**THE LION ROARS**

**A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF AMOS**

**(A FAMINE OF THE WORST KIND)**

Amos 8:1 - 14 Lesson 13

Main Idea: Newton's third law is: *For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. The statement means that in every interaction, there is a pair of forces acting on the two interacting objects. The size of the forces on the first object equals the size of the force on the second object*.

Spiritually speaking, for every wayward action of God’s people there is an equal action by God, prompted by the sinfulness of His people. Newton’s *third law* is nothing more than a repetition of God’s law of sowing and reaping.

Introduction –

Famines are such destructive disasters. They are horrific to experience and heartbreaking to watch their destruction. It becomes painfully obvious to nations when rain becomes scarce or even non-existent. Crops simply will not grow. Then everybody relies on the storehouses… till they run out. Then it gets bad… really bad. Men will steal and even resort to murder to get food for him and his family. Cannibalism has even been resorted to. People will scratch the fields looking for fallen grain from a harvest years ago. Then the emaciation and weakness and the death of the weak and then even the strong succumb.

In today’s vision God tells Israel they will experience a famine that surpasses the horror of what we just described. Let’s lead up to it.

1. **THE VISION AMOS DESCRIBES,**  vs. 1 – 3
   1. We start with a new vision presented. It’s a vision of *summer fruit.* That’s significant. There’s an early harvest or *firstfruits.* But toward the end of the season everything ripens. Some is even beginning to rot. It is the time that everybody recognizes as *the end of the season.* There will be nothing after this.
   2. God asks Amos what he sees and Amos tells Him that he saw a *basket of summer fruit.* God then explains that just as you saw *summer* fruit or the end of the harvest, that’s what is true of Israel. They are on their last leg so to speak. Matter of fact God tells them that He will not pass by them anymore. (Overlooking a child’s disobedience several times but finally determining “*no more, next time I go by I’m dealing with that!”)* Well, that’s what God is saying.
   3. Verse three - Every place shall be filled with the dead, and an ugly silence will be everywhere; the few that remain will be afraid either to speak or complain, or even to chant a funeral dirge for the most respectable of the dead. It will be an eerie scene.
2. **NEXT, AMOS OFFERS AN INVITATION TO HEAR THE REASON FOR THEIR JUDGMENT,** vs. 4 – 6
   1. He invites them to hear the *cause* of their end. The invitation is to those who have caused God’s anger. They are the enemy of the poor and needy. They are those who use the poor for their own benefit and for *their* demise.
   2. In Verses Five and Six, God describes their hypocritical worship. (Read) The new moon. The first day of the month was a holiday, on which all trade was suspended. These greedy sinners kept the festivals, indeed, but they resented the time given to them, and considered it as a waste of their valuable time.
   3. They would take the refuse of the wheat, that which was fit only for cattle, and would sell it to the poor at an elevated price. They would even buy the poor for the price of a pair of shoes as some interpret it.
   4. They were saying, “*When will the Sabbath be done so that we can get back out there and make some money. We want to sell wheat and deceive the people with our false weights.*”
   5. They couldn’t wait to get out of the Sabbath worship to buy the poor with silver or even for the price of a pair of shoes! *That’s what they were thinking about during the day of worship.*
   6. That begs the question for us… What do you think about during church? “*I just can’t wait to get out of church so that I can…”*
3. **THEN GOD DESCRIBES THE NATURE OF THEIR JUDGMENT,** vs. 7 – 14
   1. In Verse Seven God tells them He’s not going to forget *ONE* thing they’ve done wrong.
   2. Thankfully, when we get saved God tells us that the sins we’ve committed He will remember no more. **Hebrews 10:17**  And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.
   3. But to an unrepentant sinner, God never forgets! God is not mocked! We *never* “*get one over on God*.” God’s never been *hood winked*. God sees and records *every* word and deed we’ve ever said or done! God is a righteous Judge and there is no crime scene where the evidence has been so tampered with that He couldn’t make an accurate judgment.
   4. In Verse Eight he tells them their judgment will come in like a flood. You simply can’t stop a flood; you just have to allow it to have its way (any examples). And without doubt, God is going to have His way when He judges them.
   5. Then verse Nine describes some kind of eclipse of the sun or just some kind of judgment that affects the sunlight. This would naturally devastate crops and in winter would cause the most severe temperatures.
   6. Verse 13 describes the thirst of the young men and women and then seems to indicate why in verse 14... they have never truly left their sinful idolatry and calf worship both in Samaria and Beersheba.
4. **GOD NOW PROCEEDS TO DESCRIBE THE CONDITION OF THEIR HEARTS AFTER THESE JUDGMENTS COME TO PASS,** VS. 10 – 14
   1. Notice the drastic change of heart from the people here in this verse to the previous verses. In verse 10 they are actually in mourning and lamentation. What a contrast to their deceitful, proud ways previously. Something major has happened! Don’t miss it!
   2. These people have now voluntarily put on sackcloth and shaved their heads in great humility. They will be as broken as a man whose only son has died.
   3. Verse Eleven is key to this whole chapter... maybe even the whole book. God describes a famine that is not the result of a lack of bread or water. The missing ingredient in their land will be *a total absence of God’s Word!*
5. The judgment of God will be so severe that the people of Israel will recognize that it’s because of their sin... and they will try to look for God’s Word, for God’s prophets, for a copy of the law… *anything* that has to do with the Word of God… but they won’t find it! From one end of Israel to the other they will search. Oh, if they had only searched while God was dealing with them... if they had only responded while the preacher was preaching! But they will have waited too late... like so many in the pews today!

**DISCUSS:**

1. What did the basket of summer fruit represent?
2. Why was Israel weary of the new moons?
3. During their holy days of worship... what was really on their minds. How could their attitudes be a reflection of modern-day worship services?
4. What are some of the ways Israel mistreated the poor?
5. Describe some of the judgments inflicted on Israel.
6. What attitude did this eventually develop in Israel. What was the result of their nationwide search.
7. How would this relate to America’s attitude about God and His Word today?
8. What could Israel just not give up... right to the end?