**THE LION ROARS**

**A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF AMOS**

**(A Message to Those Who Were at Ease in Zion)**

Main Idea: God desires to bless His people but when His people begin to worship the blessing more than the Giver of blessings, God will have to judge those people to bring them back into a right relationship with Him.

Amos 6:1 - 14 Lesson 10

Introduction –

* Amos chapters 3 - 6 contains three messages and each chapter begins with the words... "*hear the word..."* The last message contains two woes in 5:18 and then again in 6:1. The first woe was to the Northern Kingdom because they foolishly *desired the day of the Lord.* They had no clue what was really coming. The second woe is to *both* kingdoms (Israel and Judah) because *they were at ease.*
* A Spruce Grouse is a bird that feeds on the forest floor where there are plenty of conifers. They feed on the needles and buds of the trees. They are pretty sparse but if you ever spot one they are very easy to approach and even catch them if you want one. They are so tame they are not afraid of their enemies or of approaching danger like they should. So, they make an easy target for supper. That's why they are knick-named the *fool's hen.*
* Well, sadly, that's the description of Israel here tonight. They are so peaceful with how luxuriously they are living without God that they are sitting ducks for God's judgment. They have no real idea what's about to happen to them. They just don't get it!

1. **GOD REVEALS THE CONDITIONS OF THE NATION OF ISRAEL TO PREPARE THEM FOR THEIR CONDEMNATION,** Vs. 1 – 6
   1. In Verse One - He heads everything He’s going to say about them with a “*woe.”* A woe is a solemn declaration of a warning or a curse. But first God describes the nations that this *woe* is to come upon.
   2. They are at ease in Zion, or Jerusalem... those living in the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Judah, remember, had gotten to the place where they despised the Word of God, (2:4, 5). And once you despise the law of God your next step is to neglect or even disregard it. That is what Judah was doing... and the whole time they are *living at ease in Zion,* the city of Jerusalem... as if nothing in the world was wrong.
   3. He addresses the Northern Kingdom of Israel by those that *put their trust in the mountain of Samaria.* This was their capital city and was built on a hill. It was truly a force to be dealt with militarily and the people felt secure in their capital. They were *at ease*... worshipping in their own way and cutting Jehovah God out of their life.
   4. These two cities, Zion and Samaria, were the chief cities of these two kingdoms and these were the cities to which all their citizens came to worship.
   5. From Verse Two - (read). As he points out each one of these great cities or places he describes their individual greatness. These were *great* cities. But then he asks, "*Are these cities better than yours or are their borders bigger than yours?"* The obvious answer is *NO.* And the point is... that since they (Israel) are so much greater and so much more blessed than these surrounding cities, how ungrateful they are for God's great blessings upon them.
   6. What's so significant about these foreign cities is that each one of them had been conquered by some enemy, great as they were. And if these surrounding cities in their individual greatness fell because of their lack of appreciation for the one and only true God, what makes Israel and Judah think they can stand when they are so filled with personal pride and self-exalting ways? They needed to WAKE UP!
   7. Verse Three – These people pushed the thought of God’s Judgment away and imagined His blessings instead... (The day of the Lord, 5:18). In doing so their sinful living was encouraged and their deception only deepened. This only brought God’s judgment ever so close!
   8. Verses 4 – 6 describes their sedative that enabled their godless lifestyle.
      1. ( vs. 4) They reclined on the most expensive furniture and ate the young animals from the flock which were the most tender meats.
      2. (vs. 5) While they played their musical instruments, they chanted empty and meaningless words that reflected the emptiness of their hearts. The viols made beautiful harmony yet their corrupt hearts could not match their beauty. They continued to invent musical instruments to be able to play like King David, but failed to produce the character that could give meaning to the harmony. That’s so much like much of the music today!
      3. (vs. 6) Many believe these bowls were used in offerings of wine and sprinkling of blood in the true temple. Now they are using them for their drunkenness. They wear perfumes fit for a king. Humility would reserve this fancy treatment for royalty, for those held in high regard. But they proudly treated themselves as princes when God looked in their hearts and saw only paupers. What hypocrisy! Their country was soon to be ravished by enemies closing in closer and closer and they fail to grieve for judgment that was right at the door described as ... “*the affliction of Joseph.”*
   9. The problem with Israel and Judah was that they were *At Ease...* They were comfortable with their sinful ways. They could no longer feel the pang of conviction when God spoke to them. Their sins no longer appeared to be sin... so... they were at ease... Trust me.... their *ease* was just the calm before the storm... the eye of the hurricane!
   10. Living a rich lifestyle was not what God condemned. It was that they rejected the God who freely blesses. **1 Timothy 6:17**  Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;
2. **THOSE CONDITIONS PAVED THE WAY FOR THEIR CONDEMNATION,** vs. 7 – 14
   1. Verse 7 – those who were the last to show any humility will be the first to go into captivity. **Proverbs 16:18**  Pride *goeth* before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.
   2. Verse 8 – God’s hatred for their ingratitude and ungodly lifestyle was so strong that He is going to deliver the whole city to their enemy.
   3. Verse 9 – If Abram could have found just 10 righteous men in Sodom God would have spared the city. But if 10 men are in one house (probably one of the palaces) God will destroy them all.
   4. Verse 10 – A man’s uncle will have to cremate his body. And if one even considers mentioning the Lord, they are immediately hushed... either because of their captors forbidding it or because they don’t feel worthy to now call upon God when they had scorned him in their abundance.
   5. Verse 11 – Both the palaces and the shacks in the outskirts will be pelted and destroyed. Much like the death angel in Egypt took the life of both the rich and the poor.
   6. Verse 12 – It would be absurd to run horses across dangerous rock or to try to plow the rock. They would gain nothing from doing that. Yet just as foolishly, they have turned judgment into the bitterness of gall and what should be righteous they have made it something poisonous.
   7. Verse 13 – is either a refence to their foolish idols they trusted in or it’s their own strength they are boasting of by having defeated previous enemies.
   8. Verse 14 – Hamath was the boundary of Israel on the north and the Nile River was the southern boundary. He was telling them that every mile of their territory will be continuously attacked with no place to hide or run to for safety!

**Discuss:**

1. If a woe is a solemn declaration of a warning or a curse... where could multiple woes be applied today?
2. How does Amos describe the ease those living in Zion were experiencing? How would that relate to individual Christianity or even with America?
3. Did God condemn them for their luxurious living? If not, then what were those at ease condemned for?