

FAMISHED



Prophetic Word of Amos

January - March 2010

This Book Belongs to _____



MARCH 14

A Basket of Fruit

Amos 8

Introduction

How many times in life do you end up right where you started? This lesson brings us back to the start of our study of Amos. We get back to the famine that God sends throughout the land. It's a famine and a drought caused by the absence of God's Word. It's as deadly as any physical famine or regional drought because it kills people physically, spiritually and emotionally. It is devastating...even to the oppressors. While they end up with all the stuff, they also end up without a heart and without a soul.

God puts a basket of fruit on the table of life and says, "The

time is ripe” for Israel to reap what she’s sown. The image is a contradiction. After all, when is harvest not a good thing? When is it a negative to see a basket of fruit? The image conjures up good thoughts and happy memories for people who live in an agriculturally based society. How can a beautiful basket of fruit be anything but good?

The basket of fruit indicates that it’s time. God’s been patient. God’s been waiting. But now it’s time. Before God gets to that point, we need to say in our hearts, “It’s time for some serious changes.”

Sermon Notes

In the mind of God, there is a _____.

A cultural statement is made to God when a day of _____ is limited so that _____, _____ and _____ can be expanded.

God considers some _____ of the _____ to be rationalizations for _____ the poorest among us. It’s not just _____; it’s _____.

God’s people must be....

- Ethical _____ & _____.
- Concerned about the _____ cost, not just the _____ of the product.
- Focused on more than “ _____ ” but also serve as those who _____.

Word of Thought

What's the worst experience you've ever had eating fruit?

Word of Study

Read Amos 8. What is going to happen to the worship of the Israelites?

What is the concern of the business community in verse 5?

God seems to continually connect the land to the people. How are we interconnected?

What will be the effect of the famine on the younger generations?

Word of Discussion

1) God seems to turn the world of the Israelites upside down in Amos. “Your celebrations will be filled with sadness, your singing into weeping, your dancing into mourning and a basket of fruit an icon of curses rather than blessings.” God’s judgment always comes as a reaction to the action (or inaction) of His people. The “cultural system” we live in seems so much bigger than any person or group that we often don’t think we can make a difference. Share with each other moments when you’ve seen Christians go against the system to make sure people got a fair share at a fair price.

2) Economic ethics are something we struggle with. If we’re buying a used house or car, we point out all the flaws that should reduce the price. If we’re selling the same car, we often hide the flaws and problems in order to boost the price. While capitalism is actually a vehicle for fairness and wealth, it can also become a source of dishonest gain. What are the common ways we are tempted to compromise our economic ethics because it makes good capitalistic sense?

3) Based on Amos and the chapters we’ve studied so far, what have we learned about the heart of God when it comes to the poor and oppressed?

Word of Action

I don't think many American Christians have the heart of the Israelites that led to the oppression of the poor in the time of Amos. At the same time, I'm sure many of the Israelites would have felt the same. One way Northwest Church combats this oppression is through the thousands of dollars we set aside to help the poor and oppressed in Kenya, Honduras and a variety of other global outposts. On May 23rd, we will take up a special collection that is above and beyond our regular contribution. This contribution is known as "Mission's Sunday" and coincides with the Day of Pentecost when the Spirit of God was initially poured out on humanity and the church was born in a powerful way. This week, begin intentionally praying about your participation in this event and what you will give and/or pledge to give.

15555 15th Avenue NE
Shoreline, WA 98155
www.nwchurch.net
206.364.2275



NORTHWEST
CHURCH

*embracing **real** life*