

# When God Calls The Common: Amos

## Amos 3:1-8

Well, beloved, today—and for next week as well—I would like to introduce a very special substitute teacher to our program. The name of this teacher is simply Paul, and his lesson is called Learn from Israel. So let me hand this short lesson over to our guest teacher. Be attentive to Paul, that you may remember these life lessons from the Lord about His chosen family.

### **1Corinthians 10:1-22**

*Brothers and sisters, here is what I want you to know about our people who lived long ago. They were all led by the cloud. They all walked through the Red Sea. They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. They all ate the same supernatural food. They all drank the same supernatural water. They drank from the supernatural rock that went with them. That rock was Christ. But God was not pleased with most of them. Their bodies were scattered all over the desert. Now those things happened as examples for us. They are supposed to keep us from longing for evil things, as the people of Israel did. So don't worship statues of gods, as some of them did. It is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink. Then they got up to dance wildly in front of their god." (Exodus 32:6) We should not commit sexual sins, as some of them did. In one day 23,000 of them died. We should not put the Lord to the test, as some of them did. They were killed by snakes. Don't tell your leaders how unhappy you are with them. That's what some of the people of Israel did. And they were killed by the destroying angel. Those things happened to them as examples for us. They were written down to warn us who are living at the time when God's work is being completed. So be careful. When you think you are standing firm, you might fall. You are tempted in the same way all other human beings are. God is faithful. He will not let you be tempted any more than you can take. But when you are tempted, God will give you a way out so that you can stand up under it. My dear friends, run away from statues of gods. Don't worship them. I'm talking to people who are reasonable. Judge for yourselves what I say. When we give thanks for the cup at the Lord's Supper, aren't we sharing in the blood of Christ? When we break the bread, aren't we sharing in the body of Christ? Just as there is one loaf, so we who are many are one body. We all eat from the one loaf. Think about the people of Israel. Don't those who eat the offerings share in the altar? Do I mean that what is offered to a statue of a god is anything? Do I mean that a statue of a god is anything? No! But what is offered by those who worship statues of gods is really offered to demons. It is not offered to God. I don't want you to be sharing with demons. You can't drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too. You can't have a part in both the Lord's table and the table of demons. Are we trying to make the Lord jealous? Are we stronger than he is?*

\*QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: Before you read this paraphrase of Paul's words, were you aware of the Bible's harrowing warnings of repeating Israel's example of disobedience? Now that you have read this passage, how is your heart and spirit encouraged and/or warned in a way that will bring about lifestyle changes of your own?

Thank you Paul for the timely reminder, and thank you Israel for your unfailing example of inconsistency and unbelief. We kind of relate to you, in that we are very good at worshipping dead idols—even our religion—and forfeiting the fullness of God’s blessings in our lives. We are deeply grateful for Holy Scripture, which is like a schoolmaster that has driven us to the foot of the cross of Christ:

### **Galatians 3:21-29**

*Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

Now, if all these truths are true, what are we doing in the Book of Amos, on the other side where God’s wrath is no longer a slow burn but an inferno ready to punish the sins of a disobedient nation? And please don’t say that the Israelites did not have the benefit of the New Testament, God’s Word, God’s grace and forgiveness through Jesus. They received God’s Word and experienced God’s goodness first!

### **Amos 3:1**

*(KJV) Hear this word that the LORD hath spoken against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying,  
(NIV) Hear this word, people of Israel, the word the LORD has spoken against you—against the whole family I brought up out of Egypt:*

Amos is speaking the very words of God here. He is addressing the “whole family” Israel and Judah—north and south divided post-Exodus—who are God’s chosen children, whom He “brought up” (both translations) from Egypt (read the whole account in Exodus 1:1-13:16). Note here that God reminds them that He had demonstrated His faithfulness to the Israelites.

### **Amos 3:2**

*(KJV) You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.  
(NIV) "You only have I chosen of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your sins."*

Notice here that God did not merely know of the family he formed first—as He is aware of every family, ancestry, and nation—but He has known Israel (Hebrew word *yada*, to know and to choose). Good human fathers discipline their children (Hebrews 12:4-11)—how

much more will God, the Father of the first family on earth, punish sin? God first reminds the Israelites why they are being punished.

\*QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: Have there been instances in your life in which you did not recognize hardship as discipline (Hebrews 12:7)? How did you then justify what you were going through?

\*STUDY POINT: Find three passages in the New Testament and three passages in the Old Testament in which God allows hardship in order to bring His children back home.

### **Amos 3:3**

*(KJV) Can two walk together, except they be agreed?*

*(NIV) Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so?*

Cause and effect statements from Amos show great poetic oratory skills of a supernatural level, and these statements lawyer up, build and culminate into an open and shut case for God's sure punishment for Israel's arrogance and sin.

### **Amos 3:4**

*(KJV) Will a lion roar in the forest, when he hath no prey? will a young lion cry out of his den, if he have taken nothing?*

*(NIV) Does a lion roar in the thicket when it has no prey? Does it growl in its den when it has caught nothing?*

### **Amos 3:5**

*(KJV) Can a bird fall in a snare upon the earth, where no gin is for him? shall one take up a snare from the earth, and have taken nothing at all?*

*(NIV) Does a bird swoop down to a trap on the ground when no bait is there? Does a trap spring up from the ground if it has not caught anything?*

### **Amos 3:6**

*(KJV) Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? shall there be evil in a city, and the LORD hath not done it?*

*(NIV) When a trumpet sounds in a city, do not the people tremble? When disaster comes to a city, has not the LORD caused it?*

Now Amos takes a sudden turn in the context of his cause and effect questions, and gives us valuable insight into the motives that brought him to public proclaim these prophetic judgments to all of God's first family.

### **Amos 3:7**

*(KJV) Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.*

*(NIV) Surely the Sovereign LORD does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets.*

Amos states here in third person that he is a servant first and foremost, and He speaks only what God speaks through him. We have to ask at this verse and this point: could there be an higher office than that of one chosen to receive and relate God's first formidable plans to a spiritually numb nation?

\*STUDY POINT: Pick two other books of the Bible—from the Minor Prophets—and begin to draw parallels to the Book of Amos. Some possible parallel topics may be: calling of the prophet, proclamations of the prophet, nature of prophecies given to the prophet, and fulfillment of prophecies. Note that this may be a longer term study.

### **Amos 3:8**

*(KJV) The lion hath roared, who will not fear? the Lord GOD hath spoken, who can but prophesy?*

*(NIV) The lion has roared— who will not fear? The Sovereign LORD has spoken— who can but prophesy?*

The heart of the prophet, folks, the heart of the prophet. Amos reminds us here that there is no resisting God—the lion of justice—and His compelling call to prophesy, just as the roar of a lion yields fear in its prey.

Beloved, we are blessed to have Scripture today describe how a chosen nation could forfeit the fullness of God's blessing. We need to understand that His Word is not just information, but instruction for our present and future walk with Him. Amen.

### **2Timothy 3:16-17**

*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.*

~ Reverend Darren McClelland