

October 13, 2019 – Amos 8:1-7a; 11-14 (NIV)

Theme: The Pride of Jacob. Hope - In The Midst of Judgment

“This is what the Sovereign Lord showed me: a basket of ripe fruit. What do you see, Amos? He asked. – A basket of ripe fruit, I answered. – Then the Lord said to me, The time is ripe for my people Israel; I will spare them no longer. In that day, declares the Sovereign Lord, the songs in the temple will turn to wailing. Many, many bodies – flung everywhere! Silence! Hear this, you who trample the needy and do away with the poor of the land, saying, - When will the New Moon be over that we may sell grain, and the Sabbath be ended that we may market wheat? – skimping the measure, boosting the price and cheating with dishonest scales, buying the poor with silver and the needy for a pair of sandals, selling even the sweepings with the wheat. The Lord has sworn by the Pride of Jacob: The days are coming, declares the Sovereign Lord, when I will send a famine through the land – not a famine of food or a thirst for water, but a famine of hearing the Words of the Lord. Men will stagger from sea to sea and wander from north to east, searching for the Word of the Lord, but they will not find it. In that day ‘the lovely young women and strong young men will faint because of thirst. They who swear by the shame of Samaria, or say, As surely as your god lives, O Dan, or, As surely as the god of Beersheba lives – they will fall, never to rise again.”

The soybean field across from the church is beginning to change colors. It is changing from green to Harvest Gold. Harvest time is approaching. When harvest begins, and the fields are dry enough, the combines will begin their march across the fields, gathering in the grain. In this text today, the Lord God showed the Prophet AMOS a basket of ripe fruit. The Lord then gives the interpretation of what this means:

Vs. 2 – Then the Lord said, The time is ripe for MY people Israel; I will spare them no longer.

The Lord’s judgment was about to come upon the people of Israel living in the North. They were deliberately despising the Word of the Lord and as we also read in Hebrews:

Hebrews 10:26 – If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, 27 – But only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. 30b – The Lord will judge His people. 31 – It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God.”

WHY would the Lord God no longer spare His People? The answer is also found in this text:

Vs. 4 – Hear this, you who trample the needy and do away with the poor of the land,

Vs. 5 – saying, - When will the New Moon be over that we may sell grain, and the Sabbath be ended that we may market wheat? – skimping the measure, boosting the price and cheating with dishonest scales,

Vs. 6 – buying the poor with silver and the needy for a pair of sandals, selling even the sweepings with the wheat.

The people of Israel were not showing fruits of faith, because their faith in God was nearly dead, if not already there. The Israelite people were:

1. Abusing the Poor
2. Only looking forward for the day of worship to be over so that they can get back to making money.
3. Cheating in the market place
4. Selling the chaff with the grain.

By doing these things, God’s chosen people were demonstrating where their hearts were - Far from God! HOW serious would God’s judgment be?

Vs. 3 – In that day, declares the Sovereign Lord, the songs in the temple will turn to wailing. Many, many bodies – flung everywhere! Silence!

Imagine being AMOS, as God’s called representative to deliver this message of the Lord. Amos was a Shepherd from a place called Tekoa. He carried out his ministry about 750 B.C. Even though this text does not tell us who God used as HIS instrument of punishment upon Israel and later Judah, we know from other portions of Scripture that God used the Assyrians to take the Northern Tribes of Israel into slavery in 722 B.C. Never to be heard from again.

God used the Babylonians to carry the Southern tribe of Judah into slavery in 586 B.C. Fortunately for us and all mankind, God allowed a remnant of the tribe of Judah to return to Jerusalem because God had promised that the Savior would come from the tribe of Judah. The people of Israel had despised the Word of the Lord, and so the Lord would withdraw His Word from the land. The people of Israel had despised the Word of the Lord to the point that they were worshiping false gods and goddesses at Samaria, Dan and Beersheba.

This section of Scripture is a warning to us as a congregation, as a community, as a Nation. Do not reject the Word of the Lord, do not despise it, do not come up with excuses to avoid it or to live lives that do not reflect our faith in Jesus.

Without the Word of God there is no salvation. Without the Word of God there is no heaven to look forward to, there is only Hell. We give thanks to God that He has not caused a famine of His Word in our nation at this time. We still are living In His Grace and favor. We still have the precious Word of the Lord in which we learn of our Savior Jesus. “Whom God Sent, Who had no sin, to be sin for us, so that we might become the righteousness of God.” – (II Corinthians 5:21)

To those Believers living in the day of AMOS, their trained ears would have picked up on the small segment of Gospel in this text.

The Words: The Pride of Jacob, was in reference to the ONE Who would come from the line of Abraham – Isaac and Jacob. That Pride of Jacob is none other than Jesus Christ, The Lamb of God Who taketh away the sin of the world!

Let us Give thanks for the Pride of Jacob – Christ Jesus our Lord and Savior – AMEN!