

Sin Judged, God's People Sustained

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[0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word.

Thank you, Bibles, if you would, and turn to the book of Amos, chapter 8 and verse 1. Amos, chapter 8 and verse 1. And we have been with Amos as he has walked through the nation of Israel and warned them about what God is going to do.

And now we're in the last part of his messages. And he says to them in this passage of Scripture something extremely horrible. In verse 1 and 2 he says, the end is coming.

If you've got your Bible, open it to Amos, chapter 8 and verse 2. And we'll just read that verse. It says, and he said, Amos, what do you see? What seest thou? And I said, a basket of summer fruit.

Then said the Lord unto me, the end is come upon my people Israel. I will not pass by them anymore. You recall, he had come to him and said, hey, I'm going to send the grasshoppers.

[1 : 06] And the grasshoppers, and Amos said, well, come on, Lord, the people are weak. And the nation would die if you did that. And God said, okay, I won't do it. And he said, I'm going to send fire. And Amos said, God, come on, the people are weak.

They can't take it. He said, I'm going to send the plumb line. And you're not talking me out of this one. And so now in this verse, he says, the end is come and no more will I let you talk me out of that.

God shows Amos. He is bringing judgment on his people. You can't read the Bible without knowing that the creator God is the judging God.

You can't read the Bible without knowing that there will be a time of judgment. And the people of Israel are hearing that. Remember, God's been merciful and given them time.

But now it's time for judgment, Amos says. And I'd like to remind all of you of something extremely important today. And that is today for you at this moment is a moment of grace.

[2 : 05] God has given you opportunity to hear, to believe, and to accept. And if you keep rejecting, it's going to be too late sometime. Amos' message is, I'm telling you guys, it's over now.

The time of the end is here. In Isaiah chapter 55 and verse 6, Isaiah said, Seek ye the Lord while he may be found. Call ye upon him while he is near.

Let the wicked forsake his way, the unrighteous man his thoughts. Let him return to the Lord and he will have mercy upon him and to our God. For he will abundantly pardon. The other day I read that verse in one of the messages.

And one of the young men met me over there and said, Well, when's it too late? I said, Well, it's definitely too late when you're dead. Amen. And there comes a time, though, when God's dealing with you. And today you're here in church.

And you're here in the gospel. And you're here in the church. And you're here in the church center. And you're here in Jesus died for you. And yet you've rebelled against it all the time. And today's still a time for you to be saved evidently. And so it's your chance.

- [3 : 06] Accept the Lord. Trust Jesus. And what he did. Here's what he told them. Your music in the temple is going to turn into screams of pain with all the death around you.
- Chapter 8, verse 3. The songs of the temple shall be howlings in that day. There shall be many dead. There will be bodies everywhere, the Bible says.
- Because God is angry with the sin of the nation of Israel. These people have become a very carnal and wicked people that sound like they live in Alpharetta.
- For example, in Amos chapter 8 and verse 4, they use their business to take advantage of poor people. So they'd swallow up the needy. And they even hated the fact because of being Jewish people and living in the nation of Israel.
- And they had to respect the Sabbath day. They were like, man, I'm telling you, God gets in the way of my business. I've got to wait on the Sabbath day to get by. Read what it says in Amos chapter 8 and verse 5.
- [4 : 08] Saying, when will the new moon be gone that we may sell corn? And the Sabbath, when can we get Saturday over with? So we can go back to selling wheat. And then they were falsifying the balances by deceit.
- They were cheating the people that religion got in the way. They were selling junk. They were sweeping up the floor and getting everything off that and selling the poor people this wheat that had all the trash still mixed in it.
- In Amos chapter 8 and verse 6. And they were foreclosing on them. They'd sell them this junk and sell it to them on credit and then foreclose on them and take advantage of them.
- And he said, God's not going to forget your sin. He's not going to forget your abuses. Look at Amos chapter 8 and verse 7. What a horrendous verse in the Bible. I will never forget any of their works.
- So he's starting to say, hey, you know what, Israel? I have put up with a lot of junk out of you. I put up with you not loving me. I put up with you not honoring me. I put up with you violating my rules. I've sent preacher after preacher to talk to you.
- [5 : 10] I've sent prophet after prophet. I've given you the word of God. But the end is now. I'm ready to make a move. And so Amos is prophesying about a time when the land will tremble.
- In Amos chapter 8 and verse 8. The land will tremble. There's going to be an earthquake that will literally shake the ground. And it's going to look like floodwaters. It's going to look like the waves coming off of the Nile River.
- It's going to look like the waves coming in as it shakes the land. Even the heavens are going to be affected. The Bible said the sun will be darkened. The sky will be darkened. The clear day will turn dark.
- And in Amos chapter 8 and verse 10. All joy will turn to sadness. Look at Amos 8.10 with me. I will turn your feast into mourning. And all your songs will be crying songs.
- Lamentation. That means lamenting. That means crying. It means sorry that everything is falling apart. It's like funeral music. I'll turn all your parties. These are going to sound like funeral music.
- [6 : 07] I will bring on you sackcloth. Which is the mourning clothes. I will make it as the mourning as though you lost your only son. You're going to feel like your only son has died.
- Because sooner or later sin gets judged. God hates sin. We all never forget that.
- And sin has consequences. Sin hurts people. Makes us victims. But we have victory through the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Every person in this room should know that you have victory. You are not a victim. You are a victor. Because by the blood of Jesus Christ, you've been saved.

You've been made new. The Bible says in Romans chapter 6 and verse 6. That your old man is crucified. That the body of sin has been destroyed. That you don't have to serve sin. So if you're in this room and you say, I just can't help it, man.

[7 : 04] Sin seems to have won. It's like God gave me this besetting sin and I can't win over. That's not true. You have victory. Can I hear an amen right there? You have victory in Christ. You have victory over sin.

You decide whether or not you'll sin. Don't blame it on your mama. Don't blame it on your daddy. Don't blame it on your boss. Don't blame it on God. Don't blame it on the devil. The Bible says in Romans chapter 6 and verse 16.

Know you not that to whom you yield yourselves, servants to obey his servants you are. You choose. So every week as a born again believer, when you step out there and there's an opportunity to do wrong, you choose.

When there's sin at the door and an opportunity to do wrong, you choose. These people of the nation Israel, they chose to make their money more important than God. They chose to do what they knew wasn't right.

You decide. Sin cannot win unless we allow it to. By the way, God deals with our sin. He judges our sin that we won't be condemned to the world. First Corinthians chapter 11.

[8 : 06] We get chastised. As a born again believer, if you do wrong, you'll suffer the consequences of your sin. So you won't be judged and sent to hell. Second thing that's in there, God said the end is now.

In all this tragedy, God says that he will quit speaking to his people. God said, I will quit talking to you. That has to be horrendous. Just imagine that no longer do you get a word from the Lord.

No longer can you know what God's will is. The nation of Israel has lived by having a man who would go find out what God had to say about something and bringing that back to them and telling them this is what God says.

And the Bible says in Amos chapter 8 and verse 11. You got your Bible? You're going to need to mark this one. It says, Behold, the days come, says the Lord, that I will send famine in the land. Not a famine of bread nor a thirst for water, but a famine and a thirst for hearing the words of the Lord.

And they'll wander from sea to sea. They'll run from coast to coast. From the north to the east, they'll run to and fro. They'll look for the word of God, but they will not find it.

[9 : 16] You see, God had been available and working in their lives. But he turns and says, I'm not going to do that anymore. They will seek him and they won't find him. This is what you need to listen to today.

Listen to me. Because you're culturally Christian. Because you're a southeastern United States cultural Christian. You're saved because your mama said you were saved.

You're saved because your daddy said you were saved. You're in church today because that's what we do. We are not from the northwest. We're from the southeast. We're church-going people. We're a God-fearing people even if we're not a God-fearing people.

That's who we tend to want to say we are. The truth is, if you haven't trusted Christ, and every service you come to, he's dealing with you, and he's convicting you of your sin, and he's showing you your need to accept Christ, and he's showing you that you need to be saved, you need to respond because there comes a point when he says, I won't do it anymore.

I want to ask you to read a passage of scripture with me. Proverbs chapter 1, if you would, in verse 22. I want you to go through this passage. It's the same truth being taught again. Solomon's writing it down in the book of Proverbs now, and I just want you to go through that passage.

[10 : 23] The Bible says, how long you simple, how long you kind of slow people, how long you kind of people that don't understand things, how long will you love simplicity, how long will you love being dumb, and the scorners delight in their scorning, you people that make fun of the things of God, how long y'all gonna like making fun of the things of God, and you fools, you people that don't believe in God, you hate knowledge.

He says in verse 23, turn at my reproof. Turn, and I will pour out my spirit upon you, and I will make known my words unto you.

He said, listen to me, stop it, pay attention to me, listen to me, I'm God, I'm speaking, you listen. They say they won't do it. So verse 24, he said, because since I have called and you have refused, I have stretched out my hand, but you didn't pay attention to me.

You have said it not all my counsel and would none of my reproof. Listen to this. I will laugh at your calamity. I will mock when your fear comes, when your fear comes as a desolation, and your destruction comes as a whirlwind, when distress and anguish comes upon them, upon you, then shall they call on me, but I will not answer.

They shall seek me early. They shall not find me. You hated knowledge. You wouldn't choose to fear the Lord. You would have none of my counsel. You despised all of my reproof. So you can eat of the fruit of your own way and be filled with your own devices, because the turning away of the simple will kill them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them, but whoso hearkens unto me shall dwell safely and shall be quiet from the fear of evil.

[12 : 10] This is the most horrendous passage of Scripture, but it's exactly what Amos is saying. God's saying in his passage of Scripture, I have talked to you and talked to you till I'm blue in the face.

I've showed you you're a sinner. I've showed you you're going to go to hell. You hear the Bible over and over and over, and you just keep ignoring me. I stick out my hand, and you don't respond. I speak, and you ignore me.

I'll tell you what I'm going to do. I'm going to get tired of this one day, and when I get tired enough, the end comes, and when your life falls apart, I'll laugh. You say, well, that don't sound like God.

I know. I didn't say it. I just read it. There comes a time when you reject God, and you mock God, and you turn your back on God, and you laugh at God long enough till God's going to say, it's time for the end.

You're going to lose what God would have done in your life. Listen. He said, I just quit talking to him. That's what Amos said. There's a famine. What's the famine?

[13 : 13] Not food. They got food, but I'm not talking to them anymore. I'm not talking to them anymore. Are you here today and not saved, not going to heaven when you die? You can think to yourself.

You can be one of the mockers and say, I don't believe in all that junk. I don't believe in God. I don't believe in heaven. I don't believe in hell. Don't God accept that. So, ha, ha, ha. Austin's such a dummy. You can think of it all you want, but here's what God said.

Keep doing that if you want, but the day comes. You see, God's people were not hearing his word. At Vision, what we try to do, what I try to do, what the staff tries to do, what the Sunday school teachers try to do, what the deacons try to do, what the disciple makers in our church try to do is to bring you the book.

This book, this is God speaking. In Nehemiah chapter 8 and verse 1, this is kind of an explanation of what we do at Vision. So, if you got your Bible, you might turn there. In Nehemiah chapter 8 and verse 1, all the people gathered themselves together as one man in the street that was before the water gate, and they spake on Ezra the scribe to bring the book.

That's what we do every Sunday. I mean, unashamedly at our church, we're not storytellers. We're not jokesters, and we're not comedians. We just bring the book.

[14 : 30] We walk out here, and I say, all right, guys, open the book. Where are we opening it to now? Well, Obadiah next week. Isn't that ridiculous? Who has ever heard a message out of Obadiah? Obadiah who?

But we're going to bring the book. Then look what it says in Nehemiah chapter 8 and verse 3. We read it, and we pay attention to what it says. It says, And he read therein before the street that was before the water gate from the morning till the midday before the men and the women and those that could understand in the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law.

He was reading Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Excuse me, but that's some of the boringest reading you could ever do. Once you get past Genesis and Exodus, come on.

They start counting threads. I mean, it gets ridiculous, but you know what they were doing? Listening to the word of God because if God said it, it ought to be heard. If God said it, it ought to be preached, and they said, we'll pay attention to what God said.

In Nehemiah chapter 8 and verse 7, it says this is what they did. Their goal was to cause God's people to understand God's word. Also, all these guys with all those funny names, skip on down to the middle of that verse, cause the people to understand the law.

[15 : 46] So the goal was, we'll read it and then help you understand it. So that when you go home, you should say, I never would have understood old Amos like I do now, but I've understood Amos.

We've been going through it. I'm kind of getting a grip on that book. That was the goal. In chapter 8 and verse 8, Nehemiah 8 and 8, they read distinctly from the word of God. So they read in the book of the law of God distinctly.

They practiced reading it with emphasis. They practiced reading it where it made sense. And then they, look at what they did, they gave the sense. They gave the sense.

They said, let me read it to you and let me read it well enough so you can understand it. Then let me explain to you what it says and help you to understand the reading. That's what God wants happening in a church.

Makes your church maybe a tad unusual because when you come in every Sunday, you know we all come in here with an ink pen and a piece of paper and a Bible and we know we're going to open the Bible and you're not going to get to hear my political opinion about all the things that are going on right now.

[16 : 44] I've got a lot of them but we ain't going to hear them. And there's a lot of stuff I could commentate on here from the news. I could, but we don't do that because we bring the book.

And that's what is happening and old Amos said well the time's coming when you're not going to have that. In Amos chapter 8 and verse 13 if you would. You'll find the sin of Samaria.

I don't have time to talk to you about this morning because I'm flying through but look at this. They that swear by the sin, this is verse 14, they that swear by the sin of Samaria.

Underline that. Let me explain to you what that was. It was a contamination, a pollution of true biblical worship. So what they did is they worshipped God like the Bible said and they brought in some idols, a golden calf for example and they set it up and so while you came to church and you did it the Bible way you also did it the other way and that was the sin of Samaria mixing filthy worldly religion with God's religion and calling it church.

And I might say to you that you find a church that reads the Bible and preaches out of the Bible and you think this is an unusual church. It's not supposed to be. It's not supposed to be unusual.

[17 : 59] We're all supposed to be doing it the way God said to it in Nehemiah but that doesn't always happen. They mixed God's truth with the world. They brought in idol worship to the worship of God.

They followed a model of worship that was popular with people not with God. But our desire and vision is to hear from God. We don't want entertainment. We don't look for jokes and stories but for truth we come to church to hear from God and what he has to say in his word.

Amos chapter 9 verse 1 third thing I want you to look at and the third thing I want you to look at is this God himself is bringing the judgment. This is going to be harsh. This is going to be harsh.

I was asked this morning do you ever preach mad? Well you know if you say it like he said it it's going to sound mad. I'm not mad but listen to what God says. In Amos chapter 9 verse 1 Amos says I saw the Lord standing on the altar and he said smite the lintel that's break that top part of the door and the post they'll shake cut him in the head I will slay I'll kill him.

that doesn't sound very nice. I ain't sure Joel's preaching that message next week.

[19 : 20] I will slay. How bad is it? In Amos chapter 9 in verse 2 he said they'll try to dig into hell to get away from me but I they'll try to climb my way up into heaven to get away from me but I'll bring them down.

You can't go high enough to escape you can't crawl into a hole deep enough to get away and when God starts his judgment you won't be able to run far enough. In Amos chapter 9 in verse 3 it says if they hide themselves on the top of Carmel I will search.

If they go down into the bottom of the sea or wherever it is I will set my eyes on them for evil meaning I will bring bad stuff on them and here's the reason because I am God.

Look if you would in Amos chapter 9 in verse 5 would you listen just a second here's what ends up before I read the verse here's what ends up happening we tend to think that God's something we invented we tend to think that the world's going on and it's got all of its stuff going on and God's out there and the preacher can say all that stuff and the Bible's got a whole bunch of stuff in it but it's not really real I mean I just need to sell my wheat I wish the Saturday would be over so I could sell my wheat I wish I could make money I wish the service would be over I need to be about making money that's what really counts and here's what God said Amos said God won't y'all know he really is God God won't y'all know he is really God he really is there and he really is in charge and you can keep acting like he's not but he's God that's what the verse says look at you with me if you would Amos 9 5 and the Lord God of hosts is he that touches the land he said in global warming he said this isn't shifting plates of the earth he said he said this isn't just a meteorological thing he said

God is doing it look if you would at verse 6 it is he God that builds the stories in the heaven and hath founded his troop on the earth that calls for the waters of the sea and pours them out upon the face of the earth the Lord is his name I'm God and I will be recognized as God you see Israel had become a very religious people they knew how to make their sacrifices they knew how to sing their songs they knew how to bring their tithes they knew how to do all the stuff that Christian or religious Jewish people did they knew all the form but they had no power they knew all the stuff you're supposed to do but they weren't doing it from their heart and God said I'm God and I am going to destroy this whole system you guys made up where you leave me out of it it's kind of like the church in Laodicea in Revelation chapter 3 where the Bible is talking about a church and then you see a picture of Jesus standing outside the church his own church and he's knocking on the door and he says behold I stand at the door and I knock if y'all let me in I'd like to come into but church is going all over the place and Jesus isn't even there that's what the Bible is saying

[22 : 21] God said I'm God in Amos chapter 9 in verse 8 I will destroy but I won't utterly destroy I'm just going to break y'all down enough that the real ones of you will figure out who I am and stop these games you're playing in Amos chapter 9 in verse 9 he will command and he will sift he is judging the people of his nation the people of Israel he is removing the false worship he is finding out who the false worshipers are he's cleansing his nation of sin that permeates him he is not through with them he just needs to call them back to him and who he is they will know that God is real and he's in their midst now listen to me would you agree that Christianity can run without Christ almost in our world today would you agree that a church doesn't really need Jesus and the Holy Spirit I mean they're everywhere quote unquote now I'm not saying that's true I'm just saying that Christianity is doing real good we got more mega churches than we ever had we got more junk going on than we ever had but how many of them got a Bible open and preaching what the Bible says

God said I want you to know I'm God I want you to know I'm God well we're ending the book of Amos boy it's bleak Israel looks like your goose is cooked looks like it over and God's not going to use you anymore and Israel you're gone he said he would destroy but then did you notice he said I will not completely destroy by the way the things that he's talking about in the book of Amos most of them haven't happened yet they're still yet to happen they're happening right now in the book of Revelation the great Babylon will fall all the financial power institutions of the world will fall the earthquakes will happen the sun will be darkened the moon will be darkened and turned to blood all kinds of crazy things are going to happen but God's not through with Israel and Amos reminds us of that before he closes his book because everybody listens like my goodness we thought God loved us and we thought he'd never leave us what's this he's getting rid of us look what the Bible says

Amos chapter 9 and verse 11 but in that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David that's fallen I will close up the breaches there I'll fix the holes I will raise up his ruins I will build it as in the days of old Israel it's coming I am fixing to kick some rumpus I am fixing to say stop it and pay attention I am God but I am going to destroy you I am going to wake you up and bring you back God's not getting rid of Israel but he's preparing to do a work in them he will raise up and build he will bring them back from their captivity look at Amos chapter 9 and verse 14 right now much of Israel has been captive way back since the Old Testament they've been in other countries there are more Jews living outside of Israel than there are inside of Israel and it's not what the Bible would picture but the day is coming when God brings them back look at chapter 9 and verse 14

I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and they shall build the waste cities and they'll inhabit them and they'll plant vineyards and drink wine and make gardens and eat the fruit of it he will make them successful again he will put them back in their land and they will never be removed again look at verse 15 I will plant them upon their land and nobody will pull them out again and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I've given them says the Lord you see when God makes a promise he always keeps it he told Abraham some stuff he told Isaac some stuff and he told Jacob some stuff and he told David some stuff and now Amos is preaching some stuff and it sounds bleak and like God's going to destroy everything but God doesn't lie well that's beautiful for you to know the Bible says in Hebrews 6 18 that it was impossible for God to lie

God cannot lie Titus chapter 1 I think verse 2 you serve a God that when he gives his word he keeps his word that's a very good thing to know because see I believe the book and trusted Christ to be my savior could he change his mind could he be like some of you when you play Monopoly have you ever played Monopoly with that guy you're playing Monopoly and about halfway through it he changes the rules I was playing with my grandson the other day we were playing Uno we're playing and I'm following the rules and all of a sudden he looked at me and said that's not the rules I get to do this I said I don't think that's in the rules he said oh it's in the rules my daddy said it was okay so we played a little longer and then he changed them again I said I ain't playing anymore I said I quit he said why are you quitting I said I don't know the rules and they keep changing all the way through that's not what happens here amen that's security of your salvation so in this story we see God blessing his people they get used to the blessings and forget God he calls them to himself but they ignore him he sends judgment but they don't respond he's going to send a great tribulation on them he's going to purge them and they are going to respond and he is going to establish the nation of

[27 : 49] Israel again God God will keep his word to the nation of Israel and he will keep it for us you can read the Bible and know it's true y'all go home today open your Bibles you have to wonder is this right is this really what God says you don't have to wonder about that he's been keeping his word so long anybody's ever said the Bible knows that's just what he does here's some lessons to take home God's in charge at work in the world in our country in our life you can trust that God is going to be at work God knows the end of things and he'll bring it about God judges sin and sin is never good or right he is at work in the affairs of men realize as you read the Bible you're often reading about future events and you can say I don't think the Bible could know the future it couldn't but the God who wrote it could say man right there right now God is working and offering grace but soon a horrible time of tribulation will come on the earth the heavens will be affected the earth will quake and men will die by the millions in this time of tribulation God will prepare his people Israel once again and he'll give them back their land but today for you he is still giving opportunity to be saved and to know him don't get caught up in religion without

Christ what a sad thing and but can I just tell you religious people can cast out demons we were talking about that last night me and Jimmy in Matthew 7 in his name they cast out demons they were surprised when they found out they weren't saved you got to know Bible salvation from what the word of God says he's been moving in your life he's offered you the truth you may reject it but if you reject the truth of God you do so at your peril God is calling you to salvation will you believe him as a Christian I challenge you to trust the word of God as a lost person I challenge you to be saved as a Christian I challenge you to say I want God's word to work in my life I'm going to study it and learn it and let God grow me through it as a lost person don't waste your opportunity while grace is extended to you trust Christ this message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred Georgia for more information log on to www.visionbaptist.com where you can find our service times location contact information and more audio and video recordings visit God's verile■■■■