

**Date:** 4 Dec 2022

**Scripture Passage:** Amos 2:4-16

**Title:** Judgement Upon God's People

### **Introduction**

- 2 Kings 17:5-12 is the commentary on the present passage, written after all these prophecies were fulfilled.
- Amos was one of three “minor prophets” to the northern nation of Israel, after the nation split into two.
- We saw last week the call to the nations of the world to come to Christ for salvation. This week, we see the judgement upon Judah & Israel.
- This message is about a call to God's people to repent and return to their first love.

### **Judgement pronounced on Judah (4-5)**

- As with other nations, the sin of Judah was reaching the limit of God's toleration. The holy wrath of God as represented by the number “7”. For three transgressions of Judah, and for four (4). The time has come where God's perfect wrath and judgement must be applied.
- Judah despised the law of the LORD, and have not kept His commandments (4b). To despise is an attitude. The human personality is made out of 3 basic faculties. The mind, the heart (affections) and the will (volition). The interaction of these three produces the effect called the conscience. When one's attitude (mind + heart) is not checked, it may lead to sin (will). The attitude inclines you towards a direction, which often follows with action. When your attitude is right, you act right, and when attitude is wrong, you act wrong. When a sinful action is committed, it is often traced to the heart.
- Despised law of LORD (attitude), and have not kept His commandments (action). God knows when you have a bad attitude. He was warning you before the act was committed. Although you were already sinning in your heart, God was compassionate in not letting you sin in action yet. If your attitude is not put right, it will come into action. For example, David committed adultery and murder. Have any temptation ensnared you? Does your mind stray and fantasize? Be very careful. Is God showing his mercy upon you through this message? Are there things in your heart that ought to be purged? Heb. 3:16, 19 shows that rebellion is linked to unbelief.
- The longsuffering of God to be noted (4d). Judah followed lies which their fathers followed. God was showing his longsuffering towards Judah for generations. The Babylonians will soon be used by God to punish Judah, 130 yrs after Israel was conquered by the Assyrians in 722 BC.
- Judah is used as a lesson to us. God is love and longsuffering, full of compassion. But it does not mean there is no limit. If there is no limit, it's indifference. Judgement delayed is not judgment annulled. Instead, the longsuffering of God to be noted. 2 Pet. 3:7-9.
- The apparent delay in God's judgement is because of His longsuffering. He wants individuals to repent. He knows the beginning from the end. His judgement is certain, and it is not an empty threat. God is saying that it WILL happen and His judgement will never be canceled. It's delayed for you. Come to faith in Christ, without which there is no hope. Let us remember our first love, for he first loved us.

### **Judgement pronounced on Israel (6-16)**

- The charges and sins against Israel are listed to leave them without excuse (6-8). Three categories of sin are listed:
  - Social sin, of oppressing the poor & perverting justice, for silver & sandals (6b, not for gold). Greed and wickedness were the driving motives (7a). Prov. 14:31.
  - Sexual sin, uncontrolled sexual passion (7b). A man & his father violating the same slave girl, defiling God's name.

- Spiritual sin, of idolatry at the same time as oppression & sexual immorality (8). Cloak (outer garment) taken in pledge should be returned before sunset (Exod. 22:25-27). They “Lie down”, “drink the wine”, i.e. participating in temple prostitution. “Every altar”, the nation of Israel was truly filled with idols.

If the restraints of God are taken away from us, we will be worse than what we are. Total depravity is not the degree but the extent. “Having a form of godliness but denying its power” (2 Tim. 3:5). From such people, turn away! Are you one such person? You have a form of outward godliness, but where is the power of true religion? Where is your first love? Repent and return to the Lord.

- Aggravating factors in Israel’s sin (9-12). God protected Israel against the Amorites, and destroyed the Amorite giants completely (9). God provided for Israel during wilderness wandering for 40 years (10). Their shoes and clothing lasted. The pillar of fire (by night) and cloud (by day) led them. They were given manna, meat, water. God provided for them sufficiently and abundantly.
- Preservation in the faith by raising prophets and Nazirites, to teach & to nurture faith (11). But Israel gave the Nazirites wine, and commanded the prophets not to prophesy (12). You have heard the Gospel, attended Sunday school, had the bible taught and expounded. But are you still despising God and putting on an outward show? Or have you forgotten your first love and are on a spiritual decline? Some sin because they have no light, but you sin against the light. Your judgement will be worse. There are degrees of sin in the bible. Sin is sin, and must be punished. But those who sin against light will be punished more severely. When judgement day comes, those sitting here will have to bear the greater judgement. “To whom much is given, much will be required” (Luke 12:48).

### **Consequences of sin (13-16)**

- God weighed down (tottering under weight) by the sins of his covenant people. His longsuffering has reached its limit. The certainty of attack by Assyrians is provided (14), where many will die, they cannot run (15), and they will have humiliating defeat (16).
- This passage was to Judah and Israel, the special people of God. We who are Christians ought to take heed. Have we been complacent? Just as Amos was preaching to God’s covenanted people, we ought to repent and return to our first love.
- This call is for individuals to be saved. Salvation is in Christ alone. Will you not come? We have the advantage of the complete revelation. 2 Tim. 3:1-5. God’s judgement upon the people in the OT is a picture of Christ who will come to judge the world. He is weighed down and His wrath is about to be poured forth on the world. You have heard the message. The longsuffering of God is reaching its limit. Will you not heed the call? Let today be the day where your eyes look up to calvary. Look to the cross, look to Christ, until you find peace in Him.