

BIBLE TEACHING AND WORSHIP GUIDE



FOR THE HOME-BASED CHURCH

Produced Weekly

God's Message Rejected
Amos 7:7-17

Copy this sheet for the Gathering Time, Bible Study, and Worship Experience leaders for the next meeting of the church.

Leaders' Responsibilities:

Important: Each person who will be leading one of the three parts of a session during a series of sessions needs to have access to the "Introduction" article found at the beginning of each series (Bible Teaching #....). The weekly session "Background" located in the Teacher Preparation is much more specific to that day's study.

1. **The Gathering Time Leader** will gather all of the people together and help them prepare their minds and hearts for a wonderful worship experience before God. His/her responsibility is to introduce the congregation to the theme (content) and the Scripture that will be central to their worship experience for the day.

2. **The Bible Study Leader** will then help the people understand what the Scriptures have to say and teach us about the content of the study for the day. He/she will guide the people to make a general application of the study (ie: How does this Bible study apply to people today?)

3. **The Worship Time Leader** has the responsibility to use the theme and Scriptures to guide the congregation to make personal commitments to God's will for each one in regard to the study for the day. He/she will use others to lead in the music, taking the offering, ministry moment comments, and other activities and parts of the **Worship Time** that can aid in participatory worship.

Prior to this Coming Session:

Gathering Time Leader:

Bible Study Leader:

You may want to bring a plumb line to class to add in your discussion. You can make a simple one by taking about two metres (six feet) of string and tying something plastic or metal with a bit of a point (something that will tend to hang straight down from the string)

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God's Message Rejected – 17-44-04-en

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to one end of the string. Hold up the string and the “point” will point toward the centre of the earth. (At least close enough to serve house and wall builders as straight up and down).

Worship Time Leader:

Music Sources:

Because He Lives, *The Worship Hymnal*, #449, CCLI#16880

Face to Face, *The Worship Hymnal*, #612, CCLI#33382

Change My Heart, O God, *The Worship Hymnal*, #529, CCLI#1565

Grace Alone, *The Worship Hymnal*, #112, CCLI#233524

Amazing Grace, *The Worship Hymnal*, #104, CCLI#22025 (Public Domain)

1

Copy this section for the Gathering Time leader.

Gathering Time: (Suggested time: 15 minutes)

God's Message Rejected

Focal Text

Amos 7:7-17

Background Text

Amos 7:1—8:3

Main Idea

Obeying God is to take precedence over all else.

Question to Explore

What happens when religion gets too close to government?

Teaching Aim

To lead the church to identify ways of hearing and obeying God's message in the midst of current culture.

Gathering together:

Sing one or both of the following or another song of your choice:

Change My Heart, O God, *The Worship Hymnal*, #529, CCLI#1565

Grace Alone, *The Worship Hymnal*, #112, CCLI#2335524

First thoughts:

In a recent election in a powerful nation, a man in his early forties was elected to represent his district in the national legislative assembly. This man had a rewarding ministry as director of a large youth camp attended by several thousand young people each year. His work was certainly making a difference for good in the world. But as time for the election drew near, he realized that decisions being made on the national level affected his family – his own children and their future. He decided that God wanted him to be a part of that decision-making process. He ran for office and was elected. Perhaps the influence he had had in the past directing the youth camp aided in

his election. At any rate, he moved to the capital of his country determined to make decisions and advocate for change in ways that would be pleasing to God.

Most of us will not make such a dramatic commitment to making changes in the political life of our country. Many would never have such an opportunity because they live under repressive regimes. What is the commitment we need to make? Today's study enables us to examine a period in Israel's history where king after king did evil in the eyes of the Lord. Amos, a shepherd and grower of fruit, was God's messenger to the evildoers. His warning was not heeded, but he was true to God's call in his life.

Today we will consider the relationship between our faith in God and our responsibility to the country in which we live. The question for discussion "What happens when religion gets too close to government?" is always relevant. Some governments, both past and present, have been ruled by religious leaders. Their governments have not always been sound, however. Other governments seem to be totally removed from faith influences. Again we ask ourselves what our responsibility to our country should be.

Closing the Gathering Time:

Take time at this point to mention items of prayer concern for the church, announcements of ministry or activities, and anything else that needs to be shared with or by the congregation. Pray for these needs. Remember to praise God in prayer.

Break time! Take five minutes between sessions. Encourage children to use the washroom so that they won't need to leave during the Bible Study time.

Distribute youth/adult Bible study outlines or paper for note-taking, if available.

Also hand out the activity sheets for preschool and younger children to use during Bible Study and/or worship.

2

Copy this section for the Bible Study leader.

Note to the Bible Study Leader: Suggested teaching time for the Bible study should be about 35 minutes. Use the “Teacher Preparation” for your personal study during the week before the session. Use the “Bible Study Plan” for the actual session.

Teacher Preparation

God’s Message Rejected

Focal Text

Amos 7:7-17

Background Text

Amos 7:1—8:3

Main Idea

Obeying God is to take precedence over all else.

Question to Explore

What happens when religion gets too close to government?

Teaching Aim

To lead the church to identify ways of hearing and obeying God’s message in the midst of current culture.

Introduction to your personal study:

It would be easy to become overwhelmed with the study with Amos. Hopefully, you have been able to attend each of the three studies which precede this lesson. If not you may want to access the previous lessons on line at www.homechurchonline.com. Look for Bible Teaching 17, Unit 44. If you cannot access the lessons, ask the previous facilitators if you can use their copy to review.

Background:

Please ask for and read the information contained in the “**Introduction**” article found at the beginning of this series of Bible Study and Worship sessions (Bible Teaching #.....). The person who downloaded this session should have that material for you, as well.

Focusing on the Meaning:

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Amos 7:1—8:3 (Background material)
Amos 7:7-17

The last of three sections in the book of Amos may be called the Book of Visions (7:1-9:8) and contains the only narrative material. The autobiographical report of five visions (7:1-9; 8:1-3 and 9:1) provides a framework that carries the dramatic report of Amos's confrontation with Amaziah, priest of Bethel (7:10-17), as well as prophetic oracles.

In the first pair of visions (7:1-6), Amos is able to secure a reprieve for Israel by his intercession. The situation, in which there is still some hope, corresponds to the Book of Woes (5:1-6:14) which is built around the exhortation in 5:24 ***Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an everflowing stream.*** (See Metzger, B.M. and Coogan, M.D. (Eds). *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1993, p. 25).

There is still time for repentance.

This is what the Sovereign Lord showed me: He was preparing swarms of locusts after the king's share had been harvested and just as the second crop of coming up. When they had stripped the land clean, I cried out, "Sovereign Lord, forgive! How can Jacob survive? He is so small!"

So the Lord relented.

"This will not happen," the Lord said.

This is what the Sovereign Lord showed me: The Sovereign Lord was calling for judgment by fire; it dried up the deep and devoured the land. Then I cried out, "Sovereign Lord, I beg you, stop! How can Jacob survive? He is so small"

So the Lord relented.

"This will not happen either," the Sovereign Lord said. Amos 7:1-6

Amos saw a vision of grasshoppers swarming the land and stripping the land clean of the crop. The second crop refers to the spring crop. The Israelites usually planted wheat in the early fall. They were able to gather one crop before winter. The words of 7:1 indicate that that crop was collected for the king – for taxes. This practice is not mentioned in other places. Perhaps the king decreed this form of taxation only during this affluent period in Israel's history, when a strong central government was constructing many expensive public works.

After the first harvest, the roots of the grain remained dormant in the soil throughout the winter. In the spring, the roots budded out again and produced a second crop. The farmers had to live all year off that second cutting or harvest. If they lost that cutting, they would be destitute. An invasion of grasshoppers at this point would wipe them out.

In his vision, Amos saw the grasshoppers eating across the land until they had consumed all the grain sprouts in the whole nation. He cried out to God (Sovereign Lord) to forgive the people. The nation was too small and too weak to recover from such a disaster. The Lord heard the prayer and told Amos he would not send the plague as He had intended.

God is swift to change His tactics in response to repentance and prayer. God never changes His purposes. He is always working toward bringing people to salvation.

In verses 4-6, a second vision is given Amos. A fire devours everything in its path. It even dried up the “great deep” which may have meant the Mediterranean Sea. Then the fire began to consume the “farm land” or the part or portion of the earth which God had given Israel. Again, Amos begged God to stop. Again the Lord told Amos that He would withhold his punishment.

These two visions emphasize God’s mercy. Mercy allows people time to repent and to accept God’s grace.

Grace means God gives people what they do not deserve: salvation and blessings. God cannot extend his mercy forever. If people persist in rejecting his grace, He must eventually withdraw His mercy and allow His wrath to fall.

Amos’s third vision pictures the limits to God’s mercy.

This is what he showed me: The Lord was standing by a wall that had been built true to plumb, with a plumb, with a plumb line in his hand. And the Lord asked me, “What do you see, Amos?”

“A plumb line,” I replied.

Then the Lord said, “Look, I am setting a plumb line among my people Israel, I will spare them no longer.

“The high places of Isaac will be destroyed and the sanctuaries of Israel will be ruined; with my sword I will rise against the house of Jeroboam” Amos 7:7-9.

Amos indicates that the Lord “caused him to see” a vision of the Lord Himself inspecting a wall which had been built straight. The plumb line has been used throughout the centuries as a means of determining if a wall is straight and vertical. A plumb line is a simple device of a line held at the top of the wall and allowed to drop on the ground. The straight line will indicate if the wall is perpendicular or leaning. In this image, the plumb line is used for testing and decision. The Lord will use a plumb line to test the authenticity of the worship of his people. The crookedness of their actions is revealed – Israel was dreadfully out of plumb.

Some versions of this passage read ***I will never again pass by them*** (verse 8). This seems a more chilling interpretation than ***I will spare them no longer*** which is, of course, a frightening prospect. But the words ***I will never again pass by them*** indicate the withdrawal of the presence of God, of his blessing and his guidance.

This is the message that Amos knew with dread certainly that he must give to the people. Doom would overtake the nation. Intercession would no longer avail. The Lord had spoken.

Jeroboam had been king of Israel for forty-one years (2 Kings 14:23-24). Now his rule will come to an end.

Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel, sent a message to Jeroboam king of Israel: "Amos is raising a conspiracy against you in the very heart of Israel. The land cannot bear all his words. For this is what Amos is saying:

'Jeroboam will die by the sword, and Israel will surely go into exile, away from their native land.'

Then Amaziah said to Amos, "Get out you seer! Go back to the land of Judah. Earn your bread there and do your prophesying there. Don't prophesy anymore in Bethel, because this is the king's sanctuary and the temple of the kingdom."

Amos answered Amaziah, "I was neither a prophet nor a prophet's son, but I was a shepherd and I also took care of sycamore-fig trees. But the Lord took me from tending the flock and said to me, 'Go prophesy to my people in Israel' Now then hear the word of the Lord. You say,

"Do not prophesy against Israel, and stop preaching against the house of Issac."

"Therefore this is what the Lord says:

'Your wife will become a prostitute in the city, and your sons and daughters will fall by the sword. Your land will be measured and divided up, and you yourself will die in a pagan country. And Israel will certainly go into exile, away from their native land'" (Amos 7: 12-17).

The dynasty to which Jeroboam II belonged came to power through a rebellion that overthrew the corrupt rule of Ahab and Jezebel. A general named Jehu led the rebellion (1 Kings 9:1-37). God promised to reward Jehu for overthrowing Ahab and Jezebel by keeping Jehu's descendants on Israel's throne for four generations (2 Kings 10:30). Jeroboam II was the third generation of Jehu's descendants. When Jeroboam died, his son Zechariah came to the throne. Zechariah ruled for only six months. Shallum led a rebellion against Zechariah and killed him in public (2 Kings 14:28-29; 15:

8-12). Shallum's violent deed exactly fulfilled God's promise to reward Jehu for four generations and also God's promise to destroy Jeroboam's house with the sword.

Shallum was assassinated after one month and was succeeded by his assassin, Menahem who reigned for ten years. He was succeeded by his son Pekahiah who reigned two years. He was assassinated by Pekah who reigned for 20 years. The judgement of all of these kings was the same ***He did evil in the eyes of the Lord. He did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam, son of Nebat, which he had caused Israel to commit*** (see 2 Kings 15: 13-31). ***In the time of Pekah king of Israel, Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria came and took Ijon, Abel beth Maacah, Janoah, Kedesh and Hazor. He took Gilead and Galilee, including all the land of Naphtali, and deported the people to Assyria*** (2 Kings 15:29-30).

This deportation to Assyria was the ultimate fulfillment of the prophecy of Amos.

Let us return, however, to the situation with Amaziah and Amos. Amaziah was high priest of Bethel. Apparently his headquarters were in the shrine at Bethel. Amos had been preaching right outside the doors of that shrine. Amaziah had come out to hear him and was not pleased with anything he heard. He sent a message to King Jeroboam and charged Amos with conspiracy against the king. He misinterpreted Amos's preaching to indicate that Jeroboam himself would die by the sword. Amos preached that Jeroboam's dynasty would be removed from the throne by violence without specifying when. In a previous paragraph we have examined the realization of that prophecy.

Amaziah did not wait for the king to intervene. He interrupted Amos in the middle of his message and called Amos a "seer". This word meant a person with divinely inspired insight into God's message for the hour. Amaziah obviously was not sincere in his use of this word and Amos told him that he made no claim to be a "seer"; he was a shepherd and a caretaker of sycamore and fig trees.

Amaziah wanted Amos out of his territory. This temple belonged to the king and Amaziah represented the established religion of the nation.

Amos said five terrible tragedies would befall Amaziah and Israel:

1. Amaziah's wife would become a harlot in the city.
2. Amaziah's children would die by the sword.
3. Amaziah's property would be divided up and given to other owners.
4. Amaziah would die in a foreign land.
5. Israel would be taken captive and removed from its land.

It was this last prophecy which would bring the others about. Amos was truly brave and God-inspired and ordained to give such a dire message to a man with the power and authority which Amaziah held.

Your Goal as the Leader of this Bible Study:

It is important that your participants realize that this is history – these events really happened in the life of the Israelites. Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria, did invade Israel and carried the people into captivity in Assyria.

Rapidly changing world events cause fear even in the hearts of Christians. We need to do those things we can to cause leaders to make right decisions. One of those things we can do is pray for those in power. It is easy to criticize, but it is harder to pray for those in leadership especially if we do not agree with policies and beliefs which they hold.

For Personal Reflection:

What have I learned from this study?

What personal experience does this lesson bring to mind?

What is one action I will take this week to apply this Scripture passage to my life?

Bible Study Plan (Suggested time: 35 minutes)

God's Message Rejected

Regroup the church after the Gathering Time and break by singing a chorus that young children can relate to—or another praise chorus if your congregation does not have children. Children who go to their own Bible teaching session should stay with the group until after this song. Have the preschoolers and children accompany the hymn with rhythm sticks, maracas, bells, etc.

Begin by helping the group locate the *Focal Text* in their Bibles. Also, share with them the *Main Idea* to be learned from the Scriptures, and the *Questions to be Explored* by the group.

Focal Text

Amos 7:7-17

Background Text

Amos 7:1—8:3

Main Idea

Obeying God is to take precedence over all else.

Question to Explore

What happens when religion gets too close to government?

Teaching Aim

To lead the church to identify ways of hearing and obeying God's message in the midst of current culture.

Connect with Life:

The question for discussion and thought is: "What happens when religion gets too close to government?"

Ask the group for current issues which need to be addressed by the government in the area where you live.

Seek an answer to this: What are some of the reactions we feel to these issues. (We may feel anger, helplessness, discouragement or even disinterest.)

Now ask: What can be done to make changes either in the government itself or in our attitudes?

Question the group: Is there danger in your national context that religion has undue influence on government in our nation?

Now ask: What would be an appropriate balance in our nation?

Guide the Study:

Ask someone to read the entire Bible passage for today which is Amos 7: 7-17.

Ask another person to reread Amos 7:1-6.

Ask: What two visions did Amos see? (grasshoppers destroying the crop and a devastating fire)

Ask: Did these events happen? No.

Now ask: Why not? (Amos asked the Lord to spare the people.)

Discuss: How important is our prayer to the well being of our nation?

Say; God is swift to change His tactics in response to repentance and prayer. God never changes his purposes. He is always working toward bringing people to salvation.

Allow time for discussion of the previous statement.

State that the two visions emphasize God's mercy.

Ask: How do we define God's mercy. (Mercy allows people time to repent and to accept God's grace).

Ask someone to read Amos 7: 7-9.

Discuss the meaning of plumb line. Allow time for someone to explain what a plumb line is.

Seek an opinion: Would a builder use a plumb line today? Comment that a builder would always have some means of ascertaining that a wall was straight and vertical.

Ask: What does the picture of the plumb line mean as it relates to Israel? (God has found the people out of line with his purposes)

State that some versions of the Bible read ***I will never again pass by them*** (verse 8).

Comment that this description of God's permanent removal of his presence and protection is a chilling thought.

Have someone read Amos 7:12-17.

Ask: Who sends a message to King Jeroboam that Amos has given a dire prediction concerning his future? (Amaziah.)

Comment: Amaziah was the high priest at Bethel. Apparently his headquarters were in the shrine at Bethel. Although a religious leader, he felt it was his responsibility and right to warn the king about Amos.

Question and state: Does Amos claim to be a "seer" or prophet? No, Amos always maintains that he is a shepherd and a caretaker of fig and sycamore trees who has a message from God.

Ask: Does that speak to us about our responsibilities as lay people to speak to evil around us?

Examine the passage and discern the five tragedies which would befall Amaziah and Israel:

1. Amaziah's wife would become a harlot (prostitute) in the city.
2. Amaziah's children would die by the sword.
3. Amaziah's property would be divided up and given to other owners.
4. Amaziah would die in a foreign land.
5. Israel would be taken captive and removed from its land.

Tell the group: In the overthrow of Israel by Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria, these things occurred. We don't know more about Amaziah's wife, but she may have been left destitute and turned to prostitution to feed herself. His children would have died in the overthrow of the country and his property would have been forfeited. He would have been carried into captivity as would all other Israelites who were able bodied or influential.

Raise the question and then comment if needed: Why would Amaziah have ignored the warning given by Amos? He was sure of his own power and that of the king. Amos was a nobody. Amaziah had gone so far from God that his own conscience had failed to function.

Ask: How can the people of God today have a prophetic voice for good without sounding unloving?

Encourage Application:

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If you have two or more youth, this is the time to give them the **Youth!!! Take Ten** page and allow them to move away from the adults and apply the lesson by and for themselves.

Close with the following story: A recent YouTube clip showed a surprising happening in a mall food court in southern Ontario, Canada. As people ate their meals in the food court, extremely talented and very attractive young adults began to sing the Hallelujah Chorus by Handel. They were joined by others from various parts of the food court. People watched tentatively and then enthusiastically as the singing continued. It appeared that others began joyfully to sing. Some were pictured in such a way that they seemed touched by the music as if it recalled something important to them. When the final climatic Hallelujah was sung, singers raised their hands in praise to God. There was no doubt that for those moments in time in that place, believers had impacted their culture. Christmas was no longer the canned and soon forgotten secular songs about Santa Claus with only the occasional carol. The people in that mall had seen and heard Christmas celebrated joyfully and fully. The prophetic voices of that group will not soon be forgotten by those listeners or by those who watched it on YouTube. Hallelujah!

Take a five minute break to separate the Bible Study and Worship Time. Children may need to use the washroom again before worship.

Youth!!! Take Ten

Bible Study Application for Youth

You may wish to move away from the adults for the final five to ten minutes of the Bible study and help each other as youth to apply the lesson to your own needs.

God's Message Rejected **Amos 7:7-17**

A youth will lead the following activity and comments. No adults need to be present. If possible, teens should take turns in leading the application time.

Physical, Moral, Ethical, and Spiritual Plumb Lines

What is a plumb line?

Why is it called a construction "standard".

How does it work?

Is a plumb line, for ordinary one or two story construction, reliable—even in a day of sophisticated laser levels?

Why would it be used as a example of God's evaluation of his people?

What is the "plumb line" by which you guide your life?

<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/plumb+line>

3

Copy this section for the Worship Time leader.

Worship Time (Suggested time: 30 minutes)

God's Message Rejected **Amos 7:7-17**

Beginning the Service:

Sing one or both of the following:

Face to Face, *The Worship Hymnal*, #612, CCLI#33382

Amazing Grace, *The Worship Hymnal*, #104, CCLI#22025 (Public Domain)

Offering:

Praying for the World:

Russian is the most geographically widespread language of Central and Eastern Europe. Yet this is not the only region of the world where it is popular. Worldwide, approximately 150 million people use it as a primary language and more than 100 million as a secondary language. Countries other than Russia that name Russian as an official language include Belarus and independent parts of Georgia and Moldova. Thank God that homechurchonline.com materials are available in Russian. Pray that they will be widely used and be a part of reaching the many Russian-speaking peoples for Christ.

Sharing Guide:

This sharing guide is written to assist the person who directs the worship time to reemphasize the teaching for the day and help guide the congregation to respond to God's call and will for their lives in regard to the scripture studied. The leader may choose to follow the guide closely. Or, he or she may wish to only use it to give direction and a concept for preparing an original message. The leader is free to choose other ways to communicate and share the concepts presented here.

Praying for Others

The background text for this lesson includes Amos 8:1-3 in which another dramatic picture is given.

This is what the Sovereign Lord showed me: a basket of ripe fruit. “What do you see, Amos?” he asked.

“A basket of ripe fruit,” I answered.

Then the Lord said to me. “The time is ripe for my people Israel: I will spare them no longer”.

“In that day,” declares the Sovereign Lord, “the songs in the temple will turn to wailing. Many, many bodies – flung everywhere! Silence”. Amos 8:1-3

This vision of the basket of ripe fruit indicates that the time has come for the punishment of the Lord to be exacted.

Amos had prophesied with the hope that the people would repent. However, there has been no repentance. Amaziah, the high priest, whose influence upon the king and the people might have led them to repentance refused to listen to Amos. In his eyes, Amos had no credentials to preach to him as high priest or to the powerful and wealthy King Jeroboam who had ruled for many years.

We must see ourselves in the attitude which Amaziah expressed. We make judgements based on a person’s personal appearance, academic achievements and accumulated wealth. We probably would not have listened to Amos either.

But we are not in the position of Amaziah. We do not represent the authority of religion or of government. We are the people of God. What is our task in the light of the world in which we live?

Earlier in the passage examined today we read of the vision which Amos had in which destruction came in the form of crop destroying locusts and Amos cried out to the Lord **“Sovereign Lord, forgive! How can Jacob survive? He is so small!”**

A second vision showed a fire which was so intense it dried up water and devoured the land. Amos cried again **“Sovereign Lord I beg you stop! How can Jacob survive? He is so small!”**

Let us reread the passage.

This is what the Sovereign Lord showed me: He was preparing swarms of locusts after the king’s share had been harvested and just as the second crop of coming up. When they had stripped the land clean, I cried out, “Sovereign Lord, forgive! How can Jacob survive? He is so small!”

So the Lord relented.

“This will not happen,” the Lord said.

This is what the Sovereign Lord showed me: The Sovereign Lord was calling for judgment by fire; it dried up the deep and devoured the land. Then I cried out, "Sovereign Lord, I beg you, stop! How can Jacob survive? He is so small"

So the Lord relented.

"This will not happen either," the Sovereign Lord said. Amos 7:1-6

In this passage we see our task clearly defined. However hopeless the culture in which we live may seem; however far from redemption and repentance, our task remains one of intercessory prayer.

"Sovereign Lord", we must call out "Spare my friend, my co-worker, my brother or sister, my child. He is so small. She is so lost".

Our prayer must involve acknowledgement of the power of God. He is the Sovereign Lord; he is my Sovereign Lord. He has all power. We examined the passage in Amos 4:13 which says

***He who forms the mountains,
creates the wind,
and reveals his thoughts to man,
he who turns dawn to darkness,
and treads the high places of the earth –
the Lord God Almighty is his name.***

This is the Sovereign Lord to whom we pray. He really can hear and answer our prayers.

Our prayer must acknowledge the need of the people. Amos said "***How can Jacob survive? He is so small!***". This must be our heart cry for the people around us. They are so small. They are so needy.

The people around Amos did not seem small. The leaders were powerful and the rich were very rich indeed. Amos was concerned that they repent. But he was also concerned for the humble people who were abused by those in high places. He knew that a punishment of the nation as a whole who involve everyone. The leaders would suffer, but the poor and needy would suffer as well.

All around us are those who need the Lord. Many live in poverty and great need. Many are the victims of the greed for power of others. They are so small.

We pray for them.

The psalmist wrote:

*I call on you, O God, for you will answer me;
give ear to me and hear my prayer.
Show me the wonder of your great love,
you who save by your right hand
those who take refuge in you from their foes.*

*Keep me as the apple of your eye;
hide me in the shadow of your wings
from the wicked who assail me,
from my mortal enemies who surround me.* (Psalm 17:6-9)

Call to Commitment:

May this be our prayer today for ourselves and for those in our circle of influence and for our world.

Show us the wonder of your great love,
Keep us as the apple of your eye:
hide us in the shadow of your wings.

Yes, Lord, Yes.

Concluding the Service:

Sing: Because He Lives, *The Worship Hymnal*, #449, CCLI#16880

Comment before singing: This hymn encourages us even when we might be discouraged by the events of the world in which we live.