

Amos 7:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The LORD repented for this: This also shall not be, saith the Lord GOD.

Analysis

The LORD repented for this: This also shall not be, saith the Lord GOD (נָחַם יְהוָה עַל־זֹאת גַּם־הִיא לֹא תִהְיֶה אֲמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה)—God's response mirrors verse 3 almost exactly, with the addition of "this also" (gam-hi, גַּם־הִיא), emphasizing that this second intercession likewise moves God to relent. The verb nacham (נָחַם, "repented/relented") again describes God changing His announced course in response to prophetic intercession. The emphatic "this also shall not be" (gam-hi lo tihyeh) cancels the fire judgment just as verse 3 canceled the locust plague.

The repetition of this pattern (vision of judgment → intercession → divine relenting) twice establishes a rhythm that makes its absence in the third vision (verses 7-9) all the more striking. When the plumbline vision comes, Amos doesn't intercede, and God doesn't relent but declares: "I will not again pass by them any more" (verse 8). The shift from mercy to finality is stark and sobering. It suggests that Israel's window of opportunity for repentance is closing; God's patience, though vast, is not infinite.

Theologically, this verse reinforces that God delights in showing mercy (Micah 7:18, Lamentations 3:22-23, 32-33) and responds graciously to intercession. James 5:16 declares: "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Ezekiel 22:30-31 reveals God's heart: "I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none. Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them." God looks for intercessors; when He finds them, He shows mercy. When He

doesn't, judgment falls.

Yet this also warns against presumption. Israel might have interpreted these two relentings as proof that God would always relent, that judgment was merely rhetorical threat. But verses 7-9 shatter this illusion. Persistent sin eventually exhausts divine patience, and then judgment becomes irrevocable. Romans 2:4-5 warns: "Despise thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God."

Historical Context

This second relenting demonstrates God's extraordinary patience with Israel. He has now canceled two catastrophic judgments—locust plague and supernatural fire—in response to Amos's intercession. This patience reflects God's covenant commitment to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Exodus 32:13, Leviticus 26:42, Deuteronomy 9:27), His desire for repentance rather than destruction (Ezekiel 18:32, 33:11), and His fundamental character as "merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth" (Exodus 34:6).

However, patience shouldn't be mistaken for indifference or approval. Ecclesiastes 8:11 warns: "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." Delayed judgment becomes, perversely, an occasion for further sin. Israel interpreted survival as divine endorsement despite continued covenant violation. But God's slowness to anger (Exodus 34:6, Psalm 103:8) doesn't mean He won't eventually act. Second Peter 3:9-10 explains: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come."

The historical trajectory confirms this. Despite God's forbearance in Amos 7:3, 6, He eventually declared irrevocable judgment (7:8, 8:2). Thirty years later, Assyria conquered Israel (722 BC), fulfilling Amos's prophecies. The lesson: God's patience

is opportunity for repentance, not guarantee of immunity. Those who presume on divine mercy while refusing to repent will face "sudden destruction" (1 Thessalonians 5:3).

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How should believers balance confidence in God's mercy with sober recognition that persistent impenitence exhausts divine patience?
2. What does God's repeated relenting in response to intercession teach about the value and efficacy of prayer?

Interlinear Text

נִחַם	יְהוָה	עַל	זֶאת	גַּם	הִיא	לֹא	תִּתְּנָהּ
repented	The LORD	H5921	H2063	H1571	H1931	H3808	H1961
H5162	H3068						
אֲמַר	יְהוָה:	אֲדֹנָיִי					
for this	This also shall not be saith	the Lord	GOD				
H559	H136	H3069					