question of the new believer you are discipling: "So when God relented does that mean that He was wrong to pronounce judgment? And if He was, about what else can He be wrong and how can I trust Him?"
- (d) *Family: Read Amos 7:1-3.* Play this video <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9z6uWG6843g&feature=related> and then discuss what it would be like to be in the middle of a plague of locusts, what the destruction would be like, and why it would be used by God as a form of judgment. Remind them of the 8<sup>th</sup> plague (Ex. 10:1-20) and that God would judge His people in the same way He judged the Egyptians if they did not repent. Ask, "How would you respond if God said that He was going to send a plague of locusts if *you* did not repent?"

### DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

### READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Amos 7:1-17.** If you don't know how to use a plumb line, watch this 26 second video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZuRtD9ZOSSE>. What would be the state of "a wall built with a plumb line?" What does the plumb line represent in this vision and how will the Lord use it to evaluate His people?
- (b) What 2 areas will God judge based on His plumb line measurement (v. 9)? What does God mean when He says, "I will never again pass by them?" What do you notice different in the form of this vision compared to the form of the first 2 visions in chapter 7? Why do you think Amos did not intercede for Israel after the judgment of this 3<sup>rd</sup> vision was pronounced?
- (c) What would be God's evaluation if He set a plumb line in the midst of your life? How would He evaluate BCC if He set a plumb line in the midst of our congregation's worship, relationships, evangelism, and discipleship? With the aid of the Holy Spirit be specific as you examine your personal life and our corporate life so you can fully participate in a discussion on this subject in your class. And remember, the answers to this could be positive or negative or both.
- (d) *Family: Read Amos 7:7-9.* If you own a plumb bob, then demonstrate how to use it by checking to see if a wall in your home is plumb. If you don't own one, you can show the video found at the link in (a) above. Discuss what the purpose of using a plumb is (to provide a straight line to which a wall can be compared in order to make sure the wall is perfectly vertical), why it is important (if the wall is not plumb it is weakened and it could eventually collapse, as well as cause difficulties in connecting other walls to it), and whether it would be wise or foolish to cut corners and not use a plumb line (absolutely not). Then ask, "What does God's plumb line in this vision represent, (God's word) and what will He do with His plumb line (set it in the midst of Israel's worship and government to see if they match up with, are plumb with the straight line of, God's revealed word)?" Then discuss ways in which our lives are to be measured to the straight line of God's word.

### DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

### READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Amos 7:1-17.** Upon what authority does Amaziah interrupt Amos' sermon? What details makes his supposed authority invalid? How is the church today to evaluate someone who claims to speak with authority? What should be the church's response if one's claimed authority proves to be false? What about if it proves to be true?
- (b) What 2 ways does Amaziah tell king Jeroboam that Amos has "conspired against" him? Are his allegations true?
- (c) Explain what Amaziah meant when he told the king, "the land is not able to bear all his words". In what ways do people today express the same idea against the preaching of God's word? In what ways are you yourself tempted to respond similarly to truths you hear preached from God's word?
- (d) *Family: Read Amos 7:10-11.* Ask, "Why does Amaziah think he has the authority to interrupt Amos?" (Because he is "the priest of Bethel".) Then **Read 1 Kings 12:25-33** and make a list on your white board of all the reasons why Amaziah has no authority and God is coming against him in judgment (Jeroboam built altars with golden calves in order to keep the people's hearts from returning to Judah's King Rehoboam and he also called God's people to worship false gods and celebrate festivals he devised from his own heart, and it is this system of false worship over which Amaziah presides; Amaziah is a non-Levitical priest appointed by this king). Now return to Amos 7:11 and have your family evaluate the truthfulness of the

charges Amaziah brings to King Jeroboam about Amos and what bearing this has on his claim to authority.

**DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT**

**READ THE PASSAGE**

(a) **Read Amos 7:1-17.** Why does Amaziah call Amos a “seer” (b. 12)? Why does he tell him to “flee away to the land of Judah, and eat bread there, and prophesy there” (i.e. is there anything people might “read between the lines”)?

(b) We somewhat explored Amos’ response to Amaziah (vs. 14-15) in our first lesson and sermon on Amos, so take a moment to write down everything you remember about the importance of his response (e.g. the significance of him not being a prophet or son of a prophet in relation to Amaziah’ command, the significance of his profession in relation to God’s call, etc.).

(c) How does God call people into His service today? Write down all the things that come to your mind to which God has called you through His Scriptures, and next to each item rate your obedience to that calling by writing a number between 1-5, 1 being the least amount of obedience and 5 being the most. Now spend some time in prayer thanking him for His power to obey and asking Him to reveal to you ways in which you can crucify sin & become more obedient to His calling.

(d) *Family: Read Amos 7:13.* You asked this question 8 weeks ago, so ask it again and see what your family remembers: “What was Amos NOT, and why is this important?” (Nor a prophet or a prophet’s son; he had no experience as a prophet nor was anyone in his family a prophet to give advice or teach him, so he was not prophesying for money or fame, but God called him anyway for His own glory.) Then lead in a discussion on the types of things to which God has called your family and how you carry out these commands on a daily basis as you go about your daily life just as Amos was going about his (e.g. honor your mother & father, love your neighbor as yourself, be holy because God is holy, carry out the “one anothers” of Scripture).

**DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT**

**READ THE PASSAGE**

(a) **Read Amos 7:1-17.** What is the relationship between vs. 15 & 16 (“therefore” in v. 16) and between vs. 16 & 17 (“therefore” in v. 17)? Is the judgment upon Amaziah and his family separate from or a part of the Assyrian captivity?

(b) Who are the Amaziahs of our day that command “do not preach against \_\_\_\_\_!” and how would they fill in this blank? Who are the Amoses of our day? Can someone look like an Amos but actually be an Amaziah? How would you tell?

(c) Do you have Amaziahs in your life? If so, how do you handle them? If not, why not, and what does this say about your obedience to God’s commands (i.e. if your preaching does not at times raise objections from the enemies of the Lord are you preaching and witnessing in the way the Scriptures command?)?

(d) *Family:* Before the lesson, prepare a script that conveys the interaction between Amaziah and Amos (vs. 10-17) in a modern setting with modern English. (e.g. Amos could be a mechanic from Brooklyn who goes to Washington to address a corrupt Congress and Amaziah is the Majority Leader and Jeroboam is the President; be creative!) Begin by asking each person to choose one of the 3 visions found in this chapter and draw a picture of the event, including the actions of Amos and God in response to the vision. Then have each person explain his or her drawing and use this as a time of review for 7:1-9. Then assign parts & act out your script as a way to review 7:10-17.

**DATE: Oct. 28, 2012**

**PASSAGE: Amos 7:1-17**

***Of Locusts, Fire, and Plumb Lines***

In Amos 7:1-17 we hear Amos relating the first three of five visions and an interlude of interruption.