Amos: Lesson 7 Homework

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1. Dr. Constable's Notes- pages 40-48
   The Old Testament Library- Amos- A Commentary by James Luther Mays- pages 71-84
   The Anchor Bible- Amos- A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary by Francis I. Andersen and David Noel Freedman- pages 412-441

2. One lesson that was new and fascinating to me this week was how God condemned luxury in Amos' time. "Whenever you are offered 'deluxe service,' that's the same Latin word: service above and beyond what you really need"" (Constable 41). God calls his people to steward all aspects of their lives. That includes the financial and economic provisions in one's life. God calls his people to live and steward on the principle of necessity rather than indulgence. This truth goes back even to the Old Testament. God is also concerned with the hearts of his people over their outward motions. "Ironically, the Lord Yahweh told all the sinful Israelites to go to "Bethel," but to "do wrong," not to worship (cf. 5:4-5)" (Constable 43). God's method of confronting and discerning the Israelites' hearts is so exact. On the outside, it seems that the Israelites were righteous and religious people, but God saw right through it through this confrontation. He confronts the Israelites to go to the exact place where they thought they were safe to show them that they were not truly practicing righteousness but sin and idolatry in their religious motions.
   Another lesson that was compelling to learn this week was the extent God would go to lead His people back to Him. ""This is utterly ruinous to the hopes of the farmer. A little earlier or a little later would not be so fatal, but drouth [*sic*] three months before harvest is entirely destructive"" (Constable 45). The Israelites' at this time depended on nature for their daily food. Rain that came a little early or later was okay, but God used a drought to grab the attention of His people. Another compelling lesson of this week was how God does not show favoritism. The women of this time were also practicing injustice. And, "On behalf of Israel's God Amos brings the same charge against them that is made against the officials and those who control Israel's wealth: ruthless exploitation of the helpless poor (cf. 2.6f.; 5.11; 8.4)" (Mays 72). The women were exploiting the poor and helpless at this time, and God did not hold back on whoever practiced injustice and sin at this time.

3. Does God confront women and men differently in the book of Amos?