

Amos 6:1-14

The book of Amos is about the nation of Israel and surrounding gentile nations. The timeframe it's talking about - 750 B.C., 200 years after the death of King Solomon - is parallel to what our nation is going through today. Most of the happenings today are not good. We need to take heed and wake up before terrible things happen. Too many people have the idea that we're too big to fail. That's not true. Anything can fail - size doesn't matter. Today we've seen GM, Citigroup, AIG insurance all fail, along with many banks. The founding fathers of America based our country on the bible and God's word, but we've turned away from His word, and we will crumble as others have done before us. God will judge this nation harshly just as he judged the nation of Israel when they turned away from God and His word.

Setting: Amos was a simple herdsman who came from a simple family and a simple life. God chose this simple man for a wonderful job. When "Israel" is mentioned in this book, it is not the nation of Israel but rather the 10 tribes of Israel. Amos comes from a small village about 10 miles south of Jerusalem. At that time, things were prospering for the people, and things had become so great and so corrupt that God decided to judge the people. God at that time never judged people without some warning beforehand. During the time of Amos, many prophets were warning people of pending judgment. Today there are many people warning others of pending judgment who are being ignored and stifled by corrupt people right here in America. The name "Jesus" is highly offensive to many, and this is very dangerous that His name is offensive.

In Chapter 6, Amos has been issuing warnings to the northern 10 tribes and the pagan nations that surround them. But now he turns to the nation of Israel to warn them, but his message is not well received. They don't want to hear that they will suffer the same judgement as their enemies.

Amos 6:1-14

1 ¶ Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and to them that are secure in the mountain of Samaria, the notable men of the chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel come! "Woe" means "stop, pay attention to what is being said here".

2 Pass ye unto Calneh, and see; and from thence go ye to Hamath the great; then go down to Gath of the Philistines: are they better than these kingdoms? or is their border greater than your border? Calneh was a very powerful city-state that was just taken over by the Syrians. This city of Hamath is another great city-state. Gath was a city in the south, so Amos covers the whole territory of Israel, north to south. He says pay attention to these big cities, see what happened to them. The same can happen to you.

3 -ye that put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near; Israel doesn't want to hear the warning. They feel the violence and destruction is too far away from them and it won't bother them. Amos says with this attitude, God will bring judgement faster. Never think you're too big for God to humble you quickly and completely.

4 that lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall; In the northern 10 tribes and Samaria, archeologists have found numerous pieces of ivory, inlays and such. Ivory indicated wealth. These people were living the life of luxury and sexual immorality. They were eating high on the hog, had the best of everything. They were the wealthy ruling class, unparalleled to any at that time.

5 that sing idle songs to the sound of the viol; that invent for themselves instruments of music, like David; They even had their own music. This equates to our rock stars of today. They are groups out of the pits of hell. If music is solely for your pleasure, God is out of the picture and you'd better watch out.

6 that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief oils; but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph. They've gone from a little to a lot. They went from cups to bowls, in other words. This was referring to offerings to the pagan gods. During the daytime it was hot and they put oils on them so they wouldn't smell bad from body odor. They

didn't bathe much. All that Amos is saying is directed to people who are living a life of excess without a care for others less fortunate.

7 Therefore shall they now go captive with the first that go captive; and the revelry of them that stretched themselves shall pass away. You all go ahead and lead this life of excess, don't think about the poor – but heed my words, your day is coming.

8 ¶ The Lord Jehovah hath sworn by himself, saith Jehovah, the God of hosts: I abhor the excellency of Jacob, and hate his palaces; therefore will I deliver up the city with all that is therein. By God swearing by Himself, there is no higher swearing available. God hates the high life and people not caring about others, He hates people who live a life of excess at the expense of others.

9 And it shall come to pass, if there remain ten men in one house, that they shall die. The first 10 men of the house of a 100 are going to die.

10 And when a man's uncle shall take him up, even he that burneth him, to bring out the bones out of the house, and shall say unto him that is in the innermost parts of the house, Is there yet any with thee? and he shall say, No; then shall he say, Hold thy peace; for we may not make mention of the name of Jehovah. This verse is saying that God sent a plague among the people as a judgement. The authorities came to take the dead bodies out of the house and burn the bodies. They would ask if anyone else is still alive in the house? If so, hide and be quiet, and don't call upon the Lord Jesus Christ because He'll bring more judgement on you and might kill you too.

11 For, behold, Jehovah commandeth, and the great house shall be smitten with breaches, and the little house with clefts. The Lord will get everything from the top down. He'll bring down palaces and shacks. Everything will go.

12 Shall horses run upon the rock? will one plow there with oxen? that ye have turned justice into gall, and the fruit of righteousness into wormwood; You don't run a horse on rock – it'll kill the horse. Do you plow rock with oxen? No. Just as stupid as it is to try to plow rock, you have taken judgement and truth and that which is right and turned it into bitterness. They've taken truth and righteousness and turned it into poison.

13 ye that rejoice in a thing of nought, that say, Have we not taken to us horns by our own strength? This verse means "aren't we powerful people?" They are relying on their own strength to get through the judgement when they should be relying on God.

14 For, behold, I will raise up against you a nation, O house of Israel, saith Jehovah, the God of hosts; and they shall afflict you from the entrance of Hamath unto the brook of the Arabah. Even though they are relying on their own strength –armies, wisdom, etc., they will be taken down from top to bottom. They will be humbled by God. Our strength lies in our faith in Jesus Christ, not in ourselves.