

1 Title Page

2 Scripture

- This is what he showed me: The Lord was standing by a wall that had been built true to plumb, with a plumb line in his hand.
- And the LORD asked me, "What do you see, Amos?" "A plumb line," I replied. (Amos 7:8a)
- Then the Lord said, "Look, I am setting a plumb line among my people Israel: I will spare them no longer. (Amos 7:8b)
- The high places of Isaac will be destroyed and the sanctuaries of Israel will be ruined; with my sword I will rise against them.

3 Scripture

- Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent a message to Jeroboam king of Israel: "Amos is raising a conspiracy against you."
- 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.'

4 Scripture

- 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 at Bethel, because this is the king's sanctuary and the temple of the kingdom." (Amos 7:12)

5 Scripture

- "Amos answered Amaziah, "I was neither a prophet nor a prophet's son, but I was a shepherd, and I also took care of sheep."
- But the LORD took me from tending the flock and said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.' Now then, hear the word of the LORD.
- You say, "'Do not prophesy against Israel, and stop preaching against the house of Isaac.'" (Amos 7:15)

6 Scripture

- "Therefore this is what the LORD says: 'Your wife will become a prostitute in the city, and your sons and daughters will be sold into slavery.'
- Your land will be measured and divided up, and you yourself will die in a pagan country. (Amos 7:17b)
- And Israel will certainly go into exile, away from their native land.'" (Amos 7:17c)
- BTW - AND HAVE A NICE DAY!

7 Introduction

- Back during the Dark Ages, a foreboding cloud of black ash blocked out the sun from Europe to Asia.
- At the same time, an outbreak of bubonic plague coincides with a piercing cold snap.
- Crops fail. Starvation, darkness and squalor abound."

8 Introduction

- According to the magazine, Popular Mechanics, all of these conditions were pervasive throughout the northern hemisphere.
- The year was a tipping point in an era of unprecedented devastation.
- It was so bad that researchers are now labeling that year the worst time to be alive in the history of humankind.
- Harvard History professor Michael McCormick told Science magazine: "It was the beginning of one of the worst periods in human history."

9 Photo

10 Introduction

- The black cloud was the result of a massive volcanic eruption in Iceland that triggered 18 months of darkness.
- "For the sun gave forth its light without brightness, like the moon, during the whole year," wrote Byzantine historian Procopius.

11 Introduction

- And this was compounded by two more eruptions in the years 540 and 547.
- This cloud of ash blocked the sun, which caused frigid temperatures that blighted crops, resulting in starvation.

12 Introduction

- This was followed by an outbreak of bubonic plague that wiped out somewhere between a third and a half of the population.
- In fact, the plague led to an economic downturn that lasted for over 30 years.

13 Introduction

- So if you could be a time traveler, the year 536 probably should not be on your itinerary.
- And don't forget that historians settled on 536 as the worst year to be alive despite some other significantly dark centuries:
 - Including 1349, when the Black Death wiped out half of Europe, and
 - 1918 when the flu killed 50 million to 100 million people around the world, mostly young adults.
 - 2015 was a bad year in Lexington, Kentucky, when the Wisconsin Badgers upset the previously undefeated Kentucky Wildcats.

14 722 B.C.

- On a smaller geographic scale, 722 B.C. could be a candidate for the worst year to be alive as well.
- The timeframe is the post-Davidic period of the divided kingdom.
- The capital and worship center of the southern kingdom of Judah was Jerusalem, whereas in the northern kingdom of

15 722 B.C.

- But there were some unholy things and a lot of spiritual hanky-panky going on in Israel —
 - dishonest merchants.
 - abuse of the poor.
 - court decisions being bought and sold.
 - corruption in the priesthood, and.
 - of course, idolatry.

16 722 B.C.

- At this point, God called Amos, a herdsman from the southern kingdom, to travel to Bethel in the northern kingdom to c
- Amos preached about God holding a plumb line in the midst of Israel and the people were far “out of plumb” spiritually
- Amos warned that unless the people repented, they would suffer God’s wrath.

17 Plumb Line

- A plumb line is a line with a plumb attached to it, used to determine the vertical on an upright surface.
- Without the use of a plumb line in construction it is virtually impossible to build a wall or lay a sure foundation that won
- In other words, if a wall or foundation is not straight and true everything built upon it will eventually fail and fall.

18 Amos and Amaziah

- However, these words did not please Amos’ audience.
- And Amaziah, the chief priest of Bethel, stepped forward to remind Amos that he was a foreigner.
- Essentially telling him that if he wanted to prophesy, he should go home to Judah and tell his fellow Jews about their si
- Amos responded by not only informing Amaziah what was going to happen to Israel but what was going to happen to A

19 Amos and Amaziah

- Amos said that in just a few years.
 - Israel's King Jeroboam II would die by the sword.
 - the nation would be destroyed. and
 - the people of Israel would go into exile.
- All of this did happen when the capital fell to the Assyrians in 722 B.C. — making it a bad year indeed for the Israel's

20 Amos and Amaziah

- Amos answered by prophesying that the coming year of exile for Israel would also be the worst time to be alive for Amaziah.
- Specifically, his wife would become a prostitute in the city, his sons and daughters would fall by the sword, his land would be desolate.
- Yes. 722 B.C. was a horrible year for both Israel and the whole household of Amaziah.

21 2019: A Good Year?

- In any given year, there's always enough bad news to convince us that things overall are terrible and that at least for so far, 2019 is no exception.
- There's also always enough bad news to convince some people that we are living in the end times.
- Last year in a town in Northern California, ironically named Paradise, there was an awful cataclysmic event.
- It wasn't locusts that consumed the town, but a wildfire where 38 people lost their lives and 90% of the housing and 50% of the trees were destroyed.

22 2019: A Good Year?

- But for many of us, it's not the national-headline-type events that most affect our lives.
- It's more likely, [...]
 - job losses, illnesses, accidents.
 - marriage failures, deaths of loved ones.
 - localized natural disasters.
 - a missing sense of purpose — or
 - unfulfilled hopes and dreams.

23 2019: A Good Year?

- So, how we adjust our attitudes and/or change our behaviors to create "good years," is very important.

- The following are three things to remember when we are going through a tough year [...]
- It's not about us being fixated on our problems.
- It's not about us storing up lots of money.
- However, it's about going "all in" for Christ.

24 **It's Not About You**

- When things don't go the way we want them to or our routine is broken, we may feel that our whole world has been yanked out from under us.
- However, Psychologists have found that the best way for people to get back on their feet emotionally is for them to focus on what they can control.
- In fact, it has been found that true satisfaction is only found when we reach beyond ourselves—doing God's will by helping others.
- It can take any bad year and make it better.

25 **It's not about the Money**

- According to Happiness 101, money doesn't make us happy nor does it save us on the day of disaster.
- According to Proverbs [...]
- Wealth is worthless in the day of wrath (disaster), but righteousness delivers from death. (Proverbs 11:4 NIV)
- The wealth of the rich is their fortified city; they imagine it an unscalable wall. (Proverbs 18:11 NIV)
- Wisdom is a shelter as money is a shelter, but the advantage of knowledge is this: that wisdom preserves the life of its possessor. (Ecclesiastes 7:12 NIV)
- So then, money or wealth is not the answer in times of trouble.

26 **It's about Living for Christ**

- These are the apostle Paul's very words and he wrote them while in prison: "For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain."
- Have you ever met an unhappy, unfulfilled and restless person who at some point went "all in" for Christ?
- Here's the secret to avoiding the worst of years and experiencing the best of years: [...]
- When Christ calls us, go all in.

27 **Going all In . . .**

- However, what does going "all in" look like?
- Become a follower of Christ and don't allow your friends, popular culture, family, or selfish desires interfere or distract you from walking in His steps.

- In other words, to truly follow Christ is to make Him our Boss and do the things that please Him as outlined in the New Testament.
- For if we do, we will have the following promises—even during times of trouble or a bad year.

28 **Going all In . . .**

- Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? (Romans 8:35)
- No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. (Romans 8:37 NIV)
- For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:38–39 NIV)

29 **Conclusion**

- The people of the world who have no faith, go to pieces when hard times come and they often make a bad situation worse.
- But not so for those who have gone “all in.”
- They have the promise that no matter how bad things get, God is going to be there to help us and give us peace.
- As Jesus has said, “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble (a bad year). But take heart! I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33 NIV)
- So then, Do not be afraid, little flock (Luke 12:32 NIV), God has everything under control and hears our prayers.
- Therefore, let us go, “all in” and wait upon the Lord for better days will surely come!