

The Restoration of Israel
A Sermon on Amos 9:11-15

by

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1. Introduction

2. The Resurrection of the Davidic Dynasty (v. 11)

a. The “fallen booth of David” will be raised and rebuilt to its former glory.

- i. Verse 11 begins by speaking very clearly of a restoration of Israel, but again, how you understand the nature and purpose of these promises to Israel will inform how you understand Israel’s restoration.
 1. If you’re a Covenantalist, meaning you believe Israel and the church are one in the same, you would believe that restoration took place during the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.
 2. The problem with this view is that we simply never find a time where the things described in this passage take place unless you spiritualize the meaning of it and make it about the church.
 - a. But remember, this was not a prophecy given to the church.
 - b. The text itself never gives us a hint that these people, nor even Amos himself, would have taken this to be a figurative promise to Israel that isn’t really about Israel.
- ii. When he refers to the “fallen booth of David,” he is speaking about the two kingdoms of Israel that have been divided ever since Solomon died.
 1. Any who came after the reign of King David longed for those same days because he was not only a good king who loved the Lord, but under his rule, the kingdom prospered in every way.

- a. They were not ruled over by their enemies. He ruled with equity and fairness.
The people enjoyed plentiful harvests and all the tribes lived in the land given to them by their God. The prophets and priests were not corrupt.
 - b. All of this was because you had a man convinced that pleasing God was not only his duty, but his delight.
2. More than this though is the fact that every Hebrew would have known the promises given to David—that his throne would endure forever.
- a. We find this all the way back in 2 Sam. 7.
 - b. What begins as a promise about Solomon quickly expands to a promise regarding a kingdom that will never end.
 - c. This promise is echoed by the prophets all throughout Israel’s time of judgment and exile (Jer. 23:5, 30:9).
 - i. Amos, of course, speaks to it here.
 - d. Yet this One from the line of David would prove to be no ordinary king.
- b. *This One to rule forever on the throne of David, is Jesus.*
- i. “He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and He will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end” (Luke 1:32-33).
1. We see this in multiple other passages throughout the Old Testament as well, which prophesied of the coming Christ.
- a. Perhaps the clearest reference though is the famous passage we all know from Isaiah 9:6-7:
 - b. “For a child will be born to us, a son will be given us; and the government will rest upon His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his

kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.”

2. What’s foretold of then in Isaiah is much the same as what Amos foretells of here.
 - a. The people of Israel will be reunited under the headship of Christ, who will sit on the throne of David and rule with complete equity, justice, and righteousness.
 - b. This same Christ will be their defense and rebuild the land to a greater glory under His kingship.
- ii. All of it will be done under the banner of the Davidic throne though—and the guarantee is not merely a spiritual reality, but a physical one.
 1. They know the promise of this Ruler to come is connected to peace and Israel’s well-being.
 2. They know the people will be united under the rule of this king, but remember, this is a hope they must embrace on the way to their exile.
 - a. They have not yet experienced the invasion of the Assyrians, nor the subsequent invasion of the Babylonians.
 - b. He reminds them that God promises to restore the Davidic dynasty, which is the first of five promises He gives them here.

3. The Possession of the Nations (v. 12)

a. The Israelites will possess the remnant of Edom.

- i. Amos prophesies that when the booth of David is restored, Israel will have authority over all the nations of the earth and be a source of blessing to them.
 1. He mentions the land of Edom by name here, and that is done for a very specific reason.
 - a. If you’re not familiar with who the Edomites are, I would invite you to listen to my sermon on Obadiah, because it deals exclusively with a prophecy of judgment against Edom.

- b. James argues that the message of the prophets actually supports the idea that these new Gentile converts shouldn't be forced to obey the Law.
 - ii. James is drawing out the fact that during this time where Gentiles are coming to faith, it is all a direct fulfillment of prophecy that involves some of the conditions for the nation of Israel to be restored.
 - 1. He argues that in light of the fact that Israel will be redeemed and rule over the earth alongside the Gentiles, there is no need for them to be circumcised and follow the Law of Moses.
 - 2. The reason for this is quite simple: these Gentile converts will have all of the same blessings promised to the Israelites, which are found in Christ.
 - 3. The Israelites in Amos's day wouldn't have understood the full implications of what the prophet was telling them. Arguably, even the prophet wouldn't have understood the full implications of this all in light of Christ because these were mysteries that had yet to be fully revealed.
 - a. Nonetheless, these were words of a profound hope for the people of Israel.
 - b. Israel is in this position of complete weakness and reliance upon God. There is no choice in the matter now.
 - i. They would rely upon God's promise to judge their enemies.
 - ii. Yet more than this, they would rely upon God's promise to make many of their enemies His own possession, by calling them as sons and daughters to be included into the covenant.

4. The Overabundance of the Land (v. 13)

a. Days of material abundance are in store when the nation is restored.

- i. There is a remarkable contrast to what we've seen throughout the book of Amos to what we now see.

1. Earlier, God promised complete destruction of the city, the agriculture, their livestock, and virtually everything else.
 2. Now we find that the land will be in such abundance that the people can't keep up with what's produced.
- ii. V. 13 tells us that the plowman will overtake the reaper and the treader of grapes will overtake the one who sows the seed.
1. If you know anything about farming, you have a season in which you plant produce and then a season where you harvest.
 - a. For Israel, they would have plowed their fields in October and finished the harvest by May, but they cannot keep up with each other.
 - b. If you'll look down, you'll see the same problem is happening in the vineyards.
 2. There is so much wine that the mountains will drip with it and all the hills will be dissolved.
 - a. The word that's being used here to speak of the hills dissolving is the same word that's used elsewhere in the Minor Prophets to speak of the mountains melting from the presence of God.
 - b. What you're seeing transpire in the text is a promise to reverse Israel's judgment.
 3. We must not forget though that this promise comes only in light of their judgment.
 - a. They must first see the fig trees cut down, their fields burned, and their vineyards dry up.
 - b. They must first see whatever goods they have go into the hands of their captors.
 - c. They must first go into exile and become slaves to oppressive nations who will not submit themselves to God.
 - d. Yet most importantly, they must wait for this One to come who will actually do all of these things.

5. The Restoration of the Remnant (v. 14)

- a. *The Israelites will be restored to the Promised Land, rebuild the ruined cities, and once again enjoy the fruit of their labors in the land.*
 - i. What transpires in v. 14 is a reversal of the judgment that has been poured out upon them for their unfaithfulness.
 1. Whereas before, judgment came upon them for disobedience to the covenant, they will now experience conditions of peace and productivity in the land.
 2. Such conditions could only happen in times of peace, but we know from history and more importantly, the narrative of Scripture, that Israel as a nation has continued in her rebellion, and as a result, has not been restored.
 - a. Yet this promise of restoration is here in the text and so we have to be able to make sense of it.
 - b. I will contend that the only way we can make sense of it is to understand that God is giving them a literal promise, and therefore, a literal hope. The reason for this is simple.
 - ii. We must continue to read this promise in light of the context of our passage today, which speaks of the in-gathering of all of Israel.
 1. Many desire to say this is speaking about King Cyrus.
 - a. Cyrus issued decree that the Israelites could return to the Promised Land and rebuild the wall, and later they would go on to rebuild the temple, which would seem to make sense of the passage.
 - b. You can read about this in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.
 2. The problem with this viewpoint, of course, is that you simply never see the conditions we've learned about so far.
 - a. The nation of Israel is certainly not united as the restoration of the Davidic kingdom would lead us to believe when Cyrus issues his decree.

- b. The nations of the world were, and still are, hostile to Israel.
 - c. There was never a point where the land yielded itself to Israel like this.
 - b. *Many will still look at these things though and say all of this speaks to a spiritual reality that is fulfilled in the church.*
 - i. The problem with this is twofold:
 - 1. You remove any significance of this to a wayward Israel who will lose everything, yet find a promise given to them that one day, God will redeem and restore them under the reign of Christ.
 - a. There is no Jew in this time period that would have seen these things only in a spiritualized sense.
 - b. They would have understood these to be real promises concerning a specific people, and all of it would have been understood in light of the covenant to Abraham in Genesis 13.
 - 2. You also take away someone's ability to just read the text and let it say what it says.
 - a. It conveys the idea that the only way you can truly know what the Bible teaches about these things is to first understand a theological system.
 - b. But more importantly, it teaches that person to always read the Scriptures in light of a particular theology developed by finite men.
 - c. Other passages simply won't allow us to faithfully read these texts like this.
 - ii. Isaiah 11 confirms and expounds upon what we're seeing here in Amos.
 - 1. Notice in the first three verses, Isaiah speaks of this One to come from the stem of Jesse.
 - a. We know this to be Christ because it speaks of the Spirit of the Lord resting on Him on a unique way.
 - b. Then notice in vv. 4-5, He will judge the poor with righteousness, He will judge the afflicted with fairness, and He will judge the wicked. Righteousness and faithfulness will characterize every aspect of His rule.

- c. At the same time this is taking place, vv. 6-10 depict that there will be complete peace in all the earth as a result of a worldwide knowledge of the Lord.
- 2. Now in vv. 11-12, we get a glimpse of what Amos is speaking of as well.
 - a. “Then it will happen on that day that the Lord will again recover the second time with His hand the remnant of His people, who will remain—that’s important, especially as we get back to v. 15 in Amos—who will remain, from Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Cush, Elam, Shinar, Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And He (speaking of Christ again) will lift up a standard for the nations and assemble the banished ones of Israel, and will gather the dispersed of Judah, from the four corners of the earth.”
 - b. This is all part of the same timeline of events that is taking place in God’s plan to restore Israel according to Amos.

6. The Permanence of God’s Promises (v. 15)

- a. *“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.”*
 - i. God will not simply regather them into the land after a period of exile, but He will plant them in it in such a way that they shall never be uprooted from it again.
 - 1. For that reason, the full context of this passage cannot be speaking of anything other than a permanent, literal restoration of Israel to the Promised Land.
 - 2. The substance of the gospel does not change simply because this is a reality, which means that an unbelieving Israel will not stand to inherit these promises.
 - a. But this is consistent with the message of the prophet Amos all throughout this book.
 - b. He has repeatedly warned that this day when Christ returns would not be a good day for them if they fail to repent.
 - ii. We must remember, all of the former things must come to be before this happens though.

1. Israel must still confess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.
 - a. It is only through faith in the Messiah that any Israelite will come to experience the blessings of God.
 - b. None of this implies that simply because one was an ethnic Jew that they were children of God, no more than having a family with Christian parents implies that all of their children will be Christians.
 2. Likewise, the enemies of God must be judged, and the fullness of the Gentiles must come in.
 3. Then we must see Christ return in bodily form where He will reign for a thousand years, and the earth and everyone in it will experience life as they never have before.
 4. Once these things happen, then Israel will be drawn in from all the corners of the earth and restored, never to be uprooted from the Promised Land again. The promise made to Abraham will finally be fully fulfilled.
- b. In the midst of this all, we must remember that these promises were given to Israel in the midst of impending doom.*
- i. None of these promises removed the fact that God was going to judge all of Israel in this incredibly hard way.
 1. The Assyrians would still come to destroy the Northern Kingdom and the Babylonians would still come to destroy the Southern Kingdom at a time after them.
 - a. Many Israelites would be brutally killed at the hands of these kingdoms.
 - b. If they weren't killed, they would nonetheless suffer in profound ways—all as a result of their failure to obey.
 - c. None though, would escape years in exile, poverty, and enslavement.
 2. In a very real sense, the Israelites would be forced to accept one of two realities:
 - a. They could fail to repent and face the promise of God's judgment.
 - b. They could repent in faith and face the promise of God's restoration.

- ii. The promises of judgment and salvation have always been intermingled, and this is a reality at play in our lives still today.
 - 1. Throughout the course of world history, we have seen these two promises at play.
 - a. We continually see these themes of judgment and salvation woven through the fabric of the story of God in the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation.
 - b. Yet we continually see these themes of judgment and salvation woven through the fabric of the story of God in Creation.
 - 2. These twin promises though are working towards one end: God is bringing in His Kingdom, bit by bit, and faithfully working to fulfill every single one of His promises.

7. Conclusion

Small Group Questions

- 1. Why is it important that we understand the promises concerning Israel correctly?
- 2. How can we look at a passage like Amos 9:11-15 and likewise draw hope from it?

3. Follow up with Pastor Matt's questions for last week's sermon on who your "one" is.

- a. Have you picked a person yet to share the gospel with? If not, why?
- b. Have you been praying for them and other people's "one"?
- c. Have you sought an opportunity to share the gospel with them? If not, what has prevented you from it?