

Amos 3:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.

Analysis

This verse articulates a crucial biblical principle regarding prophetic revelation: "Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." The Hebrew ki lo ya'aseh Adonai YHWH davar ki im-galah sodo el-avadav hanevi'im (כִּי לَا יַעֲשֶׂה אֱלֹהִים יְהוָה זֶבַר כִּי אִם־גָּלַה סָודָן אֶל־עֲבָדָיו הַנְּבִיאִים) means "For the Lord Yahweh does nothing unless He reveals His counsel to His servants the prophets."

The term sod (סוד, "secret/counsel") denotes intimate confidence—the secret counsel of God's throne room where He determines His actions. Psalm 25:14 states "the secret [sod] of the LORD is with them that fear him." God doesn't act arbitrarily or capriciously; He reveals His purposes to His prophets before executing judgment or deliverance. This demonstrates both God's gracious warning (giving opportunity for repentance) and the prophet's privileged access to divine counsel.

The word galah (גָּלַה, "reveal/uncover") means to unveil what was hidden—prophets receive insider knowledge of God's plans. The phrase "His servants the prophets" (avadav hanevi'im) emphasizes their authorized status. They're not freelance fortune-tellers but commissioned representatives who've stood in God's council. Jeremiah 23:18, 22 distinguishes true prophets (who stood in God's council and heard His word) from false prophets (who didn't). Amos, despite being a herdsman, received this revelation and therefore spoke with divine authority.

Theologically, this principle assures that God governs history purposefully and communicates His intentions through chosen messengers. In the New Covenant, Christ is the ultimate revelation of God's counsel (Hebrews 1:1-2), and the completed Scriptures provide God's full revealed will. Yet the principle remains: God acts according to His revealed word, not arbitrarily. This should drive us to Scripture, where God's purposes are made known.

Historical Context

Amos, a shepherd from Tekoa in Judah, prophesied to the northern kingdom of Israel during the prosperous reign of Jeroboam II (793-753 BC). This was a time of territorial expansion and economic boom, creating massive wealth inequality. The wealthy elite oppressed the poor through debt slavery, corrupt courts, and economic exploitation. Despite maintaining elaborate worship at Bethel and Dan, Israel had abandoned covenant faithfulness for social injustice and religious syncretism. Amos condemned their exploitation of the vulnerable while predicting imminent judgment through Assyrian conquest. His prophecies were fulfilled when Assyria destroyed Israel in 722 BC, about 30 years after his ministry.

Amos was contemporary with Hosea and ministered during Israel's last period of prosperity before destruction. As a southerner from Judah called to prophesy in northern Israel, he was an unwelcome outsider delivering an unwanted message. His emphasis on social justice and his declaration that religious ritual cannot substitute for righteousness make his message perpetually relevant.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does Amos 3:7 deepen your understanding of God's character, particularly His holiness, justice, and mercy?

2. What specific attitudes, thought patterns, or behaviors does this verse call you to examine and change in light of the gospel?
3. How does this passage point forward to Christ and His redemptive work, and how should that shape your worship and obedience?

Interlinear Text

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|-------------------------|-------------------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| וְאֶת־ | יְמִינְךָ־ | אָדָם־ | יְהִי־ | רְבָבָה־ | אָמֵן־ |
| H3588 | H3808 | will do | Surely the Lord | GOD | nothing |
| | | H6213 | H136 | H3069 | H1697 |
| | | | | | |
| בְּלֹא־ | סִידָה־ | עֲבָדָה־ | פְּגָבִיאִים: | | |
| but he revealeth | his secret | H413 | unto his servants | the prophets | |
| H1540 | H5475 | | H5650 | H5030 | |

Additional Cross-References

John 15:15 (References Lord): Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

Genesis 18:17 (References Lord): And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do;

Psalms 25:14 (References Lord): The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.

Revelation 1:1 (References God): The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:

Genesis 6:13 (References God): And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

Revelation 4:1 (Parallel theme): After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet

talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.

Revelation 1:19 (Parallel theme): Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter;

Jeremiah 23:22 (Parallel theme): But if they had stood in my counsel, and had caused my people to hear my words, then they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings.

Daniel 10:21 (Parallel theme): But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince.

Daniel 11:2 (Parallel theme): And now will I shew thee the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia.

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