

**Second Baptist Church of Doylestown**  
**Bible Study Notes**  
**9-13-17**

**Amos 3**

**Witnesses Summoned Against Israel - Verses 1-2**

<sup>1</sup> Hear this word, people of Israel, the word the LORD has spoken against you—against the whole family I brought up out of Egypt:<sup>2</sup> “You only have I chosen of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your sins.”

**3:2** God chose Israel to be the people through whom all other nations of the world could know him. He made this promise to Abraham, father of the Israelites (Genesis 12:1-3). Israel didn't have to do anything to be chosen; God had given them this special privilege because he wanted to, not because they deserved special treatment (Deuteronomy 9:4-6). Pride in their privileged position, however, ruined Israel's sensitivity to the will of God and to the plight of others.

**The Prophet's Task - Verses 3-9**

<sup>3</sup> Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so?<sup>4</sup> Does a lion roar in the thicket when it has no prey? Does it growl in its den when it has caught nothing?<sup>5</sup> Does a bird swoop down to a trap on the ground when no bait is there? Does a trap spring up from the ground if it has not caught anything?<sup>6</sup> When a trumpet sounds in a city, do not the people tremble? When disaster comes to a city, has not the LORD caused it?<sup>7</sup> Surely the Sovereign LORD does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets.<sup>8</sup> The lion has roared—who will not fear? The Sovereign LORD has spoken—who can but prophesy?

**3:3-6** With a series of seven rhetorical questions, Amos shows how two events can be linked together. Once one event takes place, the second will surely follow. Amos was showing that God's revelation to him was the sure sign that judgment would follow. This verse means that God himself would be sending disaster to Israel.

**3:7** Even in anger, God is merciful: He always warned his people through prophets before punishing them. Warnings about sin and judgment apply to people today just as they did to Israel. Because we have been warned about our sin, we have no excuse when punishment comes. God had warned his people through his prophets, so they could not rationalize or complain when God punished them for refusing to

repent. Do not take lightly the warnings in God's Word about judgment. His warnings are a way of showing mercy to you.

### **The Doom of Samaria - Verses 9-15**

<sup>9</sup> Proclaim to the fortresses of Ashdod and to the fortresses of Egypt: "Assemble yourselves on the mountains of Samaria; see the great unrest within her and the oppression among her people."<sup>10</sup> "They do not know how to do right," declares the LORD, "who store up in their fortresses what they have plundered and looted."<sup>11</sup> Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: "An enemy will overrun your land, pull down your strongholds and plunder your fortresses."<sup>12</sup> This is what the LORD says: "As a shepherd rescues from the lion's mouth only two leg bones or a piece of an ear, so will the Israelites living in Samaria be rescued, with only the head of a bed and a piece of fabric from a couch."<sup>13</sup> "Hear this and testify against the descendants of Jacob," declares the Lord, the LORD God Almighty.<sup>14</sup> "On the day I punish Israel for her sins, I will destroy the altars of Bethel; the horns of the altar will be cut off and fall to the ground."<sup>15</sup> I will tear down the winter house along with the summer house; the houses adorned with ivory will be destroyed and the mansions will be demolished," declares the LORD.

**3:9** Ashdod was a Philistine city and the site of the temple of Dagon, a pagan god. Amos pictured Philistia and Egypt being summoned to witness Israel's great sins. Even Israel's most wicked and idolatrous neighbors would see God judge Israel.

**3:10** The people of Israel no longer knew how to do what was right. The more they sinned, the harder it was to remember what God wanted. The same is true for us. The longer we wait to deal with sin, the greater the hold it has on us. Finally, we forget what it means to do right. Are you on the verge of forgetting?

**3:11-12** The enemy mentioned here was Assyria, who would soon conquer Israel and did just as Amos predicted. The people were scattered to foreign lands, and foreigners were placed in the land to keep the peace. Israel's leaders had robbed their defenseless countrymen, and here they would be rendered defenseless by the Assyrians. Amos added that even if the Israelites tried to repent, it would be too late. The destruction would be so complete that nothing of value would be left.

**3:14** God's judgment against Israel's altars shows that he was rejecting Israel's entire religious system because it was so polluted. The horns of the altar stood for protection (1 Kings 1:49-53), and the false altars would soon be gone. Then the people would have no sanctuary, protection, or refuge (see 4:4) when judgment came.