November 23–29
Amos; Obadiah; Jonah
“Seek the Lord, and Ye Shall Live”



Warning to Israel

Amos 3:1-2,7-8

What does the Lord promise to do before bringing destruction upon His people?

Milton R. Hunter

“Another distinctive characteristic of a prophet of God is that he is chosen, appointed, and called by the Lord. He draws his knowledge from the divine fountain of truth; therefore, he speaks in the name of the Lord and as one having authority. Let us give a few examples. The Prophet Amos, in his masterful discourse at Bethel, prefaced each of his predictions by ‘Thus saith the Lord’ (Amos 1:3,6,9,11,13).” (CR, April 1948)

N. Eldon Tanner

“There are many scriptures which assure us that God is as interested in us today as he has been in all his children from the beginning, and thus we believe in continuous revelation from God through his prophets to guide us in these latter days. The Prophet Amos said, ‘Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.’” (CR, April 1975)

Warning to Israel

Amos 4:9-12

How did the Lord try to bring Israel to repentance despite their continued refusal to return to Him?

George Q. Cannon

“There is a passage in the book of Amos on this subject, which shows the Lord pleading with Israel, to bring them back to the consideration of [the] law....

“These are the calamities which God sent upon Israel with the intention to have them return to him; but notwithstanding they were poured out and pestilence visited the land, the people hardened their hearts against him, broke his laws and violated his ordinances, and his anger was enkindled against them, and they were driven out from the face of the land.” (JD, 15:145)

Warning to Israel

Amos 5:18-24

Why do you think the Lord reject Israel's feasts, sacrifices, and worship instead of blessing them with light?

Pride

Amos 6:1-8

What danger do these verses teach us about becoming so comfortable with our lives that we fail to heed the Lord's warnings and repent?

2 Nephi 28:21,24,28

21) And others will he pacify, and lull them away into carnal security, that they will say: All is well in Zion; yea, Zion prospereth, all is well—and thus the devil cheateth their souls, and leadeth them away carefully down to hell.

24) Therefore, wo be unto him that is at ease in Zion!

28) And in fine, wo unto all those who tremble, and are angry because of the truth of God! For behold, he that is built upon the rock receiveth it with gladness; and he that is built upon a sandy foundation trembleth lest he shall fall.

Orson Pratt

"The purposes of God must be fulfilled; and we are the people who have to do the work; and to those who do not take part in it, I will apply the words of my text —'Woe to them that are at ease in Zion.' And this woe will find them out; it will surely come upon them, and sorely afflict them... until they learn by sad experience that there is no such thing as being at ease in Zion until Zion has travailed in pain and brought forth her children." (JD, 9:174)

Pride

Amos 6:12-14

How did Israel's pride in its own strength and disregard for righteousness lead to the Lord's judgment?

Sidney B. Sperry

“Amos next turns his invective on the careless and reckless rich of Israel, on those who are at ease, on the self-satisfied and the arrogant—in short, on those who, having plenty, take no thought of the sad social and religious state of their country…. The nation is to be destroyed because its inhabitants pervert truth and righteousness and trust in their own strength.” (Voice of Israel’s Prophets, pg. 313)

Pride

Obad 1:2-4

How can pride deceive us into believing we are secure and beyond the reach of the Lord's judgments?

The Last Days

Amos 8:9-12

What are the consequences of losing access to the word of the Lord because of wickedness?

Joseph B. Wirthlin

“There is a gnawing hunger in the human heart that, if not fed by the truths of the gospel, leaves life empty and devoid of peace…. Such empty nostrums have led mankind to seek worldly goods and symbols of material power, blinding humanity to the truth that only the righteous life firmly established in the daily living of God’s commandments brings true happiness. Anything less leaves the heart unfed, with a yearning inner hunger—a hunger which it is our mission to identify and define and of which we should make the people aware. I have seen... the fulfillment of the words of Amos, that there would be ‘a famine in the land, not a famine of bread... but of hearing the words of the Lord.’” (CR, Oct. 1975)

The Last Days

Amos 9:8-10

What does the Lord's image of sifting Israel among the nations teach us about the scattering of Israel?

Wilford Woodruff

"All that [Christ] said concerning them and all that Moses predicted concerning their dispersion and about their being driven, as corn is sifted through a sieve, among the nations... has been fulfilled.... They have been trampled under foot by the whole Gentile world for the last eighteen hundred years. In their affliction and persecutions they have had to suffer almost beyond the endurance of man." (JD, 13:156)

The Last Days

Amos 9:11,14-15

What does the Lord promise He will do to gather Israel in the last days?

The Last Days

Obad 1:17-18,21

What do you think Obadiah means when he prophesies that “saviours shall come up on mount Zion”?

Joseph Smith

"The keys are to be delivered, the spirit of Elijah is to come, the Gospel to be established, the Saints of God gathered, Zion built up, and the Saints to come up as saviors on Mount Zion.

“But how are they to become saviors on Mount Zion? By building their temples, erecting their baptismal fonts… and redeem them that they may come forth in the first resurrection and be exalted to thrones of glory with them; and herein is the chain that binds the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, which fulfills the mission of Elijah." (TPJS, pg. 330)

Jonah and the Whale

Jonah 1:1-3

Why do you think Jonah was unwilling to preach the Lord's message to the people of Nineveh?

Lorenzo Snow

“Jonah fled from the presence of the Lord, for he knew that... all nations and peoples that feared [God], and lived according to the light which they possessed;… that the Lord would forgive that people.” (JD, 23:338)

Henry B. Eyring

“Think of Jonah. He fled at first from the call from the Lord to warn the people of Nineveh who were blinded to the danger by sin. He knew that wicked people through the ages have rejected prophets and sometimes killed them. Yet when Jonah went forward with faith, the Lord blessed him with safety and success.” (CR, Oct. 1998)

Orson Pratt

“He was going to condemn the great city of Nineveh.... Jonah finding that the Lord sent but one witness with such an important message felt almost discouraged, and when he was on his way to deliver it to a great people and city, he felt that he would almost rather die than go as a single and solitary witness with a message of so much importance, and he besought the people to throw him overboard.” (JD, 14:253)

Victor L. Ludlow

"How can Jonah's experience be applied to our lives? Do we ever run from our responsibilities in the Church? Are we ever afraid to do a task given us by our leaders? Does the Lord seem to put obstacles in our lives to help us turn around and establish more valuable priorities? The example of Jonah provides answers to these questions as we understand how God works with his children." ("Unlocking Old Testament Prophecy," Ensign, Oct. 1990)

Jonah and the Whale

Jonah 1:10-15

What does Jonah's willingness to sacrifice himself to save the sailors teach us about taking responsibility for our actions?

Lorenzo Snow

“In Jonah again we find an interesting trait of character. When upon the raging waters, and fears were expressed by the sailors as to their ability to save the ship, Jonah, feeling conscience-stricken at the course he had taken in not proceeding to Nineveh as commanded of the Lord, came forward and confessed himself as being the cause of the disaster that was about to befall them, and was willing to be sacrificed in the interest of those on board.” (JD, 23:189)

Jonah and the Whale

Jonah 1:17

What does this verse state that helps us understand this miracle?

Joseph Fielding Smith

“Are we to reject it as being an impossibility and say that the Lord could not prepare a fish, or whale, to swallow Jonah?… Surely the Lord sits in the heavens and laughs at the wisdom of the scoffer, and then on a sudden answers his folly by a repetition of the miracle in dispute, or by the presentation of one still greater.” (Doctrines of Salvation, 2:314–15)

Matthew 12:39-41
39) But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:
40) For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.
41) The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.

Jonah and the Whale

Jonah 2:1-2,8-10

What did Jonah come to realize while he was in the belly of the great fish, and how can we apply that realization in our own lives?

Marie Searle

“Jonah spiritually stagnated in the belly of the fish for three days and nights until he repented and expressed this interesting realization to the Lord:

“‘They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy. But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord.’

"Even if we have the same callings year after year... we can still gain new and vital knowledge and skills and ‘with joy... draw water out of the wells of salvation’ (Isa. 12:3).... Through Church callings, we are able to learn to understand many eternal principles." ("An Invitation from the Lord," Ensign, Dec. 1989)

Jonah and the Whale

Jonah 3:1-6,10

JST, Jonah 3:10
And God saw their works that they turned from their evil way and repented; and God turned away the evil that he had said he would bring upon them.

What does the response of the king and people of Nineveh teach us about how genuine repentance can change our lives and bring the Lord's mercy?

Lorenzo Snow

“Jonah turned up at last in Nineveh, a wiser, if not a better man. And he went to work in earnest, performing the mission to which he had been called, and delivered the message to the people. The king heard of it, and he had that faith in and that knowledge of the character of the Almighty that he believed and humbled himself, and used his influence with his nobles and people that they should do likewise,... and the people repented and humbled themselves before God in the hope that he would turn away his wrath from them. And they so fully complied with the requirements that his judgment was reversed, and the great city preserved.” (JD, 23:338)

Jonah and the Whale

Jonah 4:1-3,9-11

What did the Lord understand about the people of Nineveh that Jonah failed to recognize?

Next Week:

November 30–December 6

Micah; Nahum; Habakkuk; Zephaniah

“He Delighteth in Mercy”

