



Repeated Refusals to Repent

Amos 7:15

“But the LORD took me from tending the flock and said to me, ‘Go, prophesy to my people Israel’” (Amos 7:15—ESV).

After King Solomon died, his heir to the throne was a disastrous king; therefore, Jeroboam I established the Kingdom of Israel (the Northern Kingdom of 10 tribes). To keep his subjects from going back to Jerusalem to worship the LORD, Jeroboam I set up a temple in Bethel (meaning “House of God,” where Jacob first met the LORD), and another temple in Dan. In each temple, Jeroboam I placed an idol in the shape of a bull (like the idol Aaron created when the Hebrews wandered in the wilderness and learned to worship like their pagan neighbors). God raised up prophets within the Kingdom of Israel to call the king, priests, and people to repent of their sins and return to the LORD. But from this evil beginning, no matter how many prophets the LORD raised up within the kingdom, the Kingdom of Israel would not repent.

In the days of Jeroboam II, God again showed His love for these rebellious Israelites by sending Amos from the southern Kingdom of Judah to Bethel in the northern Kingdom of Israel. Amos was neither a professional prophet nor the son of a prophet. He was a shepherd and untrained in the priestly duties or the “professional” study of the Scriptures. But the LORD prepared him and gave him His message to preach so His people had another opportunity to repent. Amos was a Southerner, and the elite Northern leaders resisted his message of repentance and continued to mislead the people. They accused Amos of conspiracy and commanded him not to preach. Still, Amos preached. No matter what was said about him, no matter how he was persecuted, he continued to obey God. He warned the king, priests, and people that if they did not turn from their oppression of the poor and other unjust ways then God would send them into exile. They refused to repent, so the Kingdom of Israel was destroyed, and the empire became known as “the ten lost tribes of Israel.”