

## **“Prepare To Meet Thy God”**

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The selected theme for our Spring Gospel Meeting at Tiftonia from Amos 4:12 is “Prepare to meet thy God!” In order to appreciate this theme more fully, an overview of Amos’ prophecy and the reading of the entire fourth chapter follow. As you read, see if you can detect the current need to review and find application for God’s message through the prophet Amos.

The historical background of the Book of Amos yields these observations: “Both Judah and Israel had had unprecedented prosperity, commercial advantages and material wealth. The seeds of political unrest and immorality were present in their prosperity. Northern Israel was in the greatest danger for reasons which this prophecy unfolds. The kingdom was outwardly at peace. It was in the middle of the reign of Jereboam II, while Uzziah was king in Jerusalem. The Syrians of Damascus had been confined to their own territory by the wars of the Assyrians. Assyria, herself, was now torn by internal dissensions and was quite harmless. Amos prophesied the rise of Assyria to greater power and her dominion over Israel as a punishment for the sins and follies which he had been sent to rebuke.

“The purpose of Amos was to warn Israel of her coming doom and to predict the coming of the great Messianic Kingdom through Christ” (George DeHoff, *DeHoff’s Bible Handbook*, p. 168).

Israel’s spiritual failure and impending judgment from God receive attention in chapter 4. The eighth century B.C. prophet wrote,

“Hear this word, ye kine of Bashan, that are in the mountain of Samaria, which oppress the poor, which crush the needy, which say to their masters, Bring, and let us drink.

“The Lord GOD hath sworn by his holiness, that, lo, the days shall come upon you, that he will take you away with hooks, and your posterity with fishhooks.

“And ye shall go out at the breaches, every cow at that which is before her; and ye shall cast them into the palace, saith the Lord.

“Come to Bethel, and transgress; at Gilgal multiply transgression; and bring your sacrifices every morning, and your tithes after three years:

“And offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven, and proclaim and publish the free offerings: for this liketh you, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord GOD.

“And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

“And also I have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest: and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered.

“So two or three cities wandered unto one city, to drink water; but they were not satisfied: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

“I have smitten you with blasting and mildew: when your gardens and your vineyards and your fig trees and your olive trees increased, the palmerworm devoured them: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

“I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt: your young men have I slain with the sword, and have taken away your horses; and I have made the stink of your camps to come up unto your nostrils: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

“I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

“Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.

“For, lo, he that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is his thought, that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth, The Lord, The God of hosts, is his name.”

The Book of Amos ends with a hopeful vision for the future which ultimately is realized in the church of Christ. “The tabernacle of David” would be raised up to bless all nations (Amos 9:11-15). This reference quoted by the apostle James in Acts 15:13-17 was to the church of Christ, the royal descendant of David whose kingdom was established on the day of Pentecost in A.D. 33 as recorded in Acts 2. The hope of eternal salvation for a world that has lost its way – if it ever knew it – uniquely and exclusively resides in Christ and in the church of Christ (cf. Ephesians 1:3 and 5:23).



## 5 VISIONS OF AMOS

1. The Devouring Locust.....Amos 7:1-3.
2. The Consuming Fire.....Amos 7:4-6.
3. The Searching Plumline.....Amos 7:7-11.
4. The Summer Fruit Basket.....Amos 8:1-10.
5. The Lord at the Altar.....Amos 9:1-10.