

would not tolerate their sin forever, and Israel and Judah paid a heavy price!

What about us? Are we in the “autumn” of our lives, or in the “autumn” of our relationship with God? While the actual season of autumn is easily delineated and clearly a time of preparation, our “spiritual” season of autumn may not be as easily apparent. We may feel as if we are in the “spring” or “summer” of our lives or in our relationship with God, when, in fact, the end is near.

Let none be deceived: God will not tolerate sin forever. If we are living in sin and turning a deaf ear to the Word of God who convicts us regarding sin (cf. John 16:8), we may suffer the same fate as Israel and Judah, and have destruction fall upon us unawares (cf. 1 Thessalonians 5:1–3). Since we can never be entirely sure when the “autumn” of our lives has begun, we must live in a constant state of preparedness, as our Lord Jesus affirms for us in Matthew 24:42 – 25:30, and Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5:1–10.

We may be living in a debauched and sinful society, and its “autumn” may be present. Nevertheless, let us live our lives as the prophet Micah, constantly trusting in the LORD no matter what our fellow man may say and do, and show constant vigilance, ever prepared for the return of Jesus Christ and the end of time!



Chiefland Church of Christ

Meeting at 211 NE 2nd Street in beautiful Chiefland, Florida
PO Box 2539 • Chiefland FL 32644 • (352) 493–1242

THINGS ABOVE

“Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth”
— [Colossians 3:1–2]—

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www.ChieflandChurchofChrist.com

Welcome to Our Gospel Meeting
John Zellner, preaching

Lesson Titles

1. Sunday – 9:30 AM – **Time**
2. Sunday – 10:20 AM – **Tearing Down the Barns**
3. Sunday – 5:00 PM – **Why Were They Called?**
4. Monday – 7:30 PM – **Rise and Pray**
5. Tuesday – 7:30 PM – **The March to Jerusalem**
6. Wednesday – 7:30 PM – **What Do I Still Lack?**
7. Thursday – 7:30 PM – **Responding to Answered Prayers**
8. Friday – 7:30 PM – **The Power of the Word**

We are recording the messages digitally. You can request CDs of specific lessons or the entire set. Or, download them from the Internet from our website — <http://chieflandchurchofchrist.com>

The Autumn of Covenant

By Ethan R. Longhenry

Thus the Lord GOD showed me: and, behold, a basket of summer fruit. And he said, “Amos, what seest thou?” And I said, “A basket of summer fruit.” Then said the LORD unto me, “The end is come upon my people Israel; I will not again pass by them any more” (Amos 8:1–2).

“Woe is me! For I am as when they have gathered the summer fruits, as the grape gleanings of the vintage: there is no cluster to eat; my soul desireth the first-ripe fig” (Micah 7:1).

Autumn is a season of transition. For those of us in the Northern Hemisphere, days grow shorter, nights grow longer, and the temperature gets cooler. The days of heat and growth are declining, and the last crops must be harvested. Everywhere around us, life is preparing for the cold, dark winter that will soon come.

The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah were also in the “autumn” of their existence in the late ninth and eighth centuries BCE. Unbeknownst to them, their days of glory were behind them. The kingdoms were experiencing a momentary period of great prosperity and wealth, not unlike a short warm spell during the autumn. Yet the cold, dark days of “winter” — collapse and exile — were approaching, and the prophets were busy warning the people.

God shows Amos a basket of summer fruit, representing the imminent end of Israel. They had enjoyed their days of prosperity and wealth — they always were more prosperous than the Judeans to their south — but had squandered it all on idols and political alliances. The people of Israel acted shamefully and sinfully, committing all kinds of injustice and sin, and God sent Amos to pronounce judgment. The people refused to hear, and within forty years of Amos’ predictions, Israel was overwhelmed by Assyria and would soon be exiled, never to return (cf. 2 Kings 17).

Not long after Amos goes to Israel, Micah prophesies against Judah. The prophet acutely feels the vast sinfulness and injustice swirling around him. He feels as if he is part of the grape gleanings on the vine after the harvests of the summer fruits — the very few who still stand for righteousness and justice. Everyone around him, it seems, is out for their own advantage, full of iniquity and blood. Yet Micah trusts in the LORD, knowing that destruction and judgment will come soon (cf. Micah 7:7). Likewise, within forty years, the Assyrians came to Judah, destroying everything but Jerusalem, leaving but a remnant of Judah to remain (cf. 2 Kings 18–19, Isaiah 1).

Both Israel and Judah, therefore, were in the “autumn” of their covenants with God. Destruction would come upon them soon, and yet they willfully turned a deaf ear to the warnings of the prophets. They trusted that since the LORD was the One True God, and that Israel was His chosen people, that no harm would befall them (cf. Micah 2:6). Yet God