

## **Return To Me!**

### **“The Lord Roars from Zion”**

### **Amos 1:1-2:16**

The eternal significance of the Word of God is very evident as we look at the words spoken by the Prophet Amos to the people of Israel 2700 years ago.

- It was a time of peace and prosperity for the Israelites, but as it often happens when things are going good, God’s people had taken God’s blessings for granted.
- God chose Amos to go to the kings and religious leaders and to give them a simple, but certain word of warning – either repent of your sin and return to God, or suffer the consequences.
- About 200 years after Amos gave his warning, King Nebuchadnezzar’s army destroyed Jerusalem.
- God gave Amos a burden for his people in his day. He saw their activity as a blatant disrespect for God, and in many cases, outright blasphemy, and he knew God would not tolerate their rebellion forever!

### **Do you have such a burden for your people today?**

- The people of the world think they are living in the most liberated time in human history, when, in fact, they are in bondage to the power of evil.
- The people in the church think they are living in the most spiritually dynamic times in human history, when, in fact, the church is biblically ignorant, piously arrogant, spiritually blind, and self-centered; unaware of the needs of others.

Just as God was raising up an ungodly nation to come against Israel to judge them for their sins, God is raising up an ungodly people *from within* America to show us how far we have drifted from His Word.

- Romans 1:18 – *“The wrath of God is being revealed against all people who suppress the truth by their wickedness!”*
- Romans 1:24 – *“God gave them over to sexual immorality”* which led to homosexuality!
  - *“He gave them over”* – a term describing God’s punishment for disobedience.
  - When a society is consumed by sexual sin it is already under the judgment of God!
- Romans 1:28 – *“God gave them over to a reprobate mind!”*
  - When a sinner is so hardened as to feel no remorse or misgiving of conscience, it is considered as a sign of reprobation, from which there is no repentance.
  - When a society approves what was once corrupt behavior, unless God intervenes, the next step is reprobation.
  - *“They profess to know God, but in works deny him, being abominable and disobedient, and to every good work a reprobate.”* Titus 1:16

## 1. God's Messenger – Vs 1

- His name means BURDEN – God gave Amos a burden for His people, because He knew God was not pleased with their behavior.
- He was a FARMER – a shepherd and a grower of sycamore figs.
- Amos lived in the mountains of TEKOA and brought his wool and figs into Jerusalem to trade.
- Each time he entered the city, he was confronted by the sinfulness of his own people.

## 2. God's Message – Vs 2

- *“The words of Amos”* – identified him as a prophet – one who spoke on behalf of God!
- *“Thus saith the Lord”* – identified the message as being given to Amos by God Himself.
- Amos used a four-point outline:
  - He spoke from the Lord
  - He listed the specific sin
  - He outlined the specific punishment
  - He reaffirmed His source as being from God
- Each of the eight examples began with this phrase: *“For three transgressions and for four!”*
  - “Three” in Hebrew means “complete”
  - “Four” in this case meant “overflowed”
  - God's people had overflowed God's legal limit of sin

Amos began his message by pointing out the sins of the pagan nations around Israel, and how God was going to punish them. He then turned his focus toward Judah, his own people, and then finally, Israel and Jerusalem!

- Damascus – they treated their prisoners of war harshly.
- Gaza and Tyre – they kidnapped people and sold them into slavery.
- Edom – they “chased” their brother with the sword.
  - These were the descendants of Esau, the brother of Jacob, whose father was Isaac – the descendants of the Edomites include the Palestinians who continue to fight Israel today.
- Ammon – they executed pregnant women and killed their babies.
- Moab – they removed the bones of a King from his grave, burned them to ashes and then used them to whitewash a building.
- Judah – they despised the Law of God and His commandments.
  - The pagan nations had to answer for their inhumanity to man, for they had violated the natural conscience of man.

- But the people of God would answer for their disobedience to God's Law, for they had violated the blood covenant with God.
- Israel – they sold the poor into slavery to pay debts they did not owe, and they blasphemed the name of God, and profaned the temple of God with their sexual immorality.

### **3. Israel's rejection of God's messenger and message –**

- When Amos preached –
  - Some were moved to turn toward God!
  - Some were moved to turn upon Amos!
- In Amos 7:14, Amos said the mark of a true messenger of God:
  - Was not his pedigree!
  - Was not his ability!
  - It was his obedience – GOD called him!

When God begins to judge a nation, He does not begin with the corrupt government, businesses, or organizations that profit from sin, He begins with the institution that represents Him.

- In Amos' day it was the Temple, but in our day, it is the Church.
- In 1 Peter 4:17, the Apostle said: *"The time has come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?"*
- While God's wrath awaits those who have rejected Him and His plan for their salvation, God's primary concern is for those who call themselves by His name!
- It doesn't matter if our government removes God's name from our coins, or our courthouse, for that is not where God established His name to be exalted!
- But the Scriptures are clear, before the Lord release His wrath upon the sons of disobedience, He will first reveal His wrath to the Church, and as we see what is happening in and through the church in America today.
- God is using the daily deterioration of our way of life to warn us of what is to come unless His people repent and return to Him.
- America has regressed from being a Christian nation, to a post-Christian nation, and now to an anti-Christian nation.
- What will America's fourth sin be?

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**"Oh, that You would rend the heavens and come down to make Your name known to Your Adversaries, that the nations may tremble in Your presence. For we have sinned, and we need to be saved so that times of refreshment will come from the presence of the Lord."**

Selected passages

