

Preach It... Just Not to Me!!!

The Book of Amos

You've heard me say many times throughout this series, "This is one of my favorite passages/books of the Bible!" Well... **this is not one of those times!**

I don't like the book of Amos, not for any other reason except that it stirs up things in me that I'd rather not think about and have to deal with!

It's one thing to read/speak/preach the Bible to others who need to hear it! **It's another thing when the person who needs to hear it the most is me/us!**

God's people Israel were given the Law of God! They were the ones entrusted with it, to live it out as light in the midst of darkness before the nations!

But what if they failed? What if they fell short in penetrating the darkness, & the darkness actually overcame them & snuffed out the light?

And what if the pastors/priests/prophets failed to speak the Word of the Lord, failed to confront the sin of God's own people, & became complicit in it?

The book of Amos reveals what God said He would do in such a time as this! **And He revealed it through an unknown & unlikely prophet who spoke an unpopular message that needed to be heard back then, as well as today!**

In Amos' day, it fell upon deaf ears & hardened hearts b/c they thought that being God's chosen people & going thru their religious motions was enough!

Hear what God said about their worship, their religious activities - **5:21-24**

It was time for a rude awakening, and it came through this voice of Amos! Amos was a "herdsman and a dresser of sycamore figs", yet he becomes God's mouthpiece of judgment upon God's complacent & sinful people!

The people didn't realize this was the message at first! Amos' prophecy starts by God speaking judgment upon the surrounding nations. **You can almost hear God's people respond with a resounding "AMEN!" Amos 1**

- God is going to bring judgment upon Damascus – b/c **"they treat others with extreme cruelty for the sake of gaining personal advantage!" (1:3-5)**
- God is going to bring judgment upon Gaza – b/c **"they value financial gain for themselves over the well-being, even the freedom, of others." (1:6-8)**

- God is going to bring judgment upon Tyre – b/c **"they regard one's word as breakable when self-interest is served." (1:9-10)**
- God is going to bring judgment upon Edom – b/c **"they see nothing wrong with nourishing hatred against people who hurt them deeply." (1:11-12)**
- God is going to bring judgment upon Ammon – b/c **"they justify harming others to increase personal satisfaction." (1:13-15)**
- God is going to bring judgment upon Moab – b/c **"they presume vengeance is a legitimate personal right." (2:1-3)**

In all of this, **God's people are feeling vindicated because God is bringing judgment upon "those" wicked people!** But... God's not done!

- God is going to bring judgment upon Judah – b/c **"they disregard the absolutes that God has revealed as the standard of all living." (2:4-5)**

God's people have no excuse because they are the ones who have been given the Law of God! **Their sin is not of ignorance, but of rejection!**

- God is going to bring judgment upon Israel – b/c **"they pursue satisfaction by following a plan for life that is self-serving & not God-glorifying." (2:6-8)**

God's people put themselves before God and others – thus breaking the 1st & greatest commandment, as well as the 2nd. **Matt. 22:36-40**

You can't love God without loving your neighbor! Who's our neighbor today? When we love our neighbor, it is **an extension/evidence of our love for God!**

"Let justice & praise become my embrace, to love You from the inside out!"
Do we truly live and love like this, as God's people today?

What happens here in worship matters, but God is only glorified in here, if **He is also glorified out there with our neighbors! Micah 6:8**

If we think we are doing well because of how we are compared to others, remember God's standard is perfection! He sets the plumbline! **Amos 7:7-9**

The bad, but truthful, reality is that none of us measure up to the plumbline. The good news is that we don't have to! **God will tear down, in order to rebuild!** Where sin destroys & brings about judgment, God's grace in Jesus Christ is a sure foundation upon which He rebuilds His people! **(9:11-12)**

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