

March 3/4, 2012

## **Restoration**

*Let Justice Flow*

**Amos 7, 8, and 9**

Pastor Bryan Clark

Most of you know that we, as a church, are heavily invested in reaching out to the poorest of the poor in the world in India. This past week Jeff returned from another trip to India and brought me a copy of the newspaper. It's the Sunday edition, so a week ago today. He brought it home to me because it reads like it's right out of the book of Amos. It's a lead story about a financing company that was put in place in order to make loans to the poorest of the poor, but just turns out to be another way to rob from and oppress the poor. Listen to what the article says:

*First they were stripped of their utensils, furniture, mobile phones, television sets, ration cards and heirloom gold jewelry. Then some of them drank pesticide. One woman threw herself into a pond. Another jumped into a well with her children. Sometimes the debt collectors watched nearby. More than 200 poor, debt-ridden residents of Andhra Pradesh killed themselves in 2010. Both reports said the SKS (which is the financing company) employees had verbally harassed over-indebted borrowers, forced them to pawn valuable items, and cited other borrowers to humiliate them or orchestrated sit-ins outside their homes to publically shame them. In some cases the SKS staff physically harassed the defaulters, according to the report. Only in death would the debts be forgiven. One woman drank pesticide and died a day after an SKS loan agent told her to prostitute her daughters to pay off the debt. Another SKS debt collector told a delinquent borrower to drown herself in a pond if she wanted her debt waived. The next day she did. She left behind four children. One agent blocked a woman from bringing her young son, weak with diarrhea, to the hospital, demanding payment first. Other borrowers, who could not get any new loans until she paid, told her that if she wanted to die, they would bring her the pesticide. An SKS staff member was there when she drank the poison. An 18-year-old girl, pressured until she handed over 150 rupees meant for a school examination fee, she drank pesticide. She left a suicide note, "Work hard, earn money; do not take loans." (Kinetz, Erika. "Small Loans Add Up to Lethal Debts." The Hindu. 26 Febr. 2012. p. 1)*

It's amazing; it sounds like right out of the book of Amos. For the last six weeks we've reminded ourselves of God's heart for the oppressed, for the poor, for the orphan and the widow and the immigrant—those that the world uses and abuses. Amos has reminded us that a lot of the abuse comes because of selfish, greedy, consumer hearts—an insatiable appetite for more and more and more—people willing to advantage themselves by grossly disadvantaging others, breaking down the social fabric of a community. Amos has reminded us: as long as that attitude prevails in the food chain from top to bottom, people will be working the system, advantaging themselves and systematically breaking down the social fabric of the community and oppressing the disadvantaged. Amos has reminded us that the very thing put in place to protect the vulnerable, to protect the poor and weak and the immigrant was the very thing being used by the rich to oppress the poor—and that was the judicial system. As long as the system put in place to protect the poor was corrupt, the poor and the oppressed had nowhere to turn. We've reminded ourselves that just because something is legal doesn't make it right.

Amos has reminded us that one of the causes of injustice in any community is sexual immorality. In our culture people often say as long as two consenting adults do it in private, it doesn't hurt anybody. But that is an absolutely ridiculous notion! We, as a nation, spend billions of dollars cleaning up the mess of sexual immorality. As a matter of fact, it would be fair to say if we cleaned up this one issue worldwide, we could help the poor and the hungry and the needy without any problem. Sexual immorality is the ultimate advantaging myself to the disadvantage of a community. And last but certainly not least, Amos reminded us that the community was filled with religious hypocrisy. People who, six days a week, crush and oppress the poor, show up one day a week to do their religious thing—to be noticed by others, to convince everyone that everything's fine between me and God. Amos reminds us of things that are equally true in our culture today.

This is our final week in the book of Amos. We'll go through chapters 7, 8, 9—three chapters— but should be able to get through it quickly. You kind of have to see all three of these together to get the point—then, at the end, a very surprising twist. If you have a Bible, turn with us to Amos, Chapter 7. The best way to understand this last section is: it's organized around five visions that Amos has from God. Chapter 7, Verse 1, Vision number 1:

**Thus the Lord GOD showed me, and behold, He was forming a locust-swarm when the spring crop began to sprout. And behold, the spring crop was after the king's mowing. And it came about, when it had finished eating the vegetation of the land, that I said,**

**“Lord GOD, please pardon!**

**How can Jacob stand,**

**For he is small?”**

**The LORD changed His mind about this.**

**“It shall not be,” said the LORD. (\*NASB, Amos, 7:1-3)**

Vision number 1 is the vision of locusts, a plague of locusts coming to destroy the crops. One of the greatest fears of these people was these locusts that would come and clean out the land of all of its crop. It refers, here, to the mowing that would be done after the king's mowing. We would call it, in our terminology, the second cutting. Basically what he's talking about is the king always got the first cutting, so the king used it for himself and to feed the army. Then there was a second cutting later on—that was used for the people. The idea of the text is the second cutting is so late in the season, if something happens to the second cutting, there's no time to replant and the people will starve to death. So the locusts are taking out the second cutting, which is what causes Amos to plead with God, “Don't do this. We're a small nation and we will die.” And in remarkable fashion, God changes his mind. He relents. Now this always raises the question, “How does prayer move the hand of a sovereign God?” Answer: I don't know. Neither does anybody else. Nobody can explain how this works. Sometimes we find ourselves falling into fatalism, where what's going to happen is going to happen; what's the use? But there's clear evidence from Scripture that God listens when His people pray. God changed His mind. This is what we refer to as an anthropomorphic statement. It's a human attribute attached to God, just to make a theological point. Whatever's happening here, God listens to Amos, says, “Okay I relent—I'm not going to do that.” Vision number 2:

**Thus the Lord GOD showed me, and behold, the Lord GOD was calling to contend *with them* by fire, and it consumed the great deep and began to consume the farm land.**

**Then I said,**

**“Lord GOD, please stop!  
How can Jacob stand, for he is small?”  
The LORD changed His mind about this.  
“This too shall not be,” said the Lord GOD. (Vs. 4-6)**

Vision number 2 is the vision of a fire that would sweep the land. It would consume the water; it would consume the crops and they would die. Amos, again, pleads on behalf of his people and, in amazing fashion, God relents—He changes His mind—because Amos asked! Vision number 3, verse 7:

**Thus He showed me, and behold, the Lord was standing by a vertical wall, with a plumb line in His hand. The LORD said to me, “What do you see, Amos?”  
And I said, “A plumb line.” Then the Lord said,  
“Behold I am about to put a plumb line  
In the midst of My people Israel.  
I will spare them no longer.  
The high places of Isaac will be desolated  
And the sanctuaries of Israel laid waste.  
Then I will rise up against the house of Jeroboam with the sword.”(Vs. 7-9)**

The third vision is the vision of a plumb line, exactly what it would be today. If you’re building a wall, you put the plumb line at the top of the wall; it hangs down with a weight and you can see if the wall is straight or if the wall is leaning. If the wall is leaning, it’s unsafe and it must come down. So God says, “I’m going to take a plumb line and I’m going to put it on Israel,” and Israel is found to be leaning. The plumb line would be justice—and they’re not just. So he says, “They must come down,” and very emphatically says, “This time I’m not changing my mind. This time I will carry out my judgment!” Starting then in verse 10, you have a power struggle between Amos the prophet and Amaziah the priest.

**Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent word to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, “Amos has conspired against you in the midst of the house of Israel; the land is unable to endure all his words. For thus Amos says, ‘Jeroboam will die by the sword and Israel will certainly go from its land into exile.’” Then Amaziah said to Amos, “Go, you seer, flee away to the land of Judah, and there eat bread and there do your prophesying! But no longer prophesy at Bethel, for it is a sanctuary of the king and a royal residence.” (Vs. 10-13)**

Keep in mind the responsibility of a priest was to be a go-between between a holy God and sinful people. But Amaziah had drifted far from that. Amaziah goes to the king and says, “We have a problem. There’s this guy who thinks he’s a prophet, by the name of Amos, and he’s saying bad things about the king, bad things about the land; we can’t take it anymore.” I think what comes back from Jeroboam is what Amaziah says to Amos. “You can’t stay here any longer. Take your little game and go home.” Basically, when he refers to him as a **seer**, he’s referring to those who were professional prophets, people who could be hired as prophets and supposedly could tell the future, and that’s how they made their living. That’s why he says, “You have to go home to do your little thing and earn your bread there, but you can’t stay here.” Verse 14:

**Then Amos replied to Amaziah, “I am not a prophet, nor am I the son of a prophet; for I am a herdsman and a grower of sycamore figs. But the LORD**

**took me from following the flock and the LORD said to me, ‘Go prophesy to My people Israel.’ Now hear the word of the LORD: you are saying, ‘You shall not prophesy against Israel nor shall you speak against the house of Isaac.’ (Vs.14-16)**

So Amos responds and says, “I’m not a seer; I’m not a prophet.” What he means by that is, “I’m not a professional prophet; I’m not here as some hired gun, but rather I’m a rancher; I’m a farmer. I was down South minding my own business, when God shows up and says, ‘Amos, I need you to go to Israel and I need you to tell them what they need to hear.’” And so Amos says, “I come because God told me to come and say these things,” and then he says, “Amaziah, listen to what you’re saying. You’re saying that I can’t speak. You’re saying you don’t want to hear from God. You’re saying I should be quiet.” That’s the power struggle. Verse 17:

**“Therefore, thus says the LORD, ‘Your wife will become a harlot in the city, your sons and your daughters will fall by the sword, your land will be parceled up by a *measuring* line and you yourself will die upon unclean soil. Moreover, Israel will certainly go from its land into exile.’”**

So Amos says to Amaziah, “Because you’re fighting against God, you’ve aligned yourself with Jeroboam in opposition against God, so here’s the deal. You’re going to be carried away into a foreign land and you will die there. Your sons and daughters will be killed in the streets. Your wife will be left alone; she will have no way to survive but to prostitute herself in the streets. This is the consequence for choosing an evil king over God.” Chapter 8:

**Thus the Lord GOD showed me, and behold, *there* was a basket of summer fruit. He said, “What do you see, Amos?” And I said, “A basket of summer fruit.” Then the LORD said to me, “The end has come for My people Israel. I will spare them no longer. The songs of the palace will turn to wailing in that day,” declares the Lord GOD. “Many will be the corpses; in every place they will cast them forth in silence.” (Amos 8:1-3)**

Vision number 4 is Amos seeing a basket of ripe fruit—that’s the idea of summer fruit. There’s a little bit of a play on words in the Hebrew that isn’t captured in the English, but basically the vision is this: “Amos, see that basket of ripe fruit? I need to tell you my people are ripe for judgment and I’m going to carry out that judgment.” Starting in verse 4, He reviews again the problem.

**Hear this, you who trample the needy, to do away with the humble of the land, saying,**

**“When will the new moon be over,  
So that we may sell grain,  
And the sabbath, that we may open the wheat market,  
To make the bushel smaller and the shekel bigger,  
And to cheat with dishonest scales,  
So as to buy the helpless for money  
And the needy for a pair of sandals,  
And *that* we may sell the refuse of the wheat?” (Vs. 4-6)**

He’s reminding them again what the offenses—the oppression of the orphan and the widow and the immigrant and the poor—are basically saying. “When is this religious holiday going to be over—the new moon, or the sabbath—so we can go back to cheating people?” That’s the essence of their

heart; it's just dripping with sarcasm. The idea of **the bushel smaller and the shekel bigger**—they're just cheating people. The scales are dishonest—**so as to buy the helpless**. We saw this in the second week—that they would offer money to the poorest of the poor, with ridiculous interest rates. When the poor couldn't pay, they would literally sell them into slavery and they would sell them because they were owed the price of a pair of sandals. People—by today's standards, that had millions and millions and millions of dollars, lived unbelievable lives of opulence—would sell human beings into slavery because they were owed the equivalent of a price of a pair of sandals. Even when the poor would come to buy wheat, instead of selling them wheat, they'd sell them the chaff. They get home; they open their bag: that's all they have and it's a bag full of chaff and they can't do anything about it because the legal system is corrupt. So they just starve to death. It's just a summary of what we've seen. That's what these people are doing to the weak and the vulnerable.

**The LORD has sworn by the pride of Jacob,  
“Indeed, I will never forget any of their deeds.  
Because of this will not the land quake  
And everyone who dwells in it mourn?  
Indeed, all of it will rise up like the Nile,  
And it will be tossed about  
And subside like the Nile of Egypt.  
It will come about in that day,” declares the Lord GOD,  
“That I will make the sun go down at noon  
And make the earth dark in broad daylight.  
Then I will turn your festivals into mourning  
And all your songs into lamentation;  
And I will bring sackcloth on everyone's loins  
And baldness on every head.  
And I will make it like a time of mourning for an only son,  
And the end of it will be like a bitter day.**

**“Behold, days are coming,” declares the Lord GOD,  
“When I will send a famine on the land,  
Not a famine for bread or a thirst for water,  
But rather for hearing the words of the LORD.  
People will stagger from sea to sea  
And from the north even to the east;  
They will go to and fro to seek the word of the LORD,  
But they will not find it.  
In that day the beautiful virgins  
And the young men will faint from thirst.  
As for those who swear by the guilt of Samaria,  
Who say, ‘As your god lives, O Dan,’  
And, ‘As the way of Beersheba lives,’  
They will fall and not rise again.” (Vs.7-14)**

The best summary of the first part of that is, “The party's over”. The second part of that is saying, “There will be a famine in the land, but it won't be a famine for food and it won't be a thirst for water. It will be a famine for a word from God. The ultimate judgment of God on His people was silence. And God says, “You will not hear from Me. I will be silent and you will go from place to place, staggering around, desperately wanting a word from God. The young virgins and young

men—the best among you—will ultimately die of thirst looking for a word from God.” The last verse, verse 14, is saying, “Don’t bother going to the religious centers because you won’t hear from God there.” Chapter 9:

**I saw the Lord standing beside the altar, and He said, [so this is vision number 5]  
“Smite the capitals so that the thresholds will shake,  
And break them on the heads of them all!  
Then I will slay the rest of them with the sword;  
They will not have a fugitive who will flee,  
Or a refugee who will escape.  
“Though they dig into Sheol,  
From there will My hand take them;  
And though they ascend to heaven,  
From there will I bring them down.  
Though they hide on the summit of Carmel,  
I will search them out and take them from there;  
And though they conceal themselves from My sight on the floor of the sea  
From there I will command the serpent and it will bite them.  
“And though they go into captivity before their enemies,  
From there I will command the sword that it slay them,  
And I will set My eyes against them for evil and not for good.”**

**The Lord GOD of hosts,  
The One who touches the land so that it melts,  
And all those who dwell in it mourn,  
And all of it rises up like the Nile  
And subsides like the Nile of Egypt;  
The One who builds His upper chambers in the heavens  
And has founded His vaulted dome over the earth,  
He who calls for the waters of the sea  
And pours them out on the face of the earth,  
The LORD is His name. (Chapter 9:1-6)**

The easiest way to summarize that section is, “You can run but you can’t hide. Anywhere you go, I’m going to find you and I’m going to discipline you for what you have done.” Verse 7:

**“Are you not as the sons of Ethiopia to Me,  
O sons of Israel?” declares the LORD.  
“Have I not brought up Israel from the land of Egypt,  
And the Philistines from Caphtor and the Arameans from Kir?  
“Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are on the sinful kingdom,  
And I will destroy it from the face of the earth; (Vs.7-8a)**

What God is saying to the sinful people of Israel is that, “You are to me like the pagans. You’re no different to me than the Philistines, than the Edomites, than the Egyptians, than the pagans.” Again you have to understand, this gets confusing. Just because the ethnic Hebrew people in the Old Covenant were the people of God doesn’t mean, in New Testament language, they were saved. Many of these people, ethnically, were among the people of God but were not experiencing God’s salvation. They were no different than the Philistines, than the Egyptians, than the Edomites. They

had rejected God; they had rebelled against Him and they would suffer the same consequence—middle of verse 8:

**“Nevertheless, I will not totally destroy the house of Jacob,”  
Declares the LORD.  
“For behold, I am commanding,  
And I will shake the house of Israel among all nations  
As *grain* is shaken in a sieve,  
But not a kernel will fall to the ground.  
All the sinners of My people will die by the sword,  
Those who say, ‘The calamity will not overtake or confront us.’ (Vs.8b-10)**

We’ve had this reminder the last two weeks—that God has always been faithful to the remnant, that even in the midst of such oppression, in the midst of such offense, in the midst of such idolatry, there’s still a remnant of people that want to do the right thing. They want to be numbered among the righteous. They want *to love good and hate evil* and God says over and over again, “For the sake of the remnant, I will be faithful.” And so God says, “I’m going to put them in a sieve and I’m going to shake and I will not lose one single righteous one. I will separate them out and I will take care of them as my people. I will discipline the sinners and the rebellious and the pagans but I will protect the righteous remnant of my people.” Starting in verse 11, then, there’s a dramatic, unexpected turn.

**“In that day I will raise up the fallen booth of David,  
And wall up its breaches;  
I will also raise up its ruins,  
And rebuild it as in the days of old;  
That they may possess the remnant of Edom  
And all the nations who are called by My name,”  
Declares the LORD who does this. (Vs.11-12)**

It’s a reminder that God will rebuild the nation. In essence he’s saying, “I made a promise to Abraham. I re-upped my promise with a covenant with David and I’m going to keep my promise and I will rebuild my people because there’s a promise that has yet to be fulfilled.”

If you go to the New Testament, Acts, chapter 15, there’s a discussion there called the Jerusalem Counsel. It’s a gathering of Jewish religious leaders who are trying to determine whether or not Gentiles have to be circumcised in order to be part of the family of God. In essence, “*Does a Gentile have to become a Jew in order to be numbered among the people of God?*” And in the midst of that discussion, James stands up and he quotes Amos, chapter 9, verses 11 and 12 and says, “The evidence on the table is clear. God said that he would rebuild His people but it would spread to the other nations like the Edomites, that those who would believe would be numbered among the people of God. God’s vision has always been that all people would come into a relationship with Him.” What follows, though, is absolutely staggering.

**“Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD,  
“When the plowman will overtake the reaper  
And the treader of grapes him who sows seed;  
When the mountains will drip sweet wine  
And all the hills will be dissolved.**

**Also I will restore the captivity of My people Israel,  
And they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them;  
They will also plant vineyards and drink their wine,  
And make gardens and eat their fruit.  
I will also plant them on their land,  
And they will not again be rooted out from their land  
Which I have given them,”  
Says the LORD your God. (Vs.13-15)**

We might revise what we said before. What God was saying is, “The party is over for now, but there’s a better party coming. The promise was that when you come back to the land and you are rebuilt as my people, I will pour out blessing on you like you have never seen—abundance like you have never experienced. As a matter of fact, when the plowman goes out to plow, he won’t be able to plow because the reapers aren’t out of the field yet. It’ll take the reapers the whole year to bring in the harvest. When the wine stompers go out to get the grapes, they’re going to run into the same thing. They can’t replant because the harvesters aren’t done yet because the harvest is so abundant.” He pictures wine flowing out of the mountains like a river, in abundance; it will be beyond what you’ve ever imagined. And we find ourselves saying, “Wait a minute; I thought that was the problem.” That has never been the problem! As a matter of fact, if you look back through the Old Testament, God delights in blessing His people. God finds pleasure in pouring out His goodness; God loves to give to His people. God makes some of the great heroes of faith the most wealthy people on the face of the planet. That was never the problem. The problem was their selfish, greedy, consumer hearts that had this appetite that could never be satisfied, and they oppressed the poor and the weak and the vulnerable and the immigrant and the orphan and the widow. They had this appetite that couldn’t be satisfied—*more...more...more*—while they unraveled the social fabric and people literally died in the streets. God had blessed them with more than what they needed. They could have all lived at an unimaginable level, but they chose, rather, to advantage themselves to the great disadvantage of others—and God said, “That’s enough of that!” It reminds us that God longs to bless His people; He longs for us to delight in His goodness—but that we would have hearts of generosity, that we would have hearts of justice, that we would take what we’ve been given and do what is right in the name of human dignity. This is about 750 BC. From this point until the invasion of the Assyrians, it was a nightmare: Six different kings, three of those assassinated, constant turmoil until the Assyrians came in, in 722 BC, captured them and hauled off the survivors into captivity for seventy years. But God brought back and restored a remnant and, through that remnant, God fulfilled His promise to Abraham and to David and brought forth the Savior of the world who would redeem and restore God’s vision to the world.

We mentioned last week that we tend to be very good at admiring the fact that Jesus ate with sinners and tax collectors and prostitutes, but God didn’t call us to *just admire* Jesus. He’s called us to *be* Jesus—to be the hands and feet of Jesus in a broken, fallen, oppressive world—to roll up our sleeves and get in the mix, to get in the midst of the pain and the suffering and the injustice, to begin to look at our world and say, “What isn’t right about this?” This isn’t the way it’s supposed to be. Where in my circle of influence, where in my industry, where in my job, where in my neighborhood, where in our community do we see things that just simply aren’t right? We need to see what breaks the heart of God and, if it breaks the heart of God, shouldn’t it break our hearts? If this grieves the heart of God, shouldn’t it grieve our hearts and compel us to do something about this?

I have said on several occasions—I'm going to say it one more time—at the end of the day, the government is not the solution to the problem. Now I've intentionally been very vague with that statement, holding off to the last week to give a little more information, because I was wanting to stir the pot a little bit and, trust me, I've been successful with that. But let me tell you exactly what I mean by that statement. I'm not an anti-government person—actually just the opposite. I believe the Bible teaches us we must be respectful of the government. The government is there as ministers of God. There are many wonderful people, working very hard, serving in government offices, trying to do the right thing, bringing justice, bringing goodness, bringing the love of Jesus into a difficult environment. Probably many of you serve in such a role. That's a wonderful place for the church to be. The government—especially as you get more local—I think they're just good people, really trying to do the right thing. But here's the deal: The government simply doesn't have the power to change the human heart. At the end of the day, the government can't make anyone *good*. The government can't make anybody *kind*. The government can't make anyone *compassionate*. The government can't *change a human heart*; it just simply can't. The whole message of the Old Testament is that the law does not have the capacity to change a human heart. Only Jesus, through the life-changing power of the gospel, has the power to actually change a human heart—to make us different from the inside-out, to make us people of compassion, to make us people of kindness, to make us good, to make us people of justice—because it's what's deep within our hearts. Only Jesus has the power to do that. That's why God calls His people to be the people of justice, the people of goodness, the people of kindness, the people of compassion, working together as a team to change what simply isn't acceptable in our world. The very first week I asked you to imagine a river flowing from 70<sup>th</sup> & Highway 2 into our community—a river of justice—that we could change our community. Lincoln, Nebraska, is not New York City. This is not Chicago. It's completely unacceptable that these things happen in our small community—and there's no reason why we can't change that. We're not talking about a few hundred people. We're talking about thousands of people—like a river into every corner of our city, in the name of justice. Why couldn't we change our community? It's easy to shrug our shoulders and think, “Yeah, whatever,” and go on. But if this is so dear to the heart of God, I would ask the question, “Why *not*?” If this is what God wants, why not *us* and why not *now*—that God would let justice flow?

*Our Father, we're thankful that You love us; You love the oppressed; You love the oppressor. God, You pour out Your abundance, Your grace and Your mercy every day, in ways we don't even understand. Lord, You long to bless Your people; that's Your heart. Lord, we want to be the remnant; we want to be people of justice. We want You to open our eyes to what's wrong around us, to what simply isn't right or isn't fair. Lord, we want people to get a glimpse of the world to come, to see that Your gospel includes redemption and restoration of a world that is far from what You intended it to be. Lord, our prayer is that we would be that people that would do justice in our community. In Jesus' Name. Amen.*

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**Restoration**  
*A Study in Amos*  
**Let Justice Flow**  
Amos 7:1-9:15  
Pastor Bryan Clark

**Opening Discussion**

1. What injustices have you become aware of or more aware of through our study in Amos?
2. What frustrations or challenges have you encountered as you've sought to become more aware of "doing justice" in our community?
3. What questions or concerns do you still have as it relates to seeking to let justice flow in our community?

**Bible Study**

1. Review what Amos has identified as causes for injustice in the first 6 chapters?
2. Read Amos 7:1-17. What were Amos' first two visions and why did God relent? What does that mean that a sovereign God "relented"? How does this address the question as to whether or not prayer can move the hand of a sovereign God?
3. What does God say to Amos in his third vision? Why?
4. What is happening between Amos and the priest Amaziah? How might we see this scene play out in our community today?
5. Read Amos 8:1-14. What are the offenses and what is God's response? What kind of famine will define the land according to Amos 8? What does this mean?
6. Read Amos 9:1-10. What does the final vision picture? What does God say about a remnant in 9:8-10?

7. Read Amos 9:11-15. Do you find the final words of Amos rather surprising? Why or why not? After all the people of Israel have done for generations why would God still bless them? How much does He promise to bless them? Has the problem in the time of Amos ever been that the people had too much? What was the problem?

## **Application**

1. What practical teaching do we learn from the final 5 verses of Amos?
2. What are the core issues that apply to us from the book of Amos? What is injustice and what does it mean to “do justice” today?
3. Spend some time praying for open hearts to consider areas where we might all get more involved in doing justice in our community.