

Amos 1-2

Judgment and Justice

Introduction

Question: Recall something you never thought would happen to you. How did you feel when it did happen?

Although Amos was a farmer from Judah, he prophesied to Israel, the northern kingdom, around 760 B.C. During this period the nation was secure and the upper classes prospered. Amos has a powerful message today. We often seek the wrong things, forgetting the One who is the only source of true life. Amos challenges us to forsake anything and everything that hinders our relationship with God.

Amos 1-2

Question: As you read through Amos 1 and 2, did you see a pattern in the content of each message? If so, what was it?

Question: Summarize God's judgment against each of the nations (vv. 1:3-5, 1:6-8, 1:9-10, 1:11-12, 1:13-15, 2:1-3).

Question: The repeated phrase, "for three sins ... even for four," emphasizes God's patience before pronouncing judgment. What kinds of sin do the nations have in common?

Question: These nations all represented enemies of Israel. How would the Israelites feel as they heard prophecies against these nations? How would you feel if you heard your enemies were receiving judgment?

Question: For what reason is Judah coming under the judgment of God (vv. 2:4-5)?

Question: How are Judah's sins different from those of the other nations?

Question: In the Law, the Torah, God has made it clear the way He intended His people to live under His leadership. When they first heard it, they received it, said they believed it, and would obey it. But then they abandoned it. According to verse 4, what had they turned to instead that led them astray? And who had also walked in the same way?

Question: What does this show you about the effect of the ways of one generation upon another? Have you this in your days? What will break the cycle – and what if it's not broken?

Question: For what reason is Israel coming under the judgment of God (vv. 2:6-8)?

Question: What actions on God's part does He mention in 2:9-11, and what do these tell us about the Lord and His grace and mercy toward His people?

Question: What is the significance of what the people do in 2:12?

Question: What further judgment from God against Israel is promised in 2:13-16?

Question: In these two first chapters of Amos, what would you select as the key verse or passage that best captures or reflects the dynamics of what these chapters are all about?

Reflection

What do these chapters of Amos communicate most to you about the heart and character of God? How can Amos' warnings to Israel and Judah keep us from being presumptuous about our status as God's children?