

# A Failure of Humanity

6.14.2020

Amos part 2

Amos 1:3–2:3 (CSB)

## **JUDGMENT ON ISRAEL'S NEIGHBORS**

<sup>3</sup> The LORD says:

I will not relent from punishing Damascus  
for three crimes, even four,  
because they threshed Gilead with iron sledges.

<sup>4</sup> Therefore, I will send fire against Hazael's palace,  
and it will consume Ben-hadad's citadels.

<sup>5</sup> I will break down the gates of Damascus.

I will cut off the ruler from the Valley of Aven,  
and the one who wields the scepter from Beth-edon.  
The people of Aram will be exiled to Kir.

The LORD has spoken.

<sup>6</sup> The LORD says:

I will not relent from punishing Gaza  
for three crimes, even four,  
because they exiled a whole community,  
handing them over to Edom.

<sup>7</sup> Therefore, I will send fire against the walls of Gaza,

and it will consume its citadels.

<sup>8</sup> I will cut off the ruler from Ashdod,  
and the one who wields the scepter from Ashkelon.  
I will also turn my hand against Ekron,  
and the remainder of the Philistines will perish.

The Lord GOD has spoken.

<sup>9</sup> The LORD says:

I will not relent from punishing Tyre  
for three crimes, even four,  
because they handed over  
a whole community of exiles to Edom  
and broke a treaty of brotherhood.

<sup>10</sup> Therefore, I will send fire against the walls of Tyre,  
and it will consume its citadels.

<sup>11</sup> The LORD says:

I will not relent from punishing Edom  
for three crimes, even four,  
because he pursued his brother with the sword.  
He stifled his compassion,  
his anger tore at him continually,  
and he harbored his rage incessantly.

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, I will send fire against Teman,  
and it will consume the citadels of Bozrah.

<sup>13</sup> The LORD says:

I will not relent from punishing the Ammonites  
for three crimes, even four,  
because they ripped open  
the pregnant women of Gilead  
in order to enlarge their territory.

**14** Therefore, I will set fire to the walls of Rabbah,  
and it will consume its citadels.

There will be shouting on the day of battle  
and a violent wind on the day of the storm.

**15** Their king and his princes  
will go into exile together.

The LORD has spoken.

**2** The LORD says:

I will not relent from punishing Moab  
for three crimes, even four,  
because he burned the bones  
of the king of Edom to lime.

**2** Therefore, I will send fire against Moab,  
and it will consume the citadels of Kerioth.

Moab will die with a tumult,  
with shouting and the sound of the ram's horn.

**3** I will cut off the judge from the land  
and kill all its officials with him.

The LORD has spoken.

## Introduction: What does a 2700-year-old story have to with us?

A. The primary reason we should pay attention to Amos is because all Scripture is God-inspired.

1. 2 Timothy 3:16 tells us that all of Scripture is Inspired and profitable.
2. Not just the new, not just the Words of Jesus, but ALL of Scripture.
3. When the Apostle Paul wrote that to Timothy, he had in mind particularly the Old Testament since the New hadn't been written yet.

B. We cannot ignore books of the Bible simply because we want to or we don't understand them.

1. When we ignore particular books because they are hard, we miss out on what God wants to say to us through them in our day and time.
2. Amos is a great example.
3. Amos is not an easy book to understand.
4. And when we understand it, it is even harder to apply.

C. But Amos maybe the most appropriate book for our time.

1. America needs a reminder of what it means to be created in the Image of God.
2. America needs a reminder of the responsibility of being human.
3. America needs a reminder that sin has a price-tag.
4. America needs a reminder of what happens when we have a failure of humanity and violate God's Covenant and Commands.

## 1. The Sins of the Nations are Sins against God.

A. All the sins we read today have something in common.

1. They are all acts of inhumanity.

2. In other words, they all violated the sanctity of human life and decency.

B. **Pro-life must be more than a statement against abortion.**

1. Too often we think Abortion is the only pro-life issue.

2. But Rape is also a pro-life issue because it violates the Image of God in the person.

a. Rape violates a person at their core.

b. God made us sexual beings and rape perverts that in a violent way, cheapening not only love and sex but life itself.

3. Racism is a Pro-Life issue because racism is hate, and Jesus said hate is murder.

a. To hate someone because of their nationality or color is to hate what God has created.

b. To despise people because they are different than us is to despise the Creator along with the creation.

4. Abuse and torture is a pro-life issue because it inflicts pain for the sake of another person's pleasure.

a. Abuse and torture assumes a lordship where we have no right to lord it over someone.

b. Abuse is a degradation of the Image of God in that person.

C. These above sins, and so much more, were the sins of the nations surrounding Israel and Judah.

1. King Solomon once said, "there is nothing new under the sun".

2. That includes the sin of humanity.

a. Do you think racism is new?

b. Do you think hate is new?

c. Do you think murder, rioting, greed, and abuse are new?

3. Any student of Scripture, of history, and of people should know that what we are experiencing in our day is an old problem.

## 2. The “old” problem is the problem of sin.

A. Greed manifested itself in the Garden of Eden when Eve wanted what was not hers to have.

1. Hate manifested itself in jealousy when Cain killed Abel.

2. The story of humanity is not how Great and Wonderful we are but how utterly depraved and sinful we are.

B. *I’m very thankful that my high school and Junior high science teacher was a Christian.*

1. My school was so small that I only had 1 science teacher who taught every science course offered in both Junior High and High School.

2. I got to know Dr. Hedden very well as a student and then we attended church together before he passed away.

a. Dr. Hedden would regularly make this observation:

b. He would look at us students and proclaim: I don’t believe in evolution. What I do believe in is de-evolution and your behavior is an excellent observation of the de-evolution of a species.

c. What he was saying was, we were not maturing or even evolving and becoming better as the years go on.

d. In fact, we were getting worse.

3. Because of the effects of sin, the natural state of creation is a state of chaos and wilderness.

a. For example, what happens to your fields if you do not care for them year after year? They become overgrown with trees, weeds, and undergrowth.

b. What happens to a relationship if you don't invest in it or steward it? You lose it.

c. Many of us have bought into the belief that things and humanity get better over time, but that is not the case.

C. Sin was an issue in the 700 B.C.s when Amos was a prophet and sin is still an issue today.

1. People are people.

2. People do peoplely things.

3. And sinful humanity will always do what sinful humanity has always done.

4. How do we change that?

### 3. We must realize we don't change people.

A. I am all for education.

1. I am all for personal expression.

2. I am all for science, facts, and truth.

3. Truthful, loving dialogue, can certainly help people see their situation in a new light and possibly change.

4. But if you think you can change another person's behavior without changing their heart, you are naive.

B. The Old Testament tells of time and time and time again of how God warned His people about their sin, sent them miracles, signs, and wonders, and prophets.

1. But you know what: All the miracles and all of the prophets were not enough to change a person's behavior permanently.

a. Sure, when things got hard enough people would eventually change.

b. But once the threat was gone, the people would go back to their old ways or worse.

2. True change has to take place in the area of the heart or mind.

C. Think about this:

1. Jesus did miracles everywhere He went, right?

2. And hundreds and thousands saw these miracles.

3. But not every person changed their ways.

a. In fact, many people saw the miracles and then plotted to kill Jesus.

b. Others saw the miracles and gave credit to Satan instead of to God.

4. If Jesus' miracles didn't change the actions and attitudes of every single person, why do you think you can change the world by sending out a perfectly worded Facebook post or YouTube video?

D. Instead, let us pray for the people around us that they will be exposed to the ministry of Jesus to change their hearts and minds!

1. The Apostle Paul wrote:

Ephesians 4:17–24 (CSB)

<sup>17</sup>Therefore, I say this and testify in the Lord: You should no longer live as the Gentiles live, in **the futility of their thoughts**. <sup>18</sup>They are darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the **ignorance** that is in them and because of the hardness of their hearts. <sup>19</sup>They became callous and gave themselves over to promiscuity for the practice of every kind of impurity with a desire for more and more.

<sup>20</sup>But that is not how you came to know Christ, <sup>21</sup>assuming you heard about him and were taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus, <sup>22</sup>to take off your former way of life, the old self that is corrupted by deceitful desires, <sup>23</sup>to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, <sup>24</sup>and to put on the new self,



the one created according to God's likeness in righteousness and purity of the truth.

2. True and lasting change begins with Jesus changing our hearts and our minds.

3. God is not in the business of forcing people to get in line, so why are we?

#### 4. What we need are Christians walking in the new self.

A. Most of the Book of Amos focuses on upcoming judgement and the opposition Amos faced.

1. People back then didn't like the idea of a God who was going to turn their world upside down.
2. NO one wanted to think about righteous judgment.
3. No one wanted a nobody shepherd telling them that God was angry and that judgment was coming.
4. So Amos is mostly a book of judgment.

B. However, Amos ends with the promise of God ordained restoration.

1. Amos gives hope at the end of the tunnel.
2. Although every word of judgment would come to pass, so too would God's future promises of restoration.
3. In a few weeks, we will talk about this unfulfilled prophecy.

C. What Amos and the others didn't know about was the extent God would go to save and redeem the lostness of humanity.

1. They didn't yet understand about Jesus coming to die for the sins of the world.
2. They didn't yet know how God was going to start reversing the curse and bring light into their dark world.

D. Today, we recognize that Jesus came to not only save us from hell but, more importantly, to change us into New Creations and New People.

1. The Old me was lost, but the new is found.
2. The Old me might have struggled with porn or alcohol or drugs but the new me has found freedom.
3. The Old me might have been full of hate: hate for my family, hate for my country, hate because people were too poor, too rich, or too different.
4. The Old me was racist, angry, and unforgiving but THROUGH Jesus the New me can be free from all of these things.

## 5. Your Pastor is not a Prophet or a Son of a Prophet.

A. But I have the unshakeable feeling that God is wanting to tell His Church that Judgment is coming.

1. Just as sure that God judged Israel and their neighbors for the bloodlust, greed, and inhumanity, God will judge the World again.
2. I don't know the day nor the hour, for that is not my domain.
3. But judgment is coming.

B. Would you join me today in praying for our community and for our world?

1. Would you take a few minutes with me this morning as we ask God to help us change our hearts and minds?
2. What we need is for people to turn to Jesus.
3. My eloquence, my activity, and my energy will not be enough to change my world.
4. What we need is the Holy Spirit to work in all of our hearts and minds.

Prayer.

