

# When God Calls The Common: Amos

## Amos 9:7-10

This is a definition of the word presumptuous from my Webster's dictionary:

### **PRESUMP'TUOUS, a.**

1. Bold and confident to excess; adventuring without reasonable ground of success; hazarding safety on too slight grounds; rash; applied to persons; as a presumptuous commander. There is a class of presumptuous men whom age has not made cautious, nor adversity wise.
2. Founded on presumption; proceeding from excess of confidence; applied to things; as presumptuous hope.
3. Arrogant; insolent; as a presumptuous priest. Presumptuous pride.
4. Unduly confident; irreverent with respect to sacred things.
5. Willful; done with bold design, rash confidence or in violation of known duty; as a presumptuous sin.

In the last of the temptations presented to Jesus by Satan in Luke 4:1-13, we see the very privilege of deity tested in the One Who is Deity—the Son of God. And how does Jesus respond when He is tempted to act upon presumption—the forbidden testing of God through the misuse of His divine power?

Let's listen in to the text:

### **Luke 4:9-13**

*The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down from here. For it is written: "He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone." Jesus answered, "It is said: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time.*

Satan would be only too happy to see any of God's children presume things about God—and act upon them—that are not permitted in His Word. And yet we see and hear in the Body of Christ today many false doctrines and attributes of God from Scripture that are admixtures of truth and error. What the false teachers are doing is mixing their own presuppositions about God with the unchanging Word itself. This is idolatry:

### **Romans 1:22-25**

*Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles. Therefore, God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.*

In today's passage, we observe that God never stands uncorrected in matters of false teaching which results in deceit and false living in His beloved children.

### **Amos 9:7**

*(KJV) Are ye not as children of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel? saith the LORD. Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt? and the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir?*

*(NIV) "Are not you Israelites the same to me as the Cushites?" declares the LORD. "Did I not bring Israel up from Egypt, the Philistines from Caphtor and the Arameans from Kir?"*

In other words, don't presume anything, Israel! His very own children presumed their heavenly privileges were retroactive (God's deliverance of Israel from Egypt). In this verse He makes it clear that they are owed nothing except what their sins deserve:

### **Romans 6:23**

*For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

God's reference to the Israelites here as Ethiopians is not exactly flattering either:

### **Jeremiah 13:23**

*Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.*

God had performed mighty acts of deliverance for others, and He makes it clear that Israel ought to drop presumption in favour of deep repentance and humility. Listen to the tone of this text:

Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt? and the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir?

And this from my JFB Commentary:

"Have not I (who) brought you out of Egypt," done as much for other peoples? For instance, did I not bring "the Philistines from Caphtor (Deu 2:23; Jer 47:4), where they had been bond-servants, and the Syrians from Kir?" It is appropriate, that as the Syrians migrated into Syria from Kir (Isa 22:6), so they should be carried back captive into the same land (Amo 1:15; 2Ki 16:9), just as elsewhere Israel is threatened with a return to Egypt whence they had been delivered. The "Ethiopians," Hebrew, "Cushites," were originally akin to the race that founded Babylon."

Enough said.

**\*QUESTION FOR MEDITATION:** To what extent has the worldly spirit of entitlement entered the North American church? What are its visible symptoms?

\*STUDY POINT: Describe three groups in the Bible that you deem presumptuous. Contrast these groups with what you know to be authentic Spirit-filled Christians. Provide Scripture references.

### **Amos 9:8**

*(KJV) Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth; saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the LORD.*

*(NIV) "Surely the eyes of the Sovereign LORD are on the sinful kingdom. I will destroy it from the face of the earth. Yet I will not totally destroy the descendants of Jacob," declares the LORD.*

Just as we survey the headlines today and wonder where our God of justice is when we need Him, we see also the myriad Biblical accounts in which God acts. And just as we ought to wait on the Lord (Psalm 27:14), trusting His promises to be true, we can take comfort each day that He sees and know our world's woes:

### **Proverbs 15:3**

*The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.*

Our verse here in Amos indicates that God's punishment over the Israelites is imminent:

### **Amos 9:4**

*And though they go into captivity before their enemies, thence will I command the sword, and it shall slay them: and I will set mine eyes upon them for evil, and not for good.*

And that He will leave a remnant of the descendants of Jacob:

### **Jeremiah 30:11**

*For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.*

### **Amos 9:9**

*(KJV) For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth.*

*(NIV) "For I will give the command, and I will shake the people of Israel among all the nations as grain is shaken in a sieve, and not a pebble will reach the ground.*

Beloved, what a word picture! Let God be true and every man a liar (Romans 3:4), for God alone is faithful to preserve a remnant of Israel until the glorious end:

### **Philippians 1:6**

*Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:*

While in this spiritual sieve, all of our falls and failings are not collected but are drained away with the blood of Christ, while our grace, mercy and righteousness in Jesus are retained for our walk with God and our certain entry into heaven with Him forever.

Here is more Biblical evidence of God's faithfulness to bring Israel—and His own children today—to the end:

**Jeremiah 3:14**

*Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion:*

**John 6:39**

*And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.*

**Amos 9:10**

*(KJV) All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword, which say, The evil shall not overtake nor prevent us.*

*(NIV) All the sinners among my people will die by the sword, all those who say, 'Disaster will not overtake or meet us.'*

Pride is such a fateful sin. God hates it (see Proverbs 6:17). In verse 10, the pride in the hearts of the Israelites has led to this presumption that God has their back, even when their hearts are hard and leading to the kind of injustice, violence, and oppression we have seen in the Book of Amos. We learn here that such disobedience leads to death by the sword—likely the unyielding blade of enemy forces.

So this is where we land, folks. More than an Old Testament book, Amos speaks to us today in 2023. We have choices to make—will we make them based on a watered-down, grace-drenched Gospel, or on the unchanging, rock-solid Word of God? We know how Jesus responded to Satan's lure to act upon presumption. We also know how a tender-hearted John in the last verse of 1 John exhorted his children to keep themselves from the idol of false teaching (1 John 5:21).

I leave you with two verses worth meditating upon to keep your hearts close to God and far from the deception of presumption:

**Proverbs 4:23**

*Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.*

**Psalms 19:7-14**

*The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter*

*also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover, by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward. Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.*

Amen.

~ Reverend Darren McClelland