

A. Introduction

1. this morning, the gospel has been proclaimed in our hymns and preached in our communion service, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

2. for some weeks we have been looking at this Book of Amos from which our Scripture reading was taken today
 - a. Amos was a shepherd
 - (A) living at the same time as Isaiah and Hosea
 - (B) he came from Judah, the southern kingdom
 - (C) from a small town, Tekoa beside the desert
 - (D) probably engaged in subsistence farming
 - (E) for he gathered figs to help support his family
 - b. this Amos was sent to proclaim God’s judgements
 - (A) to the northern kingdom, Israel; also referred to by its capital city, Samaria; there to stand
 - (B) before the king, the false priests, the people
 - (C) and to these he bore this message found in Amos 1:2:
*The Lord roars from Zion
and thunders from Jerusalem;
the pastures of the shepherds dry up,
and the top of Carmel withers. (NIV)*

3. thus far, 6 times the Lord, the Lion, has roared in judgement
 - a. I can picture Amos, standing before these people in their splendour, and he in his shepherds clothing
 - b. turning his face toward each of the nations on which he is pronouncing the judgement of God
 - (A) to the north, against Syria and its capital Damascus

- (B) to the south west, against Philistia (Gaza)
 - (C) to the north west, against Phoenicia (Tyre)
 - (D) to the extreme south, against Edom (Bozrah)
 - (E) to the east, against Ammon (Rabbah)
 - (F) to the south east, against Moab (Kerioth)
- c. six times God's judgement roars forth
 - d. six times his audience would roar back in approval as these meddlesome, neighbouring countries; their public enemies numbers one to six
 - e. and as Amos has covered just about all the points of the compass, surely breathes his audience, now he is done!
 - f. but no, he turns once more to the south and pronounces

B. Judgement against Judah

Amos 2:4-5

1. "Judah you say ..."

- a. One thing that I always detested in my business life
 - (A) were those management skills meetings we had
 - (B) when we would be called upon to do role playing
 - (C) perhaps some of you can identify with this
 - (D) so I would have some difficulty in concealing my grin
 - (E) when the person next to me was picked;
 - (F) that's probably how Amos' audience felt
- b. "Good, he's going after Judah; well, that's alright! No wonder, Amos, you came north here to Israel to speak"

2. and Judah was a choice target

- a. for they were a much privileged people
 - (A) God had set the temple in their midst, a constant reminder of God's Presence with His people
 - (B) their kings had the promise to them of the "sure mercies to David," their forefather

- (C) and God had granted to them a number of godly rulers who brought reformation to the people
 - b. but, at this time how were the Jews in Judah living
 - c. just like the idolatrous pagans that they had been before God called their ancestor, Abraham, out of the land of Ur of the Chaldees; like Jacob's family when they brought the household gods from Laban in Syria
 - (A) ruled by the false gods
 - (B) instead of being ruled by the commandments of the one true God
 - d. so judgement is pronounced upon privileged Judah
 - e. "For it is time for judgement to begin with the household of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?" as Peter tells us in 1 Peter 4:17 (NAS)
3. there are Christians today
- a. who feel that once they have accepted the gospel
 - b. that they are then free to do whatever they please
 - c. that God's commandments have nothing to do with them
 - d. forgetting
 - (A) Jesus' words, "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments." (John 14:15 NAS)
 - (B) or John's teaching, "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome." (1 John 5:2-3 NAS)
 - (C) or Paul's, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:10 NAS)
 - e. for, indeed we are saved to that we may do those things which God has established ahead of time as good works
 - f. and, if we are not, then it is time for judgement to begin with the household of God
 - g. Have you known the gospel? Danger! ... if your are not now living it before men to God's glory.
4. Amos has gained his audiences attention
- a. he has drawn a circle of judgement of the nations

b. and now, he aims at the bull's eye

C. Judgement against Israel

Amos 2:6-8

1. because this people, from king to commoner

a. were fully engaged in sin

b. [it is time for judgement to begin with the household of God](#)

c. for the sins of the nations around about Judah and Israel

d. were against other nations, other people

e. but that of Israel was against its own people

(A) this people who had been established that they should manifest the justice of God to the nations

(B) were extracting the last cent from their poor

(C) were corrupt in administering justice

(D) were engaged in widespread promiscuity

(E) and they flaunted their wickedness in the very practice of their corrupted religious service

2. and God says to this people

a. "Is this why I brought you out of the land of Egypt?"

b. "Is this why I destroyed the wicked Amorites who lived in this land, giving to you a land flowing with milk and honey, for whose vineyards you did not labour and for whose cities you did not build?"

c. "Did I do this that you should be more evil than they?"

d. No!

e. "Yet the prophets I sent to set you straight, you have rejected; the Nazirites I gave you to model righteousness, you have corrupted."

f. [it is time for judgement to begin with the household of God](#)

3. God gives His people redemption and revelation

a. how sad when they reject them both

b. in that passage, which we read this morning as part of our communion service, written to the church at

Corinth

- c. Paul reminds us of an individual responsibility for purity: "but let a man examine himself"
- d. and also a corporate responsibility – note the plurals – "But if we judged ourselves rightly, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord in order that we may not be condemned along with the world." (1 Corinthians 11:31-32 NAS), the church is the body of Christ and we judge our church as members of the body
- e. Have you known the gospel? Danger! ... if your are not now living it before men to God's glory.

D. Conclusion: Dearly beloved, let us pray to God in our closing hymn for the strength to live in a manner pleasing to God before men as we sing Hymn 317, "Cleanse Me"

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Various English versions of the Holy Bible are used in this sermon. Some (for example, the AV, ASV, and NAS) seek to be strictly translations, while others (and especially PHIL) contain paraphrasing which involves a certain amount of subjective interpretation. Nevertheless, there is little material difference in meaning among these. Some prove slightly clearer on some verses than others. Looking at more than one version sometimes sheds additional light on any particular verse. Explanatory additions to the Bible text are shown in [square brackets]. The versions are identified as:

ASV	American Standard Version of 1901
AV	Authorized (King James) Version
NAS	New American Standard version © 1975 The Lockman Foundation
NIV	New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society
NKJV	New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers
NLT	1996 New Living Translation © 1996 by Tyndale Charitable Trust
PHIL	New Testament Translation © 1972 by J. B. Phillips
RSV	Revised Standard Version © 1946, 1952 by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.
WEY	The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth

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