



SESSION OBJECTIVE: AMOS 9:11-15

To hear about God's promise to one day restore Israel after their exile.

Fixer Upper

In May of 2013, HGTV released what quickly became a massive hit. Starring Chip and Joanna Gaines, *Fixer Upper* shows the quirky duo helping someone find a house that is in less than great condition, and fixing it up with their remaining budget. The show is impressive for more reasons than one, but mostly because the work Chip and Joanna do is really, really good (they even inspired a resurgence in *shiplap* for crying out loud). There is something almost hopeful about shows like it, and I imagine it's because there is something bound up within humanity that likes to see *restoration*, and even hopes for it.

Amos is a difficult read because the overwhelming majority of it is harsh judgment towards even harsher sin. Prophets like Amos are not the most popular, because in the same way restoration is exciting to us, judgment brings a sense of dread, because there is also something bound up within us that knows that we are guilty and deserving of justice as well. However, the last four verses of Amos provide that spark of hope we all desire as we read God's Word. Though God's judgment against the sin of the northern kingdom is harsh (and well-deserved), there is still a future: "In that day I will raise up the fallen booth of David" (Amos 9:11).

Restored

Verses 11 and 12 detail how God will restore Davidic rule to the land and also presents what looks like a promise to give back the land once more to the Israelites (remember, they were taken from the land in exile as a result of this judgment Amos speaks of). Below is a brief overview of some key concepts.

THE TENT REBUILT

The first thing God says is that he will, "raise up the fallen booth of David." What does God mean by this? The word "booth" is used more than just once in the Old Testament, and in different ways. Interestingly, it is not the normal Hebrew term for booth, but instead it's the word, "sukkāh" (סֹכֶה), which means, "a hut of branches

and mats.” It is an object used for temporary shelter from the elements (Is. 4:6), by a watchman in a vineyard (Is. 1:8), by livestock (Gen. 33:17), travelers (Lev. 23:43), or a king in battle (2 Sam. 11:11; 1 Kgs. 20:12). The plural of the term is the same word used in the name, “the Feast of Booths” or “Tabernacles,” named for the kind of shelter that Israel took in the wilderness. This is, incidentally, the same festival that Jesus attends in John 7:1-24.

The concept of David’s booth is tied to restoring Davidic reign. David’s kingship over Israel is an important part of the identity of God’s people. 1 Chronicles 17:11-14 summarizes the so-called Davidic covenant in which God promises that he will raise up another Davidic leader that will build a house for God and whose throne will last forever. For a long time, the Israelites believed that God would establish an actual, political king that would fulfill this covenant promise. God *does* fulfill this covenant promise, but in an unexpected manner. Luke 1:31-33 says, “And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” Jesus’ genealogy in both Matthew and Luke already connect Jesus to David (Matt. 1:6; Lk. 3:31). Matthew even calls Jesus, “the son of David, the son of Abraham” (Matt. 1:1).

Connecting Jesus, the new covenant, and the inclusion of Gentiles into God’s kingdom to the rebuilding of David’s booth in Amos 9:11-12 is clearly correct. In Acts 15, the Jerusalem Council meets to discuss whether Gentiles should be circumcised prior to becoming Christians. After hearing testimony from Paul, Barnabas, and Peter, the leader of the Christian church, James the brother of Jesus, stands up and gives his verdict. With the testimony of these influential Christians seeing Gentiles come to faith, James quotes Amos 9:11-12 and says, “And with this the words of the prophets agree” (Acts 15:15). The apostles and the early church saw God’s promise of restoration in Amos 9:11-12 as being fulfilled by Jesus and the coming of the Holy Spirit, particularly on non-Jewish believers.

A REMNANT OF EDOM

In concert with the Amos quote found in Acts 15, this also sheds light on what is meant by a, “remnant of Edom.” Edom, or the Edomites, have a long history of tumult with Israel. The Israelites are descendants of the patriarch Jacob, while the Edomites descend from Jacob’s brother, Esau. As a result of this, the Edomites were constantly in conflict with Israel. The inclusion of Edom represents the end of conflict with all of Israel’s enemies, namely Gentiles, who will also, “be called by Name” (Amos 9:12).

Blessings Abound

Verses 13 through 15 outline how God will bless His people after this time of judgment. Below is a brief outline of some of the key terms and concepts.

FIELDS AND VINEYARDS

Verse 13 says, “Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD, “When the plowman will overtake the reaper.” In order to understand the significance of this one needs to know how the ancient farming calendar operated. *Plowing* began the farming season after the first rains, usually in October to November, and the farming calendar ended with *reaping* season, usually in April or May. The idea being presented here is the God is going to bless their crops so abundantly that the time of plowing will begin before the reaping has been completed, because there are so many crops. There will be no shortage of food any longer. The people of God, once again, will be blessed beyond measure. The same is conveyed with the imagery of, “the treader of

grapes him who sows seeds.” By the time seed sowing is needed again, there will be such an abundance that the treader will not have finished his job. Again, this illustrates an abundance of blessing.

One of the interpretive challenges is determining whether this is a literal or figurative promise. Does God actually intend to bless the agriculture of His people in this radical way, or is this simply a way of saying that God’s blessings on His people will be an overwhelming amount? I believe it can mean both, although I am more inclined to treat this figuratively for a couple of reasons. One, Amos uses some figurative language more than once to describe both blessing and curses. As we saw last week in verse 2, “though they dig into Sheol,” does not mean that they are literally digging into the abode of the dead, but is an expression that indicates there is no place they can go that God’s judgment won’t find them. Figurative language is common in prophetic writing, and so a figurative understanding as well. Secondly, if the restoration of David’s booth is in reference to Jesus and the new covenant (which was the conviction of James in Acts 15), then the blessings do refer to the church. However, Israel is restored after the captivity into their land, thus fulfilling this promise in a literal sense as well.

I AM: “I will”

Chapter 10 closes with two promises of Yahweh towards His people. Below is a brief outline of both promises.

I WILL RESTORE

First, Yahweh says in verse 14 that He will, “restore the captivity of My people Israel.” NIV translates this as, “I will bring back my exiled people Israel,” referring to either Babylonian or Assyrian captivity, however this verse likely has more to do with a reversal of fortunes. God will undo the curses they face because of their rebellion. What was taken from them will be returned, and what was inflicted upon them will be lifted. Their, “ruined cities” will be rebuilt, and they will have new vineyards and gardens. This verse reflects the love and joy God has for His people. It isn’t just that God will bring them out of captivity, but He will bless them in incredible ways as well.

I WILL PLANT

God will also, “plant them on their land,” referring to a restoration to their covenant land. While the post-exilic Israel saw a partial fulfillment of this, the true fulfillment comes in Christ, who builds His church which becomes, “the Israel of God” (Gal. 6:16). It will be the heir to David’s throne, the Messiah Jesus, who will restore, build, plant, and bless His people. Then God’s people will truly, “never again be rooted from their land” (Amos 10:15).

Study Questions

Day One

1. Read Amos 9:11-12. What day is being referred to here? What does the, “booth of David” mean? (Hint: See above notes) Who is Edom? Who are the other nations referenced?

2. Read Acts 15:15-18. What verses does James quote here? Why does he quote this? What is he connecting these verses to? (Hint: See above notes)

Day Two

1. Read Amos 9:13a. What is the significance of, “the plowman will overtake the reaper,” and, “the treader of grapes him who sows seed?” What is God communicating about what He will do for Israel?

2. Read Amos 9:13b. What is God communicating about the nature of the land? How will the land operate because of God’s restored blessing?

Day Three

1. Read Amos 9:14a. What does it likely mean that God will, “restore the captivity of My people?” What will become of the ruined cities, destroyed in exile?

2. Read Amos 9:14b. What will the people do in their restored state? What will they plant?

Day Four

1. Read Amos 9:15. What does God also promise to do for Israel?

2. When does Israel experience at least a partial fulfillment of these promises? When will this be ultimately fulfilled?

Week 10 Discussion: Mercy

After 9 chapters of harsh judgment, not only towards the surrounding nations but also Israel, God spends the final 4 verses declaring some future blessings that He will one day fulfill for His people. Even though Israel was steeped in sin and deserving of judgment, God in His mercy ends this prophetic work with a promise of restoration. The reality is, God is merciful (Deut. 4:31; Eph. 2:4-5), and because of that truth, we are also called to, “Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful” (Lk. 6:36). Talk as a group about both the benefits and the challenges of being merciful.

1. Icebreaker: Would you consider yourself a merciful person? Why or why not?
2. Apart from the mercy of God, what is the greatest act of mercy you have received?
3. What is the greatest act of mercy you have shown to someone else?
4. In your opinion, why is mercy so needed in our world currently?
5. How can the church practically show mercy to the community it exists in?

6. Read Matthew 5:7. What do we get when we show mercy to other people?

Takeaways:

1. God outlines what the coming day of judgment will be like.
2. God promises that even though the incoming judgment will be thorough, there will be a remnant that will survive.

PRAYER REQUESTS: