



*Amos*

A Prophet  
for Today

**Three Pictures And A Plumb Line**

## Amos 7:1-9

This is what the Lord GOD showed me: behold, he was forming locusts when the latter growth was just beginning to sprout, and behold, it was the latter growth after the king's mowings. When they had finished eating the grass of the land, I said, "O Lord GOD, please forgive! How can Jacob stand? He is so small!" The LORD relented concerning this: "It shall not be," said the LORD.

This is what the Lord GOD showed me: behold, the Lord GOD was calling for a judgment by fire, and it devoured the great deep and was eating up the land. Then I said, "O Lord GOD, please cease How can Jacob stand? He is so small!" The LORD relented concerning this: "This also shall not be," said the Lord GOD. This is what he showed me: behold, the Lord was standing beside a wall built with a plumb line, with a plumb line in his hand.

And the LORD said to me, "Amos, what do you see?" And I said, "A plumb line." Then the Lord said, "Behold, I am setting a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel; I will never again pass by them; the high places of Isaac shall be made desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste, and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword."

This is what the Lord GOD showed me:  
behold, he was forming locusts when  
the **latter growth** was just beginning  
to sprout, and behold, it was the latter  
growth after the **king's mowings**.

## 1 Kings 4:26-28

Solomon also had 40,000 stalls of horses for his chariots, and 12,000 horsemen. And those officers supplied provisions for King Solomon, and for all who came to King Solomon's table, each one in his month. They let nothing be lacking. Barley also and straw for the horses and swift steeds they brought to the place where it was required, each according to his duty.

This is what the Lord GOD showed me:  
behold, **he was forming locusts** when  
the latter growth was just beginning to  
sprout, and behold, it was the latter  
growth after the king's mowings.

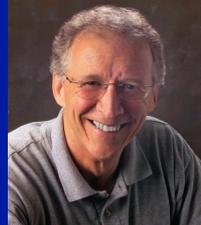
## Amos 4:13

For behold, he who **forms the mountains** and **creates the wind**,  
and declares to man what is his  
thought, who makes the morning  
darkness, and treads on the heights of  
the earth—the LORD, the God of  
hosts, is his name!

Sleep is a daily reminder from God that we are not God. “He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep” (Psalm 121:4) But Israel will. For we are not God. Once a day God sends us to bed like patients with a sickness. The sickness is a chronic tendency to think we are in control and that our work is indispensable. To cure us of this disease God turns us into helpless sacks of sand once a day. How humiliating to the self-made corporate executive that he has to give up all control and become as limp as a suckling infant every day.

Sleep is a parable that God is God and we are mere men. God handles the world quite nicely while a hemisphere sleeps. Sleep is like a broken record that comes around with the same message every day: Man is not sovereign. Man is not sovereign. Man is not sovereign. Don't let the lesson be lost on you. God wants to be trusted as the great worker who never tires and never sleeps. He is not nearly so impressed with our late nights and early mornings as he is with the peaceful trust that casts all anxieties on him and sleeps.

– John Piper



When they had finished eating the grass of the land, I said, "O Lord GOD, please forgive! How can Jacob stand? He is so small!"

## Exodus 32:9-14

And the LORD said to Moses, "I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stiff-necked people. Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them, in order that I may make a great nation of you."

But Moses implored the LORD his God and said, "O LORD, why does your wrath burn hot against your people, whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? Why should the Egyptians say, 'With evil intent did he bring them out, to kill them in the mountains and to consume them from the face of the earth'? Turn from your burning anger and relent from this

disaster against your people.

Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, to whom you swore by your own self, and said to them, 'I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your offspring, and they shall inherit it forever.'" **And**

**the LORD relented from the disaster that he had spoken of bringing on his people.**

The LORD relented concerning this: “It shall not be,” said the LORD.

## Exodus 34:5-6

The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin

## Psalms 103:8

The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

This is what the Lord GOD showed me:  
behold, the Lord GOD was calling for a  
judgment by fire, and it devoured the  
**great deep** and was eating up the land.

Then I said, "O Lord GOD, please cease  
How can Jacob stand? He is so small!" The  
LORD relented concerning this: "This also  
shall not be," said the Lord GOD.

God delights far more in His mercy than in His wrath. So in order to show the priority of His mercy, He must place it against the backdrop of His wrath.

How could God's mercy appear fully as His great mercy unless it was extended to people who were under His wrath and therefore could only ask for mercy? It would be impossible for them to share with God the delight He has in His mercy unless they saw clearly the awfulness of the almighty wrath from which His mercy delivers them.

– Daniel Fuller



This is what he showed me: behold,  
the Lord was standing beside a wall  
**built with a plumb line,** with a  
**plumb line in his hand.**



And the LORD said to me, "Amos, what do you see?" And I said, "A plumb line."

Then the Lord said, "**Behold, I am setting a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel**; I will never again pass by them

## Isaiah 28:16-17

therefore thus says the Lord GOD,  
“Behold, I am the one who has laid as  
a foundation in Zion, a stone, a tested  
stone, a precious cornerstone, of a  
sure foundation: ‘Whoever believes  
will not be in haste.’ And I will make  
justice the line, and **righteousness  
the plumb line**; and hail will sweep  
away the refuge of lies, and waters  
will overwhelm the shelter.”

Whatever respect I have for my books, I prize my Bible infinitely above them all and above all the volumes of decrees of popes, councils and conferences put together! I would not like to feel that I had been building, and building, and yet that there had been a radical error in the whole structure, for I had commenced with a mistake and I had been building myself up not in the most holy faith of the Apostles, but in the most mischievous error of my own notions! I pray you, apply the Bible plumb line continually to all your beliefs, views and practices!

– Charles Spurgeon



I will never again **pass by** them

Micah 7:18

Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and **passing over** transgression for the remnant of his inheritance? He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in steadfast love.

The original law of the universe is that “the soul that sins, it shall die.” Life is a divine gift, not a debt. Sin brings the loss of the gift of life. Once a person sins he forfeits any claim on God to human existence. The fact that we continue to exist after sinning is owing wholly to divine mercy and gracious longsuffering.

– Sam Storms

