

## Prayer and Silence

Hold a time of silence together.

God of truth and mercy,  
You hold up your plumb line  
not in anger but in longing—  
longing for your people to walk straight in love,  
to build with justice,  
to dwell in peace.  
Give us courage to hear  
the whole word,  
not the comfortable half-truth.  
Make us humble enough  
to step aside,  
and bold enough to speak  
when it matters.  
Through Christ,  
your faithful prophet and servant.  
Amen.



# HeartBeat

## Standing Straight in a Crooked World

Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> July  
Bible Study: Amos 7:7–17



Opening  
Begin with time of quiet.

I wonder;

- When have I heard a difficult truth that changed me?
- When have I been the one who needed to speak up—despite fear or uncertainty?
- Let the memories surface gently. There is no need to analyse or resolve them now. Simply notice.

Scripture Reading.  
Read Amos 7:7–17

Read aloud the whole passage.

Pause briefly after verses 8, 12, and 14 to allow the words to settle.

## Heart Response to Reading

### I wonder;

- Which character do I most relate to today: Amos, Amaziah, the king, the audience?
- What word or image in this reading makes me feel unsettled? What feels surprisingly hopeful?
- What does the “plumb line” mean to me - not just in ancient Israel, but now?

## Deepening the Conversation

### God’s Measuring Line

The plumb line is a simple tool—but used here, it becomes a standard of truth. God is not measuring success or religious appearance, but justice and integrity.

### I wonder...

- Where might God be holding up a plumb line in my life? In my community?
- What might need rebuilding?

## Read together “Amaziah Reflects on Amos”

Well, I’ll say this for Amos  
—he’s got a voice that carries.

One moment I’m minding the temple duties at Bethel—lighting incense, keeping the king’s rituals running smoothly—and the next, this herdsman from Judah is standing in the middle of everything, waving his hands about plumb-lines and destruction. Not exactly the vibe we go for at a royal sanctuary.

I mean, come on. We all know the kingdom’s not perfect, but shouting in the streets that the king’s going to die and the nation’s going to collapse? There’s honesty, and then there’s inciting panic before morning prayers.

So yes, I told him to pack it up and prophesy back in Judah. Get a gig down south. Maybe open a side business with those sycomore figs he keeps talking about. Because frankly, Bethel has enough going on without someone shouting doom at the altar.

But here’s the thing—deep down, I knew he wasn’t entirely wrong. That’s often the way, isn’t it? The ones who upset the status quo usually aren’t lying. They’re just saying the things we’ve worked hard not to hear. And if you’re in charge of keeping things stable, well... it’s tempting to protect the structure, even if it’s leaning.

We all like prophets who comfort. We’re less fond of the ones who critique.

Still, I wonder—what if I’d listened differently? What if I hadn’t tried to silence him, but sat with the discomfort a little longer?

Perhaps the plumb-line wasn’t only for the kingdom.

Perhaps it was hanging right over me.

## Reflecting on Amaziah the Company Man

Sam Wells describes Amaziah as a “company man”—loyal to institution, not truth. He edits the message to protect the king, avoiding confrontation.

### I wonder...

- Have I ever softened the truth to avoid conflict?
- When do I prioritise comfort or survival over honesty or justice?

## Prophets in 2025

This text isn’t about ancient Israel alone. It asks: how do we live when the world tilts out of line? What are the plumb lines today?

**I wonder...** take one of these to think about more deeply

- In economic life: Do we serve the poor—or protect the powerful?
- In ecology: Are we living in step with creation—or consuming it carelessly?
- In community life: Who do we exclude—deliberately or by habit?
- In leadership: Are we committed to truth—even when it costs?

## A Modern Echo

What questions and insights do you have about Naaman’s healing when seen in the context of the whole of that chapter. Share those questions as a group ( not possible answers)

Or

A number of people had witnessed the healing of Naaman. On the surface they had seen God at work. But had their lives been transformed, renewed and healed?