

# Ignore at your Own Risk

6.28.2020

Amos series Message 4

Amos 3:1–15 (CSB)

## GOD'S REASONS FOR PUNISHING ISRAEL

**3** Listen to this message that the LORD has spoken against you, Israelites, against the entire clan that I brought from the land of Egypt:

<sup>2</sup>I have known only you  
out of all the clans of the earth;  
therefore, I will punish you for all your iniquities.

<sup>3</sup>Can two walk together  
without agreeing to meet?

<sup>4</sup>Does a lion roar in the forest  
when it has no prey?  
Does a young lion growl from its lair  
unless it has captured something?

<sup>5</sup>Does a bird land in a trap on the ground  
if there is no bait for it?

Does a trap spring from the ground  
when it has caught nothing?

<sup>6</sup>If a ram's horn is blown in a city,  
aren't people afraid?

If a disaster occurs in a city,

hasn't the LORD done it?

<sup>7</sup>Indeed, the Lord GOD does nothing  
without revealing his counsel  
to his servants the prophets.

<sup>8</sup>A lion has roared;  
who will not fear?

The Lord GOD has spoken;  
who will not prophesy?

<sup>9</sup>Proclaim on the citadels in Ashdod  
and on the citadels in the land of Egypt:  
Assemble on the mountains of Samaria,  
and see the great turmoil in the city  
and the acts of oppression within it.

<sup>10</sup>*The people are incapable of doing right—  
this is the LORD's declaration—  
those who store up violence and destruction  
in their citadels.*

<sup>11</sup>Therefore, the Lord GOD says:

An enemy will surround the land;  
he will destroy your strongholds  
and plunder your citadels.

<sup>12</sup>The LORD says:

As the shepherd snatches two legs  
or a piece of an ear

from the lion's mouth,  
so the Israelites who live in Samaria  
will be rescued  
with only the corner of a bed  
or the cushion of a couch.'

<sup>13</sup> Listen and testify against the house of Jacob—  
this is the declaration of the Lord GOD,  
the God of Armies.

<sup>14</sup> I will punish the altars of Bethel  
on the day I punish Israel for its crimes;  
the horns of the altar will be cut off  
and fall to the ground.

<sup>15</sup> I will demolish the winter house  
and the summer house;  
the houses inlaid with ivory will be destroyed,  
and the great houses will come to an end.

This is the LORD's declaration.

## 1. It's true, "No one can hurt you like family"

A. God is upset and disappointed because His people keep rejecting Him and their covenant.

1. God had incredible plans for them.
2. Think about what God said through Jeremiah in 29:11, For I know the plans that I have for you, plans to prosper and bless..."
3. This is the context for that declaration.

4. Even through all the sin, the judgment, the exile, and the pain, God still had plans for his people.

B. God wanted the absolute best for His people and they repeatedly chose the worst.

1. **Picture:** 3lbs of Japanese cut Wagyu steak (guess the price of this). Answer: \$450

2. It's like offering a kid a Wagyu Steak and they throw it away for chicken nuggets or macaroni and cheese.

C. At this time, God is feeling the rejection:

1. Verse 2, He said "I have known only you..."

2. Of all the people and all the nations and all the clans, God had chosen this people.

a. HE didn't play the field.

b. He hadn't tried to find a better option.

c. He chose THESE people to be conduit of His Blessings and His Presence.

3. But they rejected God time and again.

2. God, in His goodness, had warned the people.

A. Verse 7 says, "Indeed, the Lord God does nothing without revealing his counsel to his servants the prophets".

1. God is not suddenly or maliciously attacking his people.

2. He is not being unfair, but instead has continuously sent forth prophets with warning and opportunity.

B. In other words, the disaster could have been avoided.

1. They didn't have to experience exile.

2. They didn't have to experience the horrors of a siege.

a. By the time the siege of a city was finished, the people inside experienced unimaginable horrors.

- b. People died of thirst, hunger, and disease.
- c. Mother's ate their infants.
- d. Brutality consumed everyone and everything.

3. All of this pain could be avoided, through repentance.

C. As I say this, I can't but think that God is saying the same thing today.

- 1. Judgment is coming but you can avoid it.
- 2. You don't have to suffer eternally for your sins.
- 3. We don't have to experience chaos, turmoil, rioting, plague, warfare, and disaster on every side.
- 4. We don't have to if we would heed God's warnings.
- 5. If God did not do anything in the days of Amos without first revealing through a prophet, then the same must be true today.
  - a. God has sent prophets to warn us of our sin.
  - b. God has sent His Holy Word to tell us what is coming.
  - c. God has sent the Holy Spirit to convict not only nations but individuals in their sins and their ways.
- 6. Through Jesus, God has given us an awesome opportunity to avoid eternal death and punishment.

### 3. After the warning, God called witnesses.

A. Vs. 9, Amos is to proclaim to the neighboring Philistines and Egyptians.

- 1. usually, when they are mentioned, they were being judged too.
- 2. But this time, they are being summoned as witnesses on God's behalf.
  - a. They are witnesses not only for the prosecution.

b. But now they serve as witnesses of God's righteous judgment.

B. An appropriate question for believers today is "How serious does God take sin?"

1. Sin is just as serious in our day as it was in the days of the Old Testament.

2. No matter how much we try to redefine sin, it isn't our interpretation that matters.

3. Never before has America had so many opportunities to hear the Gospel:

a. We have it free on our phones.

b. Free on TV and social media.

c. There are thousands and thousands of churches, ministries, books, and podcasts.

d. We have had unprecedented opportunity and access, so we ignore God at our own risk.

C. Ignoring this opportunity brings even greater judgment.

1. Where much is given, much is required.

2. Jesus was upset with His people in His day because they continually rejected the ministry and the miracles that Jesus had done.

3. Listen to what He said in Luke 10: 13-16:

[Luke 10:13-16 CSB] 13 "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles that were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. 14 "But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. 15 "And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? No, you will go down to Hades. 16 "Whoever listens to you listens to me. Whoever rejects you rejects me. And whoever rejects me rejects the one who sent me."

4. Just as God pulled in the Philistines and the Egyptians to serve as witness of God's righteous judgment, Jesus said that Israel's neighbors would testify against them.

5. Jesus goes one step further and declared that if the miracles Jesus had done had been displayed to the neighboring "heathens", they would have repented long time ago.

**6. Even in Jesus' day, God's people willfully rejected God's warnings and salvation.**

D. Revelation 11 tells of two last witnesses who will, again, do miraculous signs and give testimony of who God is.

1. What God has done in the past serves as a pattern of what He will do in the future.

2. While the Witnesses of Revelation are still yet to come, we must pay attention to what God is saying in our day and time.

3. We need the reminder: God always judges sin.

a. He either judges that sin through the Cross that Jesus bore,

b. Or He judges sin by us receiving the due punishment for our sin.

c. Either way, **no sin ever goes unnoticed or unpunished.**

4. The Good News: Through it all, God preserves a Remnant.

A. The theme of Remnant is one of the most important themes of the Old Testament.

1. Remnant means "that which remains".

2. It is what is leftover, that which is not consumed.

3. **Critical to the understanding of Covenant in the Old Testament is the theme of Remnant.**

4. Remnant tells of how God doesn't completely destroy His people because of His promises to them.

B. Vs. 12 describes "remnant" as a shepherd snatching the pieces of a sheep out of the mouth of a lion. **2 Applications:**

1. Exodus 22:10-13 says that if a man was looking after someone else's flock, and that animal was killed by a wild-animal, then that man was to bring a part of the animal to the owner to prove that he wasn't negligent.

a. God is saying that He was not negligent in protecting His sheep, Israel.

b. God is not at fault for the judgment that was coming.

c. It was the "sheep's" fault that they wandered off from the protection of the shepherd and was killed.

d. Therefore, God was declaring that He was not the cause of His people's sin.

2. A second application: A good shepherd doesn't say, "Well, I might as well let this thing eat it all and enjoy it."

a. Instead, a good shepherd fights for every last piece of that animal.

b. **A good shepherd does not permit the enemy to enjoy the victory over one of his own.**

C. God's people were going to experience terrible judgment.

1. The land of Israel would be destroyed, resettled by foreigners that the New Testament called Samaritans, and the 10 tribes would be forever "lost" (unable to chase genealogy).

2. But **because of God's faithfulness to the Covenant, Israel would not be completely blotted out, devoured, or destroyed. A Remnant would remain.**

3. God would preserve some so that they may continue to declare the Glory of God and be the recipient of the Promises and Plans of God.



D. Every prophetic book contains the hope of deliverance and remnant.

1. They all declare both the truth of judgment AND the hope of restoration.
2. They all declare God's right to judge and His right to redeem.
3. Even in judgment, God had the end in mind.
  - a. God knew that He couldn't completely destroy these unfaithful people because, through them, Jesus would be born.
  - b. The people were faithless, but Jesus was perfectly faithful.
  - c. The people were incapable of keeping the Covenant and doing what was right, Jesus upheld the Covenant and righteousness perfectly.
4. God sees the end from the beginning.

## 5. What is the Spirit of God saying to us today?

A. I think God wants more for us than merely understanding a book of the Bible.

1. It's really important for us to hear God speak through all of the books, not just the ones we like the best.
2. But what is it that God is drawing our attention to in this time and season?

B. What I keep hearing is the theme of "Repentance".

1. A few weeks ago, I had the impression the Lord was telling me to "teach my people about repentance because they don't know how."
2. Now, I can't say I heard a voice from God saying this, but it is a thought I have had consistently since that time.

3. Maybe God is reminding us of the importance and need for repentance.

- a. Repentance was never a solo thing.
- b. Repentance was also very much a national expression.
- c. God wasn't speaking through Amos and the other prophets for one or two people to repent but for the whole NATION to repent of her sins.

C. Amos hits upon some ideas that America is begging for right now:

1. Amos calls for Justice, and that is a very common theme these days.
2. Amos speaks about the rights of the oppressed, again another common theme.
3. Amos, like all prophetic books, demands repentance from God's people.
  - a. Our society today is demanding people to repent for the sins of our grandfathers and they are willing to deface history in order to bring that about.
  - b. All of the things sinful humanity is longing for is portrayed perfectly through Jesus.

D. Pure justice, mercy, and compassion are demonstrated through God alone.

1. We receive these by repenting of our sins to God and entering relationship with him.
2. Our nation will never know true peace, justice, or freedom apart from a relationship with Jesus.
3. And the first step we must take is to repent of our sins.

Closing: Let us take time to repent.

1. Some of us here today are harboring sin in our life.

- a. Maybe it is a secret sin no one knows about, but you know that it is hurting your relationship with God, with yourself, or others.
- b. Maybe your sin is anger, hatred, unforgiveness.
- c. If right now, you feel like I'm talking to you, or you are getting kind of nervous, that's simply the Holy Spirit speaking to you specifically even though I have NO idea.

2. It's also important for us to pray for a revival of repentance.

- a. Sin is rampant in our land.
- b. Many in our country are calling for repentance although they have no idea what true repentance is.
- c. The cry for repentance should be coming from the people of God, not from the world.

3. Today, would you join me in a time of repentance?

- a. If something specific comes to mind, then specifically ask God to forgive you and change you in that area.
- b. Join me in asking God to move upon each of our hearts and the hearts of the many people we love, to see serious life-change happen.

