

2nd Kings 15

2nd Kings 15

- **2nd Kings 15:1-7**

- *Amaziah (Uzziah)* was a pretty good guy following in the monotheistic footsteps of his father, but he also failed to stop the worshiping on the high places
- Seemingly out of no where he hear that Amaziah is a **leper** and his son Jotham is appointed as the ***al bayith*** (over the household)
- Here is a great example of finding details about a situation in the *Books of Chronicles* that are not found in the *Books of Kings*

2nd Kings 15 (Cont)

- The author of Kings assumes that you know the details about this incident while the author of Chronicles believes that you do not
- Look at the index at the bottom of the page containing 2nd Kings 15 for a reference to **2nd Chronicles 26:20-23**

2nd Chronicles 26

The author of Chronicles refers to King of Judah as *Uzziah* who is the same guy as *Amaziah* in 2nd Kings 15

King Uzziah grows proud and acts false to God by entering the temple and burning incense on the altar of incense

This is a very bad move for only a priest in the line of Aaron is allowed to offer incense in the Temple proper

So the chief priest *Azariah*, along with 80 other priests, go after the king demanding that he leave the temple

The king gets angry and as he raises the censer to offer burning incense to God, leprosy breaks out on his forehead

2nd Chronicles 26 (Cont)

- Why would he do this?
- Perhaps it was because he like some earlier kings, believed that they had a priestly role to play in the line of *Melchizedek*
- He also may have thought that because he was in the line of David he had a right to do this
- It is obvious, based on the outcome, that he was mistaken and his act violated the Law (Torah)

2nd Chronicles 26 (Cont)

- The books of Leviticus, Deuteronomy and Numbers all say that only sons of Aaron were allowed to burn incense in the Temple
- There is another example of a violation of the Law (Torah) resulting in a tragic result in *2nd Samuel 6: 1-11* which is clarified in *1st Chronicles 15:13-15*
- Scholars believe that 1st and 2nd Samuel and 1st and 2nd Kings were authored by an individual living in Judah (South) and he assumed that the people knew the teachings of the Law (Torah)
- The author of 1st and 2nd Chronicles was believed to have been written by someone in Israel (North) who assumed that he audience did not know the Law
- Returning to **2nd Kings 15**

Danger of improper use of Incense

- Nu 3:4 Unholy fire of the sons of Aaron
- Nu 16:1-35 Korah's Rebellion

2nd Kings 15 (Cont)

- Underline the words “over the household” (*al Bayith*) at 2nd Kings 15:5
- Like the term *gebirah* for the office of the Queen Mother, the *al bayith* was a specific office with in the kingdom
- It was similar to vice president or prime minister who was responsible to represent or rule for the king when he was away or not able to represent himself
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2nd Kings 15 (Cont)

- This office is going to come up a number of times in the Bible including in *Isaiah 22* and when used by Jesus in speaking of the role of Peter (*Mt 16*)
- *Azariah (Uzziah)* dies and is succeeded by his son ***Jotham***

Transition

- During the time of Jeroboam II in Israel and Azariah (Uzziah) in Judah, God sends the Prophet **Amos** to prophesy to **Israel**

The Book of the Prophet Amos

Amos 760-753 BC Pre Ex

- *Amos* falls within the historical context of 2nd Kings 14 & 15
 - *Jeroboam II* is king in *Israel* (786 – 756 B.C.)
 - *Azariah (Uzziah)* is king in *Judah* (800-783 B.C.)
- *Jeroboam II* is a very powerful king who is expanding the borders, prestige, and wealth of *Israel* under the prophecies of *Jonah*

Amos (Cont)

- An interesting fact – the first Olympic Games were held in Greece in 776 B.C.
- *Azariah* is a leper
- His son *Jotham* serves as the *al bayith* until the death of his father and then he takes over as king

Amos (Cont)

- Often the name of a prophet has something to do with his character or mission
- Amos means “burden”
- He is sometimes called the “firebrand” among the prophets
- Most Old Testament prophets split their message between doom and gloom vs happy stuff like a restoration
- In his book *Amos* tells his listeners that they are all going to die
- It is a heavy burden to read right up to the last chapter

Amos (Cont)

- *Amos* is a simple herdsman/shepherd and a dresser of sycamore-trees (not a professional prophet)
- He lives in ***Tekoa***, a village about five miles south of *Bethlehem* on the edge of the *Judean* desert
- God calls him to prophesy to the polytheists of *Israel* at ***Bethel*** during the reign of *Jeroboam II* (783-743) when *Israel* is wealthy and the rich exploited the poor
- He condemns corrupt city life, social injustice, the deceitful consolation of insincere ceremonies
- He predicts the salvation of those who stay faithful (the remnant of Joseph)

Amos (Cont)

- He proclaims hope for the faithful who would remain as a remnant (*Anawim*)
- And he uses the prophetic “rib” (Hebrew lawsuit) as he calls the people to turn back and be dependent on God (Ps 50*)
- He is the first among the canonical prophets to speak about the Gentiles coming into the faith
- Parts of his message will be echoed by all the rest of the prophets
- He is prophesying just before *Samaria* falls to the *Assyrians* in 721 B.C.
- He will be quoted in **Acts 15** at the first council of the church by the Apostle James, Bishop of Jerusalem

Amos (Cont)

- *Stephen*, the first martyr, quotes from *Amos* in his long speech in **Acts 7**
- *Amos* was very important for the early Christians
- By contrast, today very few Christians are aware of his important message
- Most think of famous cookies when they hear the word “Amos”!

Amos (Cont)

- Amos is not mentioned in 2nd Kings, instead the historical setting of 2nd Kings is at the beginning of the Book of Amos
- Amos 1 and 2 present a series of oracles against several nations in the region
- He and other prophets often condemn not only Israel and Judah but also the nations around them
- He then presents five oracles followed by five visions of judgment against Israel and then concludes with an epilogue

Amos (Cont)

- He focuses on three themes
 - Social justice concerning worship
 - God's word and the Day of Yahweh (a day of deliverance)
 - The day God would enter into history to judge and punish Israel of her enemies
- His message focuses on God's call to the nation of Israel to repent
- Since Israel fails to heed his call, she will be conquered by the *Assyrians* a few years later in 722 B.C.

Amos (Cont)

- Superscription and Thesis 1:1-2
 - A. Oracles Against the nations, 1:3-2:16
 - 1. Aram
 - 2. Philistia
 - 3. Phoenicia
 - 4. Edom
 - 5. Ammon
 - 6. Moab
 - 7. Judah
 - 8. Israel

Amos (Cont)

- Amos 1:1
 - This section starts out with some specific information concerning the historical context
 - Jeroboam II was king in Israel
 - Uzziah was king in Judah
 - The events happened two years before the earthquake*
 - This section was most likely not written by Amos
 - Each of the prophetic books begins with this sort of historical identification

Amos (Cont)

- It may have been added to these books by a scribe during the post-exilic times of Ezra and Nehemiah (458 to 445 BC) when the Old Testament was coming into its final written form
- This includes its arrangement and the editing of the books
- The person who added this introduction to these books wants to make sure the reader understands them within in a specific historical context

Amos (Cont)

- In fact, in some of the later prophetic books a section will be lifted verbatim out of 2nd Kings
- This indicates that there was some sort of lectionary system in play at that time, and that they wanted all to read the prophets within the historical context of 1st and 2nd Kings and 1st and 2nd Chronicles as we are doing in this class
- So the question arises as to who is the author of this text?
- In the end **God is the author** and thus we can see that He wants us to read it within this historical context

Amos (Cont)

- Whenever you hear a quote from one of the prophets be sure to check the historical setting that is provided at the beginning of each prophetic book to attain the proper historical context

Amos (Cont)

- **Amos 1:2**

- Amos utilizes a classical prophetic literary style of writing
- *Jonah* uses prose (narrative) while *Amos* uses Hebrew poetry which is very common in the prophets, wisdom, proverbs and the Psalms
- The two major conventions of Hebrew poetry are:
 - Antithetical parallelism
 - **Synonymous parallelism** (the Hebrews really loved this type)
 - In this convention the author says the same thing in two different ways

Amos (Cont)

- You will see this technique used all over the Old Testament
- A classic example can be seen in:
 - Amos 1:2 *“The LORD roars from Zion, and utters his voice from Jerusalem”*
 - *Zion is the mountain top located in Jerusalem*
 - Again, “the pastures of the shepherds mourn, and the top of Carmel withers”
 - One of the greenest places in the area is on top of Mt Carmel so when that withers because of the fire coming from the mouth of God, the shepherds will mourn
- Almost everything Amos says is pretty hot and fiery

Amos (Cont)

- **Amos 1:3-5**

- This refers to the coming *Assyrian* exile
- King *Hazael* and his son *Benhadad* were the kings of *Syria*

- **Amos 1:6-8**

- This is another example of synonymous parallelism as the kings of these five Philistine nations will be wiped out

- **Amos 1:9 – 2:1**

- His brother means *Israel*
- The next four oracles are to the nations that surround Israel and Judah

Amos (Cont)

- **Amos 2:4**

- Presents an oracle against *Judah*

- **Amos 2:6-7**

- Geographically these nations are arrayed from Damascus in North to Ammon and Moab on the east side of the Jordan, to Edom in the south and Philistine States on the West, then back to Israel in the North

Amos (Cont)

- Even though *Amos* and other prophets deliver oracles against the roundabout nations, they eventually focus on *Judah* or *Israel*
- *Amos* will spend the rest of his message condemning *Israel*
- Up to this point he has just warmed up, now he will really go to town
- He does this because in their wealth they are abusing the poor who are usually more pious and rely on God

Amos (Cont)

- **Amos 2:7-9**

- The reference of a man and his father is related to their pagan prostitution
- To understand the reference to the Amorites we need to look at **Genesis 15**
 - The Amorites over time are seen as a particular Gentile nation or tribe in living in the region
 - Abraham was called by God from Chaldea and came all the way over to what is called the Promised Land

Amos (Cont)

- **Genesis 15:7; 13-16**

- The word Amorite, like the word Canaanite, can mean a specific Gentile nation or “the people of the land”
- God is telling Abraham that he will return to the Promised Land (from Egypt) but not until the iniquity of the Amorites is complete
- This means that the people of Israel will not take possession of the Promised Land until the wickedness of the Amorites reaches a certain threshold

Amos (Cont)

- Turn to **Du 8:18-20**

- God warns the people of Israel that if they become like the nations that He removed they will perish

- Also look at **Du 9:1-5**

- God calls them to conquer the land because God needs a nation to go in and wipe out the pagan nations that were there because of their wickedness
- Israel gets the job to do this because they are the descendants of Abraham
- Again, he warns them that if they become like the nations they are driving out, they shall perish

Amos (Cont)

- Now turn to **Joshua 23:6-14, 24:11-28**
 - Here Joshua reminds the people how Abraham was called for Ur of the Chaldeans because they were serving pagan gods
 - He brought them into the Promised Land but they moved down to Egypt where they again worshiped the pagan god of Egypt
 - Once again God brought them out of Egypt back to monotheism in the Promised Land

Amos (Cont)

- He warned them that if after cleansing the land of paganism (polytheism) they reverted to the paganism, they would be chased out of the land
- This warning was proclaimed in the Old Testament over and over

Amos (Cont)

- So as we return to **Amos 2**, we see the people of Israel (Northern Kingdom) are breaking the Law of Moses by oppressing the poor and by serving pagan idols
- **Amos 2:9-13**
 - They even call on one who has taken the vow of a *Nazirite* to drink wine and break his vow to the Lord

The Vow of a Nazirite (Nu 6:1-21)

- Cut hair
- Abstain from all aspects of the grape
 - Wine
 - Grapes
 - Raisins
- Avoid all contact with the dead

The Vow of a Nazirite (Nu 6:1-21)

- *Nazar* means “to cut” – one who cuts himself off from society for a time (temporary period to a lifetime)
- It is a public statement (like a wedding ring)
- All aspects of the grape (particularly wine) is seen as a symbol of joy
 - No such thing as grape juice at that time
- Coming in contact with the dead would cause the person to become ritually unclean

Amos (Cont)

- Like the Nazirite,;” the prophet was under obligation to prophesy the word of the Lord to the people
- The people on the other hand do not want to hear this message of the Lord
- We will see this again and again among the prophets
- This will become a major problem for Jesus and that is why he will quote from Isaiah 6

Amos (Cont)

- We will continue with **Amos 3** after the Holidays