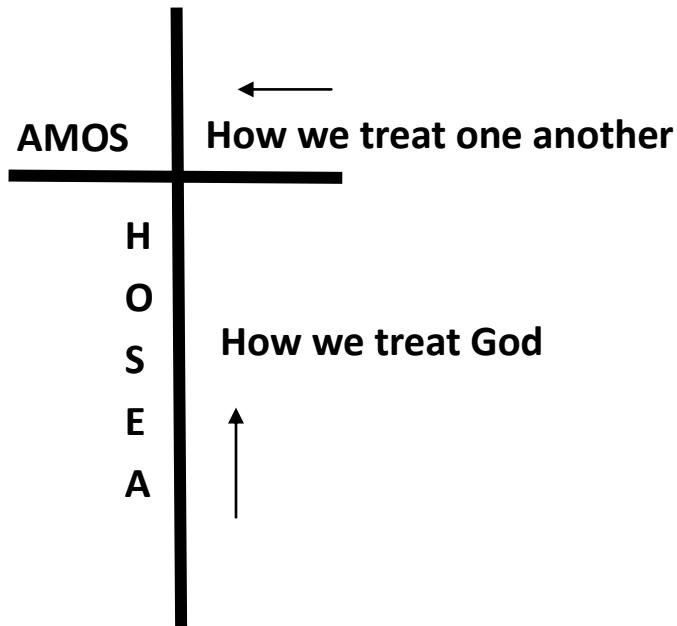


AMOS - The Burden and View of His Prophecy

The Vertical and Horizontal that makes the Full Cross



Hosea – “The Vertical”

Hosea was a picture of the way God loves us... selflessly and completely. Through such pure love Gomer, a harlot, was brought into union with Hosea and became fruitful. Hosea imparted His very KIND of love into his wife, causing her to bring forth a certain kind of fruit. Hosea's kind of love was CROSS love. Hosea (as a type of Christ) bore shame, sin, and even death to love Gomer and give her new life. Gomer received not just the benefits of that great love, but conceived the spirit of it as shown in the names of her three children. Gomer's children, Jezreel, Loruhamah, and Loammi all represent the way of Christ crucified. By the time Gomer conceived of and bore Loammi, she was willing to be sown as a dying seed in order for others to be gathered in and receive life. In these first chapters of Hosea we find that the purpose for which God brings us into the vertical relationship is so that the horizontal relationship can be formed. The goal and end of all the Lord's dealings with His people is to bring them into love, for by this one thing all the law and the prophets are summed up.

Amos – “To Bear A Burden”

Amos' “beam of wood” from the Cross (as we have just shown in the above diagram) is the horizontal beam. It is the aspect of the cross that relates to how we treat one another. Hosea bore the vertical beam that relates to our union with God. BOTH beams must be in place for the full work of the Cross to have effect in our lives. Many people are satisfied to have just the vertical relationship of cultivating a relationship with God while neglecting His very Body and Bride. To God, this is unacceptable, and quite impossible because God and His Body are one. Jesus said, “what you have done to the least you have done to me”. I John 3:11-18 lays out the reality that if you really love God and have God's love in you, then you love one another. Israel had developed into a religious culture full of outward worship and tokens of “deep spirituality” which no true proof in the way they manifested that “deep spirituality” to one another through the self giving love of God.

There is quite a weight to the burden Amos had to bear, as people many times try to justify the way they hurtfully treat one another while still maintaining a false sense of spirituality. Breaking through all those excuses and “deeper life” justifications requires a ROARING and a SHAKING... both of which occur in the book of Amos. If we truly draw closer to God’s heart we will soon realize that we break His heart by our lack of love one to another. Judah and Israel may have been living in a divided condition during the days of Amos, but God is not divided. God is one with His Body and to abuse one another is to abuse Him. Yet this reality was all but unknown in the time of Amos, and the time had come where God was going to bring these things to bear, starting with showing and burdening Amos with God’s true heart and view.

Amos – “From among the Sheep”

1:1a “The words of Amos, who was among the herdsmen of Tekoa which he saw concerning Israel”

God SHOWED something to Amos partially due to the vantage point Amos had dwelling among the sheep. God could show Amos “sheep things” because he dwelt among them. Amos daily would have observed the WAY the sheep treated one another in small things... seemingly “unimportant” things. Things that would have seemed to have gone unnoticed by the great King. But the Lord of all dwells among and within His sheep, and how they treat one another is the very seal of His Kingdom.

1:1b “...which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam, the son of Joash”

Amos specifically saw the way the sheep treated one another during a time of ease and economic abundance, as both Uzziah and Jeroboam reigned during a season of prosperity and ease in both Judah and Israel. A note of interest in this: even though BOTH Judah and Israel looked and felt as if they were prospering, in actuality they were divided in half and living in a state of wounded, mis-formed separation. It harkens back to Judges 19:29 and the concubine (mistreated at the hands of her own people) who was divided into 12 pieces (*And when he was come into his house, he took a knife, and laid hold on his concubine, and divided her, together with her bones, into twelve pieces, and sent her into all the coasts of Israel*).

In God’s eyes, neither Judah nor Israel was prospering. Rather they were in a state of brokenness beyond all comprehension but to those who have eyes to see from God’s view.

1:1b “...which he saw concerning Israel”

Even though BOTH Judah and Israel were in horrible condition, God was **DEALING WITH ISRAEL**.

This becomes a major theme in the beginning chapters of Amos as God goes through 7 different judgements to all of Israel’s neighbors and Judah before roaring at and scourging Israel for over 4 chapters.

Our pride, self-righteousness, critical spirit, pushing the blame onto others, making of excuses, etc... makes it VERY difficult for God to deal with US. “*Not my brother, not my sister, but it is ME Oh Lord, standing in the need of the CROSS*”. The Spirit of God took the time to deal with this by laying out the book of Amos in the manner it was written by not just hammering on Israel without first making mention of dealing with everyone else also. To me, more important than investigating with critical eyes every rebuke laid upon Judah and the neighboring nations is to receiving the great awakening that God is not being partial or unjust in bringing the judgement of the cross upon Israel/my flesh in a very marked and exacting way. For Israel of old, and for me today, it is time to let the Cross come in and do its work. It is not time to judge others but to let God judge me and reveal where the Spirit of His Son is not formed and self is reigning instead.

1:1c “...two years before the earthquake...”

Even though Israel may feel completely ok, and even healthy due to the outward prosperity and lack of problems, the reality is that DEEP INSIDE THE EARTH there is great pressure, poison, unformed darkness that is churning and burning under the surface. In only TWO YEARS the earth will begin to manifest its true condition, leading eventually to captivity and the end of Israel. Amos SAW what was really going on, and therefore what was coming. God showed him. Amos was not deceived by the outward appearance of things and judged based on what was really going on beneath the surface, the true spiritual state of things and people.

1:2a “And he said, The Lord will ROAR from Zion..”

Who can even begin to fathom the depths of this statement. God is ROARING concerning the state of Zion, (which is meant to be His habitation and bride). The very depths of God are moved at her condition. He is not weeping or pleading, but ROARING from the depths of His being. It is time to HEAR what the Spirit is trying to communicate. GOD Himself is ready to move, to pounce, to burst into motion concerning that which has His name but is not HIM in nature.

1:2b “and utter His voice from Jerusalem”

God is speaking from the place of oneness with His people. God dwelt in Jerusalem. He inhabited the Holy of Holies by His Presence. God is not speaking as one who is distant, like a faraway judge. God is speaking from the place of intimate oneness.

1:2c “and the habitations of the shepherds shall mourn”

What a powerful statement to make at this point. The Shepherds who dwell with the sheep are mourning. They see the true state of God’s people because they observe how they treat one another.

1:2c “and the top of Carmel shall wither”

Mount Carmel was a place of fruitfulness. The top of mount Carmel withering signifies the true state of drought and lack of love in the peoples hearts. The lack of true union in the heights with God (the vertical) is now manifesting in a withered and fruitless state in the earth.

Home Work:

- *How does God want to speak to my heart through the book of Amos?*
- *In what ways does Amos help me to hear the Lord’s heart more clearly?*
- *How can I use the time period of the class to cultivate a new openness to the Holy Spirit and the horizontal work of the cross in me?*