



## BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | [believerschapeldallas.org](http://believerschapeldallas.org)

Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Amos 9:11 – 15

“David’s Booth Restored”

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] We have been encouraging you to read through the Book of Amos and this is your last opportunity to raise your hand in Believers Chapel. You can go out and say that you responded to the invitation in Believers Chapel and raised your hand, so those of you that have read Amos this week, would you raise your hand? Good that’s very good. Now, those of you that have not read Amos at all in the whole fourteen weeks [laughter] well, there was a feeling came over my heart and so I don’t think I’d better ask you to raise your hand, but I hope you will one of these days read Amos.

We have enjoyed the study in Amos at least I have enjoyed the study in Amos. It was a fresh study for me because it was ten years ago that I expounded the Book of Amos here in Wednesday evening ministry of the word. So I had an opportunity to go back and to read Amos again a number of times. And like I know some of you, Saturday afternoon I would devote to the reading through the original text of the Book of Amos. So I would not be embarrassed to ask you to raise your hand when I would be unable to raise my own.

We were singing just a moment ago, “Holy holy holy, Lord God almighty.” God in three persons, blessed trinity. That’s one of the foundational truths of the Christian faith. In fact, in the minds of many that is the foundational truth because you see if you really

believe what you were singing God in three persons blessed trinity, then you couldn't be a member of Jehovah's witnesses. You couldn't be a Mormon. As a matter of fact, you could not even logically attend a main line denominational church in which the deity of Christ is denied because if our Lord is not truly, to use the ancient expression, very god of very god, then we don't have a Christian Trinity, and, therefore, as a natural inference of that, we don't have a Savior. We don't have a salvation.

So actually our Christian faith rests upon that foundation of the holy Trinity; three persons who subsists as one God, coequal. So when we sing, "Trinity holy holy holy," we're giving praise to the Lord God for the fundamental nature, being, and attributes of our God whom we worship. So if we're Christians, we celebrate the doctrine of the trinity and we rejoice in it; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; all possessed a full deity. Our Lord, the second person, who took to himself at a particular time an additional nature, his human nature and, therefore, is able to be the mediator by whom, through whom, through whose sacrifice; we can have the confidence of the forgiveness of sins. So I love that hymn, "Holy holy holy." Reminds me of my youth when I really didn't understand everything about it, but I understand and I rejoice in those great truths.

Now, we've come to the end of our studies of Amos and we're going to read this morning Amos chapter 9, verse 11 through verse 15, and then I'm going to turn over to Acts chapter 15, and read a few verses there but Amos 9:11-15.

"In that day," Amos writes, "I will raise up the fallen booth of David, and wall up its breaches; I will also raise up its ruins and rebuild it as in the days of old; that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the gentiles who are called by My name," declares the Lord who does this. 'Behold, days are coming,' declares the Lord, 'When the plowman will overtake the reaper and the treader of grapes him who sows seed; when the mountains will drip sweet wine and all the hills will be dissolved. Also I will restore the captivity of My people Israel, and they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them; they

will also plant vineyards and drink their wine, and make gardens and eat their fruit. 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."

Now, if you will turn over to Acts chapter 15 where this passage is cited by James at the event called, so often in our Bibles, the council at Jerusalem, which really was simply a consultation between the church and Antioch and the church in Jerusalem. And beginning with verse 12 after Peter has made his great speech concluding with, "But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus in the same way as they also are," Luke writes verse 12, Acts 15, "And all the multitude fell silent, and they were listening to Barnabas and Paul as they were relating what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles."

Now, it's very important to note that the subject of circumcision and its relationship to Gentile salvation was concluded with that statement by Peter. And so when he says, "And all the multitude fell silent" there was a conviction on the part of the group that was meeting there that Peter's statement summed up the truth of the relationship between Gentile salvation and the Old Testament rite of circumcision. It's not necessary for salvation. And we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus in the same way as they also are. The issue is therefore settled.

Now, the multitude fell silent and that gave Barnabas and Paul an opportunity to relate the things that had happened through the preaching of the word of God among the Gentiles. And Luke says, "And all of the multitude fell silent, and they were listening to Barnabas and Paul as they were relating what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles." And after they had stopped speaking James now stands and answers saying, "Brethren, listen to me."

Now, the reason that James stood is simply because there was an element of truth in those who were insisting upon a relationship between Gentile salvation and the

promises that have been made to the nation Israel which suggested their predominance in their latter days, their preeminence. And so James is going to try to draw this together and he appeals to the Amos passage. He says, "Simeon has related how God first concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name. And with this the words of the prophets agree." In other words, this Gentile salvation that you have seen take place and that Barnabas and Paul have been talking to us about; it's in harmony with what the Old Testament says.

We should expect a future day of Gentile salvation, for Amos wrote and this is his quote verse 16, "After these things" that is just what he's been talking about the taking out from among the Gentiles a people for his name, after these things, incidentally, in the original text, in the Old Testament the Hebrew text says, "In that day," and the Greek translation of that also follows the Hebrew text and says, "In that day." Since this quotation normally follows the Greek translation of the Old Testament of the Septuagint, the fact that James modifies this probably, there is some debate over this, probably means that he intended to change the statement in chapter 9 in verse 11 of Amos, "in that day" to "after these things." In other words, he's making an application of what Amos said to the present situation and to the situation that will follow the present time of Gentile salvation.

So, "After these things I will return," probably not a reference to the Second Advent although some have taken it that way. "After these things I will return," I think, what this really means, is that I interpret the Hebrew text, it's simply a Hebrew idiom for saying, "I will again rebuild the tabernacle of David which has fallen and I will rebuild its ruins and I will restore it, in order that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord and all the Gentiles who are called by my name, says the Lord who makes these things known from ago." Later on, we'll talk about the application of the passage in Acts 15 to Amos chapter 9, but we'll stop our Scripture reading at this point.

Let's bow together in a moment of prayer.

[Prayer] Father we are grateful to Thee for the privilege that is ours to gather together to study the Scriptures to learn from them and then by Thy grace through the help of the Holy Spirit to seek to live our lives in harmony with Thy word. We remember the many passages in the Old Testament in which, Lord, Thou didst admonish Israel and the people of God there to live by the law that Thou didst give them in grace, and in accordance with the promises that Thou didst in mercy extend to them. And we remember that the history of humanity is disobedience and rebellion and the turning aside from following Thy word. Lord, deliver us from that. As a local assembly of believers as a local church deliver us from apostasy. Deliver us from turning away from the teaching of the New Testament and the principles of grace that are found there. Enable us by the ministry of the Holy Spirit in that grace to live in a way that will be pleasing to Thee.

We pray for our elders and for deacons. We ask thy blessing upon them upon the members the friends the visitors who are here with us today may this be a day of spiritual blessing for each of us. We pray, of course, for our country. We ask thy blessing upon it. Enable us, Lord, to freely preach the word of God in the United States and then to the four corners of the earth. We pray for the sick and ill, for those who’ve requested our petitions, we ask Thy blessing upon them. And as we sing, may we sing in the spirit of the glory of the name of the Lord Jesus. May the ministry be profitable to us today.

For Jesus’ sake. Amen.

[Message] Our subject today is “David’s Booth Restored.” Amos’ prophecy has been said by many outstanding students to be one of unmitigated doom. In fact, that’s the precise phrase of one of the leading students in the past of the Book of Amos. But Amos always said no to total destruction of God’s people. And that is particularly evident in the immediately preceding verses where in chapter 9 in verse 8 in the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the lines of that verse in the New American Standard Bible Amos writes, “Nevertheless, I will not totally destroy the house of Jacob,’ declares the Lord.”

In other words, Amos in the final analysis acknowledges that while that generation of which his listeners or readers as the case may be were a part, may pass off the scene and be utterly destroyed. The promises, however, still hold, for as he puts it in verse 8, “The house of Jacob.” In other words, he concludes with a divine never to the thoughts that they might not possess eternally their promised inheritance. So the prophecy of this rugged man from the rock-strewn hills of Judea, this simple plain man of judgment concludes rather strikingly, I think, with an epilogue of hope in which is painted a glorious picture of the golden age that is to come. In fact, it’s hard to find in the Old Testament where there are many such pictures, one more notable than the one presented by Amos the prophet of judgment.

This same Old Testament Professor that I referred to a moment ago has referred to this closing oracle as, “A pleasant piece of music as if the birds had come out after the thunderstorm and the wet hills were glistening in the sun.” So the thunderstorm has passed. The sun has come out and the beauty of the fresh and clean situation is noted and Amos’ prophecy as he concludes his marvelous little book is parallel with that.

The preceding context has mentioned judgment on the kingdom in verse 7 through the first part of verse 8. In fact, Amos told the Northern Kingdom, “‘Are you not as the sons of Ethiopia to me O sons of Israel,’ declares the Lord.” In other words, in your disobedience you have put yourself in such a position that you are no different from Ethiopians.

Now, that’s a very important principle to bear in mind with reference to the promises that have been given to the nation Israel. The promises have been given to the nation as a nation and will be fulfilled. But each generation as it comes along is responsible to believe. And those who do not believe of the nation Israel down through the centuries, their destiny is the same as Gentiles who do not believe. If the generation does not believe it has no hope, no more hope than gentiles. And when our Lord came, if you remember, the generation that he was exposed to and that was exposed to him, he

said to them essentially the same thing. That they were a lost generation because of the way they responded but, nevertheless, the promises of the future restoration of the nation still hold but that, of course, has to do with the generation of the future and not the present. So Amos has spoken about that.

He's spoken about the preservation of a remnant down through the years. He said, "Nevertheless I will not totally destroy the house of Jacob," declares the Lord," and that's the story of the history of salvation down to the present day. In Paul's day in the midst of the nation's disavowal and rejection by the Lord he, nevertheless, could say that even in the present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And it's obvious from Romans 11 where that text occurs that he's talking about a remnant of Israelitish believers. So the remnant has persisted but the nation as the generations disobeyed lost their promises that have been extended to them by the Lord God.

Now, Amos, I say, refers to that when he speaks here about, "Nevertheless I will not totally destroy the house of Jacob," a remnant has persisted down to the present day and today within the church of Jesus Christ there is an Israel of God. That is true believing Israelites who have not fallen for the work salvation of the Judaists or the work salvation of the preachers of work salvation today but who have rested in the grace of God and Jesus Christ and those Hebrew believers today in the Church of Christ are singled out by Paul as a remnant according to the election of grace and Galatians 6:16 as the Israel of God.

There is an Israel that is not of God at the present day but the Israel of God true believers in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ who are, nevertheless, ethnic Jews. The one of the men who taught me Hebrew was a member of that remnant and a member of the Israel of God true believing Israelite and, of course, many of you know today many Jewish believers who are part of the church of Christ as they remnant of Israel. Evidence, incidentally, that God has not forgotten his promises. Even as the mass of the nation exist today in unbelief, there is still a remnant that he has brought to the knowledge of Christ.

Read Romans 11. Read it over and over again and, I think, the thoughts that you may have with reference to this, if they’re not already clear will certainly be clarified.

Now, Amos is also spoken here of worldwide discipline in the preceding context because in verse 9 he has said, “For behold, I am commanding, and I will shake the house of Jacob among all nations as grain is shaken in a sieve, but not a kernel will fall to the ground.” That’s probably a reference to a pebble. Not a pebble, not any foreign element will fall to the ground that which falls to the ground is the pure grain, the remnant. All of the refuse, all of the foreign elements, all of the chaff will be caught in the sieve and thrown away. And he speaks specifically of those that will be thrown away in verse 10 as “All the sinners of My people will die by the sword, those who say, the calamity will not overtake or confront us.” Those who think that because God has given the nation these great Abrahamic, Davidic, and New covenant promises that, therefore, they individually cannot fail to obtain them, and yet they can live in rejection of the truth of God and ultimate rejection of Christ, they are living in a fools paradise. Those who live that way have no right to the promises that are set out in the Old Testament. They are set out for repentant individuals. Of course, we know from the Scriptures that it’s God who produces repentance because he’s the one who controls the affairs of men.

Now, Amos having made reference to the worldwide discipline goes on to speak of the future glory that God has promised. And he speaks first of the king and the kingdom, “In that day I will raise up the fallen booth of David, and wall up its breaches; I will also raise up its ruins and rebuild it as in the days of old; that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations who are called by My name,’ declares the Lord who does this.”

Let me, because we don’t have a whole lot of time and this is a lengthy subject, let me just remind you of one or two things to keep in the background of the things that I’ll be saying. The prophets were gripped by what might be called the Davidic ideal. The basic promises were given to Abraham and in the promises given to Abraham was the

promise, “Kings shall come out of Thee,” Genesis chapter 17 in about verse 6. Then later on the Davidic covenant promises are given specific promises relating to the king who is to come. The son of David who will rule over the house of Jacob forever. The Davidic promises captured the mind and imagination of the Old Testament saints and prophets. And so this Davidic ideal they constantly wrote about. For example, if you read Isaiah chapter 9, Isaiah chapter 11, Isaiah chapter 55, Jeremiah chapter 23, Jeremiah 33, Ezekiel chapter 34, Ezekiel chapter 37, Hosea chapter 3, and many other passages unfold various aspects of the Davidic ideal. A son of David who would rule over an eternal kingdom. In fact, when we come into the New Testament and the enunciation is made by the angel Gabriel to Mary in Nazareth the words include these, “He shall be great. He will be called the son of the most high and the Lord God will give unto him the throne of his father David and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever and his kingdom will have no end.” So when Amos writes in the 11th verse, “In that day I will raise up the fallen booth of David,” he was talking about the fact that that time will come when the Davidic throne shall be reestablished by the Lord God in the earth.

The booth, incidentally, was just a simple little shelter particularly noted for the use at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles. It’s rather striking that at the Feast of Tabernacles there seems to be some indication that the king also took a prominent part in the feast of tabernacles. One can see this perhaps in the way in which Jeroboam the First took a prominent part in the establishment of the counterfeit Feast of Tabernacles described in 2 Kings chapter 12, the passage we’ve referred to more than once. So the booth was a simple shelter. The booth of David is a reference to the perfect royal mediator, the descendent of David who shall come. By God’s act, a king will reign mediatory work will be acceptable to the Lord.

Fallen is an interesting description. It may look back to the schism under Jeroboam the First or forward in the light of this particular prophecy or perhaps the participle in the Hebrew text which is a present participle may have some sense like that.

We’re not absolutely certain of that but the sense of fallen seems very plain. So he speaks then first of a king. He is going to restore the fallen booth of David “And wall up its breaches, raise up its ruins and rebuild it as in the days of old.” That’s important. It’s not something absolutely new. It’s a restoration of that which had in part taken place. He speaks of the nations in the 12th verse, “‘That they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the Gentiles or nations who are called by name,’ declares the Lord who does this.”

The Messianic hope was universal since the roots were in the promises made by the Lord to Eve in the Garden of Eden. As a matter of fact, the kingdom goes back to the creation of man and God putting him in the garden and giving him dominion over the fish of the sea, the fowl of the air, and the other parts of the creation. So the messianic dominion is set out in the word of God from the beginning. Amos sees the nations with privileges from the reign of the new David. There’s some questions one might have here. They’re rather incidental cause we’re not dealing with great detail with this passage but one might ask why the emphasis upon Edom.

Well, when one reads the Old Testament, it’s evident that Edom becomes rather symbolic of the world’s hostility. In the prophets, particularly, one finds that and we even find in Amos reference to Edom. You remember the children of Israel when they came out of the land of Egypt and were on their way to the Promised Land when they came to the kingdom of Edom they asked permission of the King of Edom to pass through his territory. And they were told rather roughly by the King of Edom that they could not pass through. The children of Israel said, “Look we will not touch anything; we’ll just go through on the Kings highway. We won’t go through your vineyards. We won’t go through your orchards. We’ll just stick to the road. We’ll not damage anything. We just want to go through.” The king of Edom said, “If you try that I’ll send my soldiers out after you.” And from that time on Edom, God makes reference to the fact they rejected the children of Israel’s simple desire to pass through their territory, as symbolic of the world’s hostility. In Romans chapter 20 is the passage that refers to this. You may want

to look it up some time. Later on David conquered Edom and sent out soldiers there, 2 Samuel chapter 8. So when Edom falls the suggestion is that worldly opposition to the plans and purposes of God also falls. Edom then becomes something of a Messianic sign.

Notice too it’s state in verse 12, “And all the nations who are called by My name.” Now, that’s a marriage metaphor. To be called by the name of the Lord. That is to be so united to him that he can speak of them as identified with them. His name is called over them. Now, that’s a marvelous position and the Gentiles recorded that position. There may be, I think there is, some anticipation of what the apostle is ultimately called upon to do by God because Paul is the apostle of the gospel to the gentiles. And one of the things that the apostle preaches, he calls it part of the stewardship of God’s grace given to him, is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body, fellow partakers of the promise in Christ through the Gospel, Ephesians chapter 3 in verse 6. So the privilege of being called by the name of the Lord suggests that, ultimately, they will have a position of unity with the Lord God just as the nation Israel is to have.

One might also ask about this word, possess -- that they may possess the nations of Edom. Well, in what sense can we say that there is equality when the fallen booth of David is to possess the remnant of Edom, “And all the Gentiles who are called by my name.” Well, possess points to some kind of conflict or perhaps put it this way some kind of conquest. Perhaps it suggests the kind of predominance that Israel has among equals at the time of the establishment of the kingdom of God. One of the things that is set out so fully in the Old Testament is the fact that in those days of the future when the Messianic Kingdom exists upon the earth the nation Israel has a certain kind of preeminence and perhaps that’s suggested here. It’s a matter over which we might talk in more detail but we don’t have time to do that.

Amos then, secondly, looks at life and liberty in the kingdom. Three more cardinal features of the coming day are set out. And first he speaks about the earth. “Behold, days are coming,’ declares the Lord, ‘when the plowman will overtake the

reaper and the treader of grapes him who sows seed; when the mountains will drip sweet wine and all the hills will be dissolved.” Things will be so fruitful that one does not have the power to reap all of the harvest before the sowing is now necessary again. So it’s a marvelous little picture of the restoration of fruitfulness that God evidently intended or had in the Eden of the Book of Genesis. The Messiah is a last Adam, a second David reigning in such a restored Eden. Lavish abundance. Mountains oozing wine. Basic spiritual and moral realities put right. All well between God and man. The curse gone and Eden restored or something like Eden perhaps we should say. Thorns and thistles no longer there. The sweat of the brow to produce fruit no longer necessary. No tension in Amos between the full enjoyment of the material creation in the spiritual relationship to the Lord God.

In the history of the Christian church there’s been a lot of opposition to an earthly kingdom based upon the view that it’s impossible for us to think of an earthly kingdom in which people have fullness of material blessing and at the same time enjoy a spiritual relationship to the Lord God. And we must acknowledge all the way back to the days of Augustine when it’s obvious from Augustine’s words there were people expounding the earthly kingdom of our Lord in such a way that one got the impression and Augustine says he got that impression because he speaks about the gormandizing of these expositors of the word of God who so magnified the material and carnal aspects of the kingdom that he was forced to change his view from premillennialism to another view. So the kind of gormandizing that one might suggest without looking at the spiritual reality that lies behind it is something that the Old Testament would not at all support. On the other hand, the idea that, therefore, we cannot have a kingdom in which we enjoy the material benefits of God’s creation is itself also opposed to Holy Scripture and illogical.

Some years ago I heard Dr. Alvin McLean speak on the doctrine of the kingdom. He later published a book on the kingdom five hundred and something pages. I listened to him for four lectures and they were very fruitful lectures. He obviously had spent

many years studying the subject. If you ever have a chance to read his book "The Greatness of the Kingdom," I'm sure you'll find many profitable things in it.

I remember an illustration that he used. He was trying to point out that the pulponic notion of spirituality, that is that we cannot be spiritual in material things, is one of the things that Scriptures does not countenance. It's not either gormandizing in a carnal way or having a spiritual kingdom with no material kingdom at all. It's not either or but it's possible for us to enjoy God's creation and the material benefits of it in a spiritual way. He said, "Let me illustrate with a parable. During a church banquet a group of preachers were discussing the nature of the Kingdom of God. One expressed his adherence to the premillennial view of a literal kingdom established on the earth among men. To this he said a rather belligerent that may tell you that Dr. McLean was a premillennialist, but a belligerent two hundred pound preacher snorted, 'Ridiculous; such an idea is nothing but materialism.'

When asked to state his own view he replied, 'The kingdom is a spiritual matter. The kingdom of God has already been established and is within you. Don't you gentlemen know that the kingdom is not eating and drinking but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit,' (and you remember that's a citation from Romans 14:17.) And then the preacher reached hungrily across the table and speared another enormous piece of fried chicken." So Dr. McLean said, he said, "Nobody tried to answer the preacher. As a matter of fact, no answer was necessary. He had answered his own argument. As the French would say he was hoist with his own batard. That is he was caught in his own trap talking about a fleshly material enjoyment and at the same time talking about spiritual relationship."

Then Dr. McLean said these interesting words. He said, "At the risk of being tiresome let me recite the obvious conclusion. If the kingdom of God can exist now on earth in a two hundred pound preacher full of fried chicken without reprehensible materialistic connotations perhaps it could also exist on eating and drinking on the more

perfect conditions in a future millennial kingdom.” Then I like what he said at the conclusion. “Personally,” he said “I’ve always had a very high opinion of the value of fried chicken.” All preachers have of course. That’s the way Dr. Criswell likes to say you can tell if a mans been called to the ministry. It’s a negative. That is if he doesn’t like fried chicken it means he hasn’t’ been called. If he likes it, it doesn’t necessarily mean he’s been called but if he doesn’t like it, it means he hasn’t been called. [Laughter] But at any rate, Dr. McLean said, “Personally, I’ve always had a very high opinion the value of fried chicken, but this is the first time I’ve ever seen its apologetical value as an argument against the inconsistencies of that view of the kingdom based on a platonic notion of spirituality.”

So my Christian friends when the Old Testament speaks of material blessings and that Israel and the Gentiles shall enjoy them in a marvelous kingdom of God upon the earth, we’re not saying that that kingdom is a carnal kingdom. As a matter of fact, spiritual principles will be more inevident then and will be practiced then in a way that they never have been, so far as I can tell, in the ages that precede it.

In verse 14, Amos speaks about the people. He says, “And also I will restore the captivity of My people Israel, and they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them; they will also plant vineyards and drink their wine, and make gardens and eat their fruit.” Verse 13 states that they will have abundance. Verse 14 states that they will enjoy it. They will have security and they will have satisfaction. And, finally, in verse 15 he refers to the land. “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.” These people so far as Amos describes them here are free from the presence of sin; evidently, verse 13 suggests the curse is gone. They are free from the power of sin. Their hopes are not blighted as verse 14 suggests, and now there is a clear indication that the penalty of sin no longer exists from them because the land is forever theirs. They cannot lose it. If they cannot lose it, then the penalty has gone. And it’s guaranteed as Amos states in his last

line, “By the Lord your God.” Incidentally, that’s only the second time in this whole book that God is referred to as your God. In your reading, you may remember the other place.

Now, I’m going to ask you if you will to turn over to Acts chapter 15. We only have five or six or seven minutes, but I want to make one or two points that James makes here as he cites the passage in the council or the conference at Jerusalem. The Apostle Paul had returned to Antioch from one of his journeys, and he had found a snake had crawled into the little Eden of the church in Antioch. The church was torn apart over the principle of grace. They didn’t have any problem about Gentiles salvation. That was evident from what happened in Cornelius’s house. Gentiles could be saved, but the question was how were they to be saved. Were they to be saved like they were saved in the Old Testament. That is, in the process of becoming a member of Israel they had to undergo circumcision. They believed in the Messiah to come. They were saved by faith or the principle of grace in my opinion in Old Testament times, but in order to manifest their obedience to the Lord God they became a member of Israel. Gentiles had to become part of Israel through the right of circumcision. Thus becoming identified with the Abrahamic covenantal blessing

Now, the question arises in the church age, do Gentiles have to undergo circumcision? And that’s the issue here. Not the question of Gentile salvation but the method of Gentile salvation. And as you know from what we’ve read here, it’s quite obvious they had a big discussion in Antioch, felt it necessary to go down to Jerusalem to discuss the matter with the elders and apostles there. They had further confrontation and debate over the matter and finally the Apostle Peter evidentially the Holy Spirit had brought a sense of unanimity in the group Peter stood up as the spokesman and he said to them, “Brethren you know that in the early days God made choice among you that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. And God who know the heart bore witness to them giving them the Holy Spirit just as he also did to us.” He’s talking about his preaching in Cornelius’s house. And he made no distinction

between us and them; cleansing their hearts by faith not by faith and circumcision but by faith.

Now, therefore, why do you put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciples a yoke? That is a necessity of circumcision which, incidentally, meant that they must be under the law as well. Under a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear. And then he summed it all up by saying, "But we believe that we're saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus in the same way as they are also." There are only three possible plans of salvation. There is a salvation by man and obviously the Scriptures speak very strongly against any salvation by man alone or by human works or by grace are you saved through faith and that not of yourselves. "It's the gift of God not of works lest any man should boast." So salvation by man alone or by works is ruled out.

Or it's possible to come to some view that people are saved by man and God or faith and works, but then how do we know how much works is necessary for salvation. And, furthermore, if we could ever find anything that indicated how much, then we would have to acknowledge that God is robbed of glory. He has only the glory of part of our salvation and not all of our salvation but the Scriptures say, "That God does not relinquish his glory." So we cannot have any combination salvation. The Scriptures teach the third method. We're saved by God, by God alone, by his provision in the Lord Jesus Christ. As the Scriptures put it very plainly very much to the point. Salvation is of the Lord.

Now, that is settled the pharisaic multitudes or those that adhere to their views in Jerusalem are silenced after the discussion after Peter's words. But after all, they did have one point, and the point was simply that there aren't promises that pertain to the nation which shall be fulfilled in the future. So as one commentator has put and I think put it quite well the pharisaic multitude was silenced what they needed now was soothing. And so when they fell silent indicating that they had agreed to essentially with what Peter and Paul and Barnabas in the mean time had stood up and given discourse about how God

had blessed them and the salvation of the Gentiles, James who took something of the lead there felt it was necessary to in a sense soothe those whose feathers perhaps had been ruffled because they were clearly wrong and catch the basis of the truth that still was true. That is, that Israel does have a future.

They do have special promises and those special promises are not cancelled by the unbelief of a generation. So taking Amos as his text James stands up and says, "Brethren, listen to me. Simeon (that is Peter) has related how God first concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name." That's what he's doing right now. Through the ministry of the Gospel and the power of the Holy Spirit, the word of God is going out through Barnabas and Saul and others and Gentiles are being gathered into the people of God. That was the situation, the existential situation. What is happening is that God is visiting Gentiles. That's something new because of that generation's disobedience or rejection an ultimate scattering to the four corners of the earth. He's taking other people for his name. If you want full information about this read Romans 11, Paul spells out many of the details in Romans 11. James continues, "How God first concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name. "With this the words of the Prophets agree, just as it is written." So in effect he said, "What we are seeing happening Gentile salvation is true to the Old Testament. The words of the prophets agree with this." "For it is written, after these things I will return, and I will rebuild the tabernacle of David which has fallen."

Now, it's my opinion that since James modifies the, "In that day," of the Masoretic or Hebrew text and also of the Septuagint and since his citation largely follows the Septuagint that he's done it on purpose. But even if he had not done it on purpose, the truths would still hold that I'm going to mention to you. When he says, "After these things," or "In that day," he would be referring to what follows the present time of Gentile salvation. The nation is rejected but the purged soil remains. The dispersal is purposeful. It's discriminatory. It's perogative and, ultimately, after these things I will again rebuild the

tabernacle of David which has fallen. I will rebuild its ruins. I will restore it in order that rest of mankind will seek the Lord and all the gentiles who are called by my name. So what James says is Amos speaks to the point and Amos says, plainly, "The day is coming and the future in which the tabernacle of David is going to be rebuilt and the rest of mankind will seek the Lord not just some of them as today. For God's visiting the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name but the day is coming in which there will be a universal Gentile salvation but it follow the rebuilding of the tabernacle of David."

Now, there's been a great deal of debate over the sense of the rebuilding of the tabernacle of David and it's impossible for me to speak of this in detail. If you are interested we spent several hours on this in Wednesday in the past six months or so when were talking about the purpose of the ages in connection with Israel and the Gentiles. But let me just epitomize what I think Amos is speaking about. There are some who would tell we and they are in many believing men and I respect many of them.

In fact, I respect all of those that are believing men who seek to support the interpretation that tabernacle of David is a reference to the church. That is that what we see today is what Amos is speaking about, but let me suggest some reasons why that in my mind cannot be James's point. He not saying that today Amos is being fulfilled. He's rather saying Amos and his prophecy is to be fulfilled in the future. In the first place, the context of Amos 9:7-10 indicates that. For in the context of Amos 9 in the immediately preceding context Amos speaks about a Jewish disavowal. That is a Jewish rejection as the nation as a whole. That's what is true just preceding this.

Further, David in the New Testament occurs about fifty-nine times. Never does David refer to anything about David. The terms fallen, breaches, ruins as in days of old the term rebuild, restore cannot refer to the church. We cannot speak of the church being built from ruins. We cannot speak of the church in the present day being rebuilt. It's being built not rebuilt. So when he talks about a fallen booth, breaches it, ruins it, he's

talking about the nation Israel. In all of the preceding context there is no reference but the nation Israel. These expressions “to rebuild as in days of old” they are terms that do not refer to the church that body of people Jews and Gentiles who share in the blessings with equality. Those terms that Amos uses fit the kingdom rather than the church.

So to sum up cause our time is up. What Amos speaks about and what James uses in the present context is this. He says, “The present day is a day of out gathering from among Gentiles a people for God’s name.” It’s composed of Gentiles and a believing Jewish remnant. The Gentiles are grafted into the olive tree of those believing Jewish remnant people. In the future, there will be a rebuilding of the tabernacle of David a regathering of the nation, and as a result of that a world wide ingathering of Gentiles. All the Gentiles over whom my name is called. So as James uses Amos it seems to me that what we have then is a three-fold broad description of what God is doing. Today gathering out of Gentiles a people for his name, but the promises that have been made to the remnant of Israel, he still faithfully gives them as Jewish men believe the promises. We look forward to a rebuilding of the tabernacle of David and as a result of Israel’s national ethnic salvation in the future world wide blessing that will encompass all the Gentiles. That it seems to me is the divine program set out in the word of God. If I’m wrong you have my permission at the second coming of Christ to say I told you so and I won’t mind a bit, although I hate being wrong. [Laughter] Ask Martha.

If you’re here today and you’ve never believed in our Lord let me remind you that regardless of how we may look into the future and see the future, Peter’s words are still apropos. We believe that by the grace of God we are saved even as they. The grace of God is the principle by which God extends to us the benefits of the saving work of the Lord Jesus Christ. And if you’re here today and you’ve never believed in him we invite you to come to Christ, believe in him, trust in him, and receive everlasting life and become a member of this company of people described by James as Gentiles who are

gathered together to enjoy the relationship to the Lord God that God would have us to enjoy. May God in his grace bring you to Christ.

Let's stand for the benediction.

[Prayer] Father we are grateful to Thee for this wonderful little Book of Amos and for the truth that the prophet has given us to ponder and reflect upon. Deliver us from the rebellion toward the word of God manifested by the generation that Amos was called to minister to. By Thy grace, Lord, may we be enabled to rest confidently in the promises of the word of God that have reached their fulfillment in the blood that was shed on Calvary's cross. If there are any here, Lord, who have never believed in Christ may at this very moment they turn to him to receive forgiveness of sins.

We pray in His name. Amen.