

A.L.I.V.E. Bible Study
Date: February 21, 2024
Amos 8

1. What is the Lord saying/doing in 8:1-2?
 - a. The Lord showed Amos a basket of ripe fruit.
 - b. The Lord asked Amos what he saw.
 - c. Amos answered, "A basket of ripe fruit." Good job, Amos!

2. What did this mean, according to 8:2-3?
 - a. The time is ripe for Israel.
 - b. God will spare Israel no longer.

3. Why did God bother with the song and dance? Why didn't he just say what he was going to say?
 - a. God speaks in words we understand. Have you ever heard the saying, "a picture is worth a thousand words?" Perhaps there was more to the picture than was contained in the words.
 - b. Taken as a whole, Amos's visions followed the seasons of the year. Amos, being a shepherd and one who tended to sycamore fig trees, would have understood these visions more deeply than most of us.
 - c. When we see ripened fruit, we might think about eating them. However, in a world without preservatives or refrigeration, something fully ripe brings visions of the next step...rotten fruit.
 - d. The word for "ripened" or "harvested" in the original language is the root word of the word that God uses when he says the "end" has come for my people Israel. It means "cut off" and can be used for both purposes. The combination of the picture and the wording would have made this vision easier to remember in a world with limited ability to take notes.

4. What does God say in 8:3-14?
 - a. In that day....
 - b. "...the songs in the temple will turn to wailing. Many, many bodies – flung everywhere! Silence!"
 - c. Listen, all you who can't wait for God's day to be over so that you can get back to making money and cheating people!
 - d. "I will never forget anything they have done."
 - e. There will famine and weeping and people starving.

5. Does this seem unfair or without grace?
 - a. Yes, how could God destroy his people like this.
 - b. We should really remember that these are people who have heard the word of the Lord over and over again. These were not people without a chance. These were people who were offered many chances and would not listen because they preferred to continue in their current "prosperous" path.
 - c. God is both a God of grace and of justice. We cannot lean on his grace and assume there will never be justice. His grace is an opportunity to change so that we are judged righteous when justice comes. If we do not respond to his grace, we will receive the justice we deserve.

6. What are you going to do if today is the day of grace for you...and justice is still coming?
