

## Amos Lesson 5 Articles

I lost an eighteen-year-old son in a car crash some years ago, and I know, from personal experience, how grievous the loss of a son is. But I also took the funeral service of the only son of an elderly widowed lady who lives just a few doors away from me. She now has no child to care for her in her old age, and she is sad. Jeremiah records a similar event when he says, ‘O my people, put on sackcloth and roll in ashes; mourn with bitter wailing as for an only son, for suddenly the destroyer will come upon us’ (Jer. 6:26). It is no wonder that God’s judgment will be like a bitter day (v. 10).<sup>1</sup>

As the judgment began to unfold the people of God would make a conscious effort to show an awareness of sin. Their feasts would be turned into mourning, their songs into lamentations. All would put on “sackcloth,” the coarse cloth made of goat or camel hair which was worn by mourners. They would shave their heads, a mourning sign forbidden in the law of Moses because of its heathen association (Deut 14:1). The mourning of that day would be as intense as that for an only son. “The end thereof,” i.e., of the mourning, would be “a bitter day.” The cessation of the mourning would not mark the dawn of better times, but of even more suffering (8:10).<sup>2</sup>

Students of Amos have suggested that Amos may have been expelled from northern Israel after his confrontation with Amaziah. The fourth vision and all that follows in the book would then represent the ministry of Amos after he returned to Judah. Following his fourth vision Amos has incorporated an extended oracle on the theme of covetousness. This is followed by the fifth vision in which Amos saw the collapse of the temple. In the future, however, he anticipated the resurrection of the fallen tent (house) of David.<sup>3</sup>

**8:11 — “Behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord GOD, “that I will send a famine on the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD.”**

*F*rom the time of the prophet Malachi to the time of John the Baptist—a period of almost 500 years—this drought withered the land. Let us daily feast on God’s Word, and so avoid a similar drought in our souls.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bentley, M. (2006). *Opening up Amos* (p. 102). Leominster: Day One Publications.

<sup>2 3</sup> Smith, J. E. (1994). *The Minor Prophets* (Am 8:7–10; Am 8:4–9:15). Joplin, MO: College Press.

<sup>4</sup> Stanley, C. F. (2005). *The Charles F. Stanley life principles Bible: New King James Version* (Am 8:11). Nashville, TN: Nelson Bibles.