

Amos 7 pulls back the curtain and lets us listen in on a conversation between God and one very ordinary man who dared to stand in the gap for his nation. It shows us both the seriousness of God's judgment and the surprising power of intercession, and it ends by reminding us that God often calls simple, unknown people to speak for Him.

1. The First Vision: Locusts and the Power of Intercession (Amos 7:1–3)

Thus the Lord God showed me: Behold, He formed locust swarms at the beginning of the late crop; indeed it was the late crop after the king's mowings. And so it was, when they had finished eating the grass of the land, that I said: "O Lord God, forgive, I pray! Oh, that Jacob may stand, for he is small!" So the Lord relented concerning this. "It shall not be," said the Lord.

(Amos 7:1–3, NKJV)

God shows Amos a vision: a devastating swarm of locusts consuming Israel's crops. This would mean economic collapse and starvation. Amos sees the total destruction—"when they had finished eating the grass of the land"—and he cannot stay silent.

He prays:

"O Lord God, forgive, I pray! Oh, that Jacob may stand, for he is small!" (Amos 7:2, NKJV)

Amos appeals to God's mercy. He does not argue that Israel deserves rescue. He simply pleads, "Forgive... Jacob is small. How can we survive this?"

And Scripture says:

"So the Lord relented concerning this. 'It shall not be,' said the Lord." (Amos 7:3, NKJV)

The word "relented" does not mean that God changed His character or His nature. God does not lie, and He does not change in His being or His holiness. But within His unchanging character, He responds to real prayers and real repentance in real time. From our viewpoint, He may appear to "change course," but in reality, He is always acting consistently with His heart of justice and mercy.

Practical application for believers:

- Do you believe your prayers can make a difference?
- Amos does not stand off to the side and say, "Good, Lord—give them what they deserve."
- He stands between God and a guilty people and pleads for mercy.

This is what Jesus does perfectly as our Mediator, and it is what we are called to do in a smaller, imperfect way as we pray for our families, our churches, and our nation.

2. The Second Vision: Fire and a Second Appeal (Amos 7:4–6)

Thus the Lord God showed me: Behold, the Lord God called for conflict by fire, and it consumed the great deep and devoured the territory. Then I said: "O Lord God, cease, I pray! Oh, that Jacob may stand, for he is small!" So the Lord relented concerning this. "This also shall not be," said the Lord God. (Amos 7:4–6, NKJV)

The second vision is even more intense. Fire spreads, consuming the land, possibly even imagery of underground waters drying up and the land being scorched.

Again Amos prays:

“O Lord God, cease, I pray! Oh, that Jacob may stand, for he is small!”

And again:

“So the Lord relented concerning this. ‘This also shall not be,’ said the Lord God.”

Once more God holds back a form of judgment He could righteously bring.

Practical application:

- Intercession is not a one-time event. Amos prays again.
- When you see layers of trouble, do not give up praying.
- God is not reluctant to be merciful, but He invites His people to pray and participate in His work.

3. The Third Vision: The Plumb Line—God’s Standard (Amos 7:7–9)

Thus He showed me: Behold, the Lord stood on a wall made 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 not pass by them anymore.*

*The high places of Isaac shall be desolate,
And the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste.*

I will rise with the sword against the house of Jeroboam.” (Amos 7:7–9, NKJV)

A **plumb line** is a simple builder’s tool—a string with a weight on the end—used to determine what is truly straight. God pictures Himself standing by a wall with a plumb line in His hand.

He is saying, “I am going to measure My people against My standard. I am no longer going to overlook their crookedness.”

- The “high places of Isaac” are the idolatrous worship sites.
- The “sanctuaries of Israel” are the counterfeit places of worship, including Bethel.
- God declares that even the royal house—“the house of Jeroboam”—will face the sword.

The key idea: God is no longer just warning; He is now measuring. They have been living crooked lives next to His straight standard for too long.

For us today:

God still has a plumb line. He measures us, not by the shifting standards of culture, but by His Word and by His Son, Jesus Christ.

*“For the Lord is righteous, He loves righteousness;
His countenance beholds the upright.” (Psalm 11:7, NKJV)*

We cannot make ourselves “straight” by human effort, but we are called to repent of what is crooked and submit to God’s transforming work in our lives.

4. Opposition from Religious Leadership (Amos 7:10–13)

Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, “Amos has conspired against you in the midst of the house of Israel. The land is not able to bear all his words. For thus Amos has said: ‘Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall surely be led away captive from their own land.’” (Amos 7:10–11, NKJV)

Amaziah is a priest of the false religious system at Bethel. He hears Amos’ message and sees it as a political threat: “He is conspiring against you, king. The land cannot bear his words.”

False religion often sides with power and comfort rather than with truth. Instead of asking, “Is this from God?” Amaziah asks, “Is this dangerous to the status quo?”

Then Amaziah said to Amos: “Go, you seer! Flee to the land of Judah. There eat bread, and there prophesy. But never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king’s sanctuary, and it is the royal residence.” (Amos 7:12–13, NKJV)

Amaziah basically says:

- “Go home.”
- “Preach somewhere else.”
- “This is the king’s sanctuary and the royal shrine—you have no right to speak here.”

How often the places that *claim* to belong to God in name are actually ruled by the fear of human authority.

5. Amos’ Testimony: A Simple Man Called by God (Amos 7:14–15)

*Then Amos answered, and said to Amaziah:
“I was no prophet, Nor was I a son of a prophet,
But I was a herdsman and a tender of sycamore fruit.
Then the Lord took me as I followed the flock,
And the Lord said to me,
‘Go, prophesy to My people Israel.’” (Amos 7:14–15, NKJV)*

Amos is not from a prophetic school. He is not a professional religious figure. He says plainly:

- “I was a herdsman.”
- “I took care of sycamore figs.”
- “The Lord took me as I followed the flock.”

He did not volunteer; he was called. God interrupted his ordinary work and gave him a task:

“Go, prophesy to My people Israel.”

Notice: “My people Israel.”

Even in their rebellion, God still calls them “My people.” He has not quickly disowned them. His judgments are severe, but His covenant faithfulness is deep.

Practical encouragement:

God delights to call ordinary people:

- Shepherds, farmers, fishermen, tax collectors, tentmakers.
- Men and women with weaknesses, limitations, and flaws.

He is not looking for people who are impressive in the world’s eyes, but for people who will listen, obey, and speak the truth in love.

If you belong to Jesus, there is a calling on your life. It may not be public, but it is real. Do not disqualify yourself because you feel “too ordinary.” That is exactly the kind of person God loves to use.

6. A Sobering Word to Amaziah and the Nation (Amos 7:16–17)

“Now therefore, hear the word of the Lord:

You say, ‘Do not prophesy against Israel,

And do not spout against the house of Isaac.’

Therefore thus says the Lord:

‘Your wife shall be a harlot in the city;

Your sons and daughters shall fall by the sword;

Your land shall be divided by survey line;

You shall die in a defiled land;

And Israel shall surely be led away captive

From his own land.” (Amos 7:16–17, NKJV)

Amaziah tried to silence God’s messenger. He said, “Do not prophesy against Israel.” In response, Amos gives him a deeply personal and painful word:

- His wife will be forced into prostitution in the city—likely the tragic result of conquest and humiliation.
- His sons and daughters will die by the sword.
- His land will be divided up and measured off by conquerors.
- He himself will die in an unclean, foreign land.
- Israel will go into exile.

This is not a burst of petty anger from Amos; it is the sober announcement of what happens when the word of the Lord is rejected and people are led into idolatry and false security. The prophecy does not portray God as the cause of their suffering. Instead, it reveals the natural and inevitable consequences of turning away from God and stepping outside the shelter of His protection.

A Challenge for Believers

Amos 7 presses several questions into the hearts of those who already know the Lord.

1 Will You Stand in the Gap?

Scripture gives us several moments where God reveals what will come upon people who reject His grace if no one intercedes for them. One clear example is found in the days of Moses: God declared that His anger burned against Israel and that judgment would fall. Moses then stepped into the gap and pleaded for the people, and the Lord responded to Moses' prayer. Did God change His mind? Or did He show Moses what would happen if no one interceded? I believe God was revealing the natural outcome of their rebellion and inviting Moses to pray. Moses interceded, and God responded in perfect faithfulness.

The same pattern appears in the book of Amos. Amos saw visions of devastation, and he prayed for mercy. God responded to Amos' prayer, just as He had responded to Moses. Amos understood that the right response to a warning of judgment is not resentment, but intercession.

Today, God has also revealed what will happen to those who refuse His grace. Unless people turn to Him, they will never experience the abundant life He designed them to live, and ultimately they will face eternal separation from Him in the Lake of Fire. The warning is not given to crush hope, but to stir our hearts to pray, to intercede, and to call people lovingly to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ.

Amos saw judgment coming and prayed, "O Lord God, forgive... cease."

- Do you pray for mercy over your nation, your city, your family?
- Or are you content to condemn and complain?

God calls His people to be intercessors, not spectators—to plead for mercy and revival, not to gloat over judgment.

2 Will You Let God's Plumb Line Examine Your Life?

God still holds the plumb line to His people.

- Are there "crooked walls" in your life—habits, attitudes, compromises—that you excuse instead of confessing?
- Are there areas where you measure yourself by other people instead of by the character of Christ and the teaching of Scripture?

When the Lord puts the plumb line next to your heart:

- Do you defend yourself, like Amaziah?
- Or do you humble yourself and ask Him to straighten what is bent?

3 Will You Say “Yes” to God’s Call, Even if You Feel Ordinary?

Amos was not a “professional.” He was a herdsman and a fig picker. But when the Lord said, “Go,” he went.

- Are you letting your sense of weakness or ordinariness become an excuse for disobedience?
- Are you willing to be faithful where you are—even if you never become well-known or recognized?

The Lord is not looking for perfect people; He is looking for surrendered people. He will use you in your home, your job, your neighborhood, and your church if you are willing to listen and obey.

An Invitation to Non-Believers: Mercy Before Judgment

Amos 7 is a sober chapter. It reminds us that God is patient, but He is not indifferent to sin. There comes a time when He says, “I will not pass by them anymore.”

The same is true for every person. Scripture says:

“And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment...” (Hebrews 9:27, NKJV)

We have all sinned. We have bent our lives away from God’s plumb line. None of us can make ourselves straight in our own strength.

But here is the good news:

- God did not leave us under judgment with no hope.
- He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world.
- Jesus lived a sinless life—the only perfectly “straight” life that ever lined up with God’s holy standard.
- On the cross, Jesus shed His blood for our sins. He took the judgment we deserve.
- On the third day, He rose from the dead. His resurrection declares that He is God, Savior, and Lord.

Because of His death and resurrection:

- Your sins can be forgiven.
- Your heart can be made new.
- You can be reconciled to God and given eternal life.

But this is not automatic. God calls you to:

- Turn from your sin (repentance).
- Trust Jesus Christ alone to save you.
- Confess Him as Lord.

If you sense God dealing with your heart, you can respond to Him right now. There is no magic formula, but you can express your faith and repentance in a prayer like this:

“Lord God, I admit that I have sinned. My life does not line up with Your standard. I cannot save myself. I believe that Jesus Christ shed His blood on the cross for my sins and that He rose from the dead and is God, Savior, and Lord. I turn from my sin and I put my trust in Jesus. Please forgive me, cleanse me, and make me Yours. Teach me to follow You from this day forward. In Jesus’ name, amen.”

If you truly turn to Him, He will receive you.

“For ‘whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.’” (Romans 10:13, NKJV)

Amos 7 reminds us that God is holy, God listens to prayer, God holds a plumb line to His people, and God calls ordinary men and women into His service. May we be a people who intercede, who repent where we are crooked, who obey when He calls, and who cling to the One who shed His blood for us and rose again—Jesus Christ, our God, Savior, and Lord.