

<sup>11</sup> “On that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down, and repair its damages; I will raise up its ruins, and rebuild it as in the days of old; <sup>12</sup> that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and all the Gentiles who are called by My name,” says the LORD who does this thing. <sup>13</sup> “Behold, the days are coming,” says the LORD, “When the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him who sows seed; the mountains shall drip with sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it. <sup>14</sup> I will bring back the captives of My people Israel; they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them; they shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them. <sup>15</sup> I will plant them in their land, and no longer shall they be pulled up from the land I have given them,” says the LORD your God.

Text: Amos 9:11-15 A 1-26-25 Romans 12:6-21 John 2:1-11 Psalm 100 Resp. Ps.: 103  
Hymns: 129, 19, 27, 15

## **UNDERSTAND AND APPRECIATE THE BLESSINGS JESUS GIVES US**

Dear fellow believers in Christ,

We believe in Jesus as our Savior. We know our sins are forgiven and we are saved. We know God is taking us to heaven where everything will be perfect. But what about now? The Bible is full of wonderful promises from God. But we have so many problems in this sinful world that we have to deal with. How do God’s beautiful promises in the Bible apply to the life we’re living now?

God had promised that one of David’s descendants would be the Messiah. Things were great while David and afterwards his son, Solomon, were king. But after Solomon died the nation of Israel was divided into the ten northern tribes and the two southern tribes. Over time a number of nations defeated divided Israel and ruled over them. During Jesus’ public ministry, the Romans ruled Israel. Outwardly, David’s great kingdom had fallen into ruin, like a collapsed tent.

God tells His people, “On that day I will raise up the tabernacle” (the idea from the original, being like a tent) “of David, which has fallen down, and repair its damages; I will raise up its ruins, and rebuild it as in the days of old.” That sounded great. The Jews took God’s words to mean that He would make Israel a great nation like it was during the time of King David. But that’s not what God said. God says He would do this “on that day.” What day? The “day” – that is – when the Messiah would come. Gabriel told the virgin Mary that she would have a son, Jesus. “He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end” (Lk. 1:32-33). “That day” when God would rebuild David’s kingdom would begin when Jesus was born and continue all through the New Testament era into eternity. God wasn’t promising glorious earthly blessings through the coming Messiah. God was promising glorious spiritual blessings in the Messiah.

Many Jews to this day continue to misunderstand God’s promises in the Messiah. They place so much hope in this life. We need to watch ourselves that we don’t make that same kind of

mistake. We have God's help and rich blessings in this life. But because of sin we'll always have problems in this life. Our hope is in the Savior who has come, and will come again to take us to heaven.

The Edomites were enemies of Israel. God says that His people will "*possess the remnant of Edom, and all the Gentiles who are called by My name.*" Those who are called by God's name are all of us who believe in God. God prophesied here and in many other places in the Old Testament that believing Gentiles would be added to the number of believing Jews. This has happened especially in our New Testament era in which Christ's Church is made up of believing Jews and believers from many other nations. (Gal. 3:26-29)

"*'Behold, the days are coming,' says the LORD, 'when the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him who sows seed; the mountains shall drip with sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it.'*" God here pictures a crop that is so abundant that the people would still be harvesting it when the time came to plow and plant again. God pictures the same type of thing happening with the grape crop.

This is a very important lesson for us to remember. God pours out His blessings on us, sometimes greater than we expected, always so much more than we deserve. We're told in the beginning of the 103rd Psalm, "*Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases*" (vv. 1-3). Praise God for all of His blessings to us! God's greatest blessing is our forgiveness and salvation. God sent Jesus who died for our sins on the cross, and rose again. By faith in Jesus our sins are all forgiven, we're saved, and we're going to heaven. An unbeliever may have many earthly things, but He doesn't have the most important thing: God's forgiveness and salvation. As far as our earthly troubles are concerned God assures us that He "*heals all [our] diseases.*" God either takes away what's troubling us, or, if He leaves it with us, enables us to accept His will and be at peace with it. When we start counting God's blessings, the list keeps getting longer and longer. It helps us to realize that although we have many problems to deal with in life, God is always with us, God is helping us, and we have so much to be thankful for.

We're told, "*I will bring back the captives of My people Israel; they shall build*" (from the original, "*they shall continue to build*") "*the waste cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them; they shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them. I will plant them in their land, and no longer shall they be pulled up from the land I have given them.*" God did bring a remnant – a relatively small number – of His people back from their captivity in Babylon. In returning they received many earthly blessings, but not to the extent God pictures here. The Romans destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD, and the surviving Jews were left without a country. The earthly blessings God speaks of here were pictures of the spiritual blessings David's Descendant, the promised Messiah and Savior, Jesus Christ, brings. The people then, and we now, shouldn't look for Jesus to take away all of our problems in this sin-filled world. They and we need to look to Jesus, yes, for earthly blessings, but especially to give us His spiritual blessings. We appreciate God's earthly blessings, but earthly blessings can't last. The spiritual blessings Jesus gives last forever.

With the disciples we ask Jesus, *“Increase our faith”* (Lk. 17:5). We know that our spiritual blessings are our greatest blessings. We ask the Lord, *“Help me to grow and mature in faith, making me less and less attached to this life and more and more attached to You. Help me to grow in my understanding of the spiritual blessings You give me, and more appreciative of them and of You.”* *“He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?”* (Ro. 8:32). God gave us Jesus. God takes care of all of our earthly needs as well.

The book of Amos, from which our text is taken, is full of warnings from God of His judgment if the people would not repent of their sins. This is the case in a number of the Old Testament books. In God’s warnings of judgment we see His love. If God didn’t care about the people He wouldn’t have warned them, He would have simply sent His judgments. But He warned them because He loved them and wanted to save them. The Lord told them through His prophet Ezekiel, *“‘As I live, ... I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die, O house of Israel?’”* (Ezek. 33:11). Peter says, *“The Lord is ... not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”* (2 Pet. 3:9)

Our text ends with these words: *“Says the LORD your God.”* God calls Himself *“your God,”* assuring the people that He is their God and they are His people. Their God would keep His promises to them. Three times in our text God refers to Himself as *“the LORD”*: Jehovah, the living God, the God of our salvation. God is our God, and we believers are His people. The only, true, living God keeps His Word. God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior. Our sins are forgiven. We are saved. Jesus is with always us, causing all things in our lives to work together for our good (Mt. 28:20b; Ro. 8:28). Jesus will take us to heaven. Jesus tells us, *“Because I live, you will live also.”* (Jn. 14:19b)

Paul says, *“I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us”* (Ro. 8:18). This life, with all of its problems, is a tiny blip in our existence. We’re going to live forever, not here in this sin-filled world, but in our perfect home in heaven. In heaven there will be no sin and no effects of sin. In heaven we’ll have perfect health, perfect peace, and perfect happiness forever. Thank God that He is with us to help us and richly bless us in this life! Thank God that we’re going to heaven! Amen.