

## God Roars at the Nations p2

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**Bible Text:** Amos 1:3-2:3  
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Grab your Bibles and let's go to Amos 1. I haven't been telling you accurately, actually if you go to Matthew you don't go back a quarter of an inch, it's more like an eighth of an inch back to the left of Matthew. That's the easiest way to find it, I've found. Now, if you grew up in church, I didn't, you learned those little songs that help you remember where the books of the Bible are but by the time you sing all the way to Amos, about five minutes has passed anyway. So just go to Matthew and go back an eighth of an inch and you'll be pretty close.

Amos is a country preacher. God called him from out in the region of Tekoa, shepherding the sheep, and some scholars believe and I believe it's true, Amos was a part of a reformation movement in Israel. Now, mind you, it was a very small one like it almost always is, but he was a part of a remnant that was longing for Israel to turn back to God and restore true worship and true spirituality in the land. And when God called Amos, God in effect really didn't say, "Amos, go and see if you can get these people to straighten out because I want to forgive them and I want to restore them." That's really not the point of this prophet. He basically says, "I want you to rise up like a mighty lion that's already decided that the rival matriarch hyena has got to go," and that's the picture, this roaring lion of God's judgment and wrath. But always remember that God always takes care of his remnant. He may judge a nation, he may judge a church, as a matter of fact, I'm convinced he does both of those regularly, but he will always care for his remnant. So as Amos comes into Bethel, the southernmost city there where they had set up the synchronizing of pagan Baal worship with true Jehovah worship to try to make it all good and right, as Amos is preaching there, he is bringing hope to that small remnant. He is finally giving voice to the, you might say, the Bible-believing, Christ-honoring remnant that really wanted to see the nation serve God in a true way.

So that's what he's been doing and he gave us something, I spent a couple of messages that were somewhat introduction, how Amos's message is primarily against the compromised syncretism of bringing worldly gimmicks and amusements, Baal worship, into Jehovah worship to make it more fun, to make it more relevant. And as you know, that powerfully and closely parallels what's happening in our day but, brothers and sisters, in reality it closely parallels what has happened in almost every generation. This has always been the case. People begin to take true religion and in their lust and fleshly indulgence want to shape it into something that fits their carnal desires and God is very

patient. As a matter of fact, I blundered a little bit in my history here. About a century or a century and a half before Amos began to preach, Jeroboam I was king of Israel and he actually initiated the establishment of the worship in Bethel and the worship in Dan therefore taking the place of going to Jerusalem like God required, and he is the one that established this mixture of, "Let's put a golden calf in here but also let's bring the Jehovah worship alongside of it and people are going to love it. It's going to be so fun and so exciting and so amusing and so entertaining. We can indulge in our sensual lustful pleasures and call it truly worshipping God at the same time."

Hasn't your flesh always wanted a religion that condones your sin? It has. It has. Don't look at me spiritual. That's the way we are naturally, but it's the Spirit of God that causes us and enables us to begin to repent of that and want true spirituality. It's the Spirit of God in us that has changed us that causes us to begin to find real joy and pleasure in the truth of God, not our own flesh and lust. As a matter of fact, if you are truly born again, your lust and your flesh grieve you. You get sick of yourself. You get tired of you and that's why you come back to church and under sound preaching and teaching because you say, "I need that. I want to be drawn back to the true eternal pleasures of God, not to these temporal fleeting and judged pleasures of the world in my own fallen nature."

So Amos is going to primarily confront this synchronizing of Baal worship with Jehovah worship but before he gets there, God wanted him to say a word to the other nations around Israel because God is not just the God of Israel, he's the God of everything and every nation. And we've already seen part 1 of that and today will be part 2. But let's read it together, beginning in Amos 1 and verse 3.

3 Thus says the LORD, "For three transgressions of Damascus and for four I will not revoke its punishment, Because they threshed Gilead with implements of sharp iron. 4 So I will send fire upon the house of Hazael And it will consume the citadels of Ben-hadad. 5 I will also break the gate bar of Damascus, And cut off the inhabitant from the valley of Aven, And him who holds the scepter, from Beth-eden; So the people of Aram will go exiled to Kir," Says the LORD. 6 Thus says the LORD, "For three transgressions of Gaza and for four I will not revoke its punishment, Because they deported an entire population To deliver it up to Edom. 7 So I will send fire upon the wall of Gaza And it will consume her citadels. 8 I will also cut off the inhabitant from Ashdod, And him who holds the scepter, from Ashkelon; I will even unleash My power upon Ekron, And the remnant of the Philistines will perish," Says the Lord GOD. 9 Thus says the LORD, "For three transgressions of Tyre and for four I will not revoke its punishment, Because they delivered up an entire population to Edom And did not remember the covenant of brotherhood. 10 So I will send fire upon the wall of Tyre And it will consume her citadels." 11 Thus says the LORD, "For three transgressions of Edom and for four I will not revoke its punishment, Because he pursued his brother with the sword, While he stifled his compassion; His anger also tore continually, And he maintained his fury forever. 12 So I will send fire upon Teman And it will

consume the citadels of Bozrah." 13 Thus says the LORD, "For three transgressions of the sons of Ammon and for four I will not revoke its punishment, Because they ripped open the pregnant women of Gilead In order to enlarge their borders. 14 So I will kindle a fire on the wall of Rabbah And it will consume her citadels Amid war cries on the day of battle, And a storm on the day of tempest. 15 Their king will go into exile, He and his princes together," says the LORD.

2:1 Thus says the LORD, "For three transgressions of Moab and for four I will not revoke its punishment, Because he burned the bones of the king of Edom to lime. 2 So I will send fire upon Moab And it will consume the citadels of Kerioth; And Moab will die amid tumult, With war cries and the sound of a trumpet. 3 I will also cut off the judge from her midst And slay all her princes with him," says the LORD."

Last time we began by talking about, I. How God is just in his judgment of the nations. Now, this is contained in the fact that God has given all men his law; that God has written his law in every man's heart and God has given every man a conscience. I have heard the phrase and you've possibly heard the phrase, "Oh, those poor ignorant savages or villages in all these remote jungles and unreached areas. They're just ignorant. They don't know the truth." That's not true. As a matter of fact, I told you about Dr. Albert Martin who went to Africa and preached to tribal peoples there who had never heard anything of the Gospel. He said, "I went in there thinking that they were all just ignorant and just needed to know right from wrong and the law of God," he said, "and I learned something different when I got in there. They knew stealing was wrong but they still stole from each other. They knew lying was wrong but they would still lie to each other. They knew being hateful and envious and jealous was wrong but they were still hateful and envious and jealous. They knew murder was wrong and they still killed each other." He said, "They were not ignorant," he said, "I found that they were monsters of iniquity." They had never heard the Bible, never heard the law of God but they would tell him, "We know this is wrong but we do it anyway." And that's the point here: these people, these countries surrounding Israel did not have the prophets, they did not have the law, they did not have the witness of the temple and the ceremonial law but they are not without excuse. They are held accountable to God's law that he has written in their hearts.

Now, the six countries, in the first three he refers to them first of all, by the major city in the country, but here's the way the country is outlined: Aram to the northeast, Philistia to the southwest, Phoenicia to the north, Edom to the southeast, Ammon to the east, and Moab to the southeast and God told Amos, "Go and pronounce judgments against them." Now, we could do research and find dozens and dozens of sins and wickedness in these countries for which they are worthy of judgment but God instructs Amos to write it this way, "For three transgressions and for four," and then he names the major culminating sin for which he is going to judge that country. Then he'd go to another country, "For three transgressions and for four," and then God names this culminating sin for which he is going to judge them. It points out God's long-suffering and he points out there is a place you get to that really provokes God to wrath. So we're going to bring out three primary

sins, three culminating sins that we see from these six nations that brought God's judgment against them.

Now, first of all, and actually I outlined this II. Their crimes against God that bring his judgment, and we've already talked about the first one, A: violating the sanctity of human life. We talked about how Aram was a country that threshed Gilead with implements of sharp iron. In other words, just for sheer brutality and revenge, they didn't just capture, they didn't just defeat them, they were just bloody in their violence against them; literally pulling threshing sleds, great iron sleds that had metal or flint spikes coming out of them that would just rip the bodies to pieces. And God is saying this, "War is one thing but you are made in my image." All men are made in the image of God and there ought to be a respect for human life beyond that. There is a right way to punish evil and there is a right way to bring punitive judgment to bear against wrongdoers, but there still must be a respect for those made in the image of God. We are not just creatures. We didn't just evolve. We are special. Mankind, even at his worst, still maintains something of a sanctity and a dignity being made in the image of God.

Now, I always have to do this because here's where liberals get way out of balance. They'll go way over here and say and they begin to excuse and explain away the responsibility of all wrongdoers or evildoers. Have you ever seen anything as ludicrous as this immigration thing that's just being railed about all through our country? Folks, the last time I checked, I like what one person said, "The only problem I have with illegal immigration is when it breaks the law." Hello? Illegal immigrants. My point is this liberal domino effect keeps going on and pretty soon nobody is responsible for anything. There is a respected professor in a college who is now beginning to teach that pedophilia is really not a crime and really not wrong, these people just have a problem. I mean, where is this going to stop? So we don't want to do that. That's way out. That's perverting the doctrine of the sanctity of human life. So we're not going there but what God points out here and particularly starting here with Aram, that they were intentionally and excessively violent and brutal and even uncivilized, if you will, in avenging against their enemies. God is against that.

Then we come to Philistia in verses 6 through 8 and how God denounced them, is bringing judgment against them because they callously took the whole country they were enslaving, had no regard for children, had no regard for women, had no regard for pregnant women. So just the cruelty and the brutality, again, against those made in the image of God.

Now, this is going to come out over and over again but our hearts and minds cannot but think about two things in our own country. First of all, the past evils of slavery, and the present evil of abortion. Brothers and sisters, everything about abortion is wrong. As God judges these first two countries, what he is saying to them, "It wasn't necessary for you to exercise this kind of cruelty and brutality against other human beings. You conquered them, you won the battle, but you went far too far just for your own pleasure and your own convenience." And if you've been through the nightmare and the horror of abortion, there is grace in God, amen? There is God's love and there is God's forgiveness but God

forbid as the people of God, as Christians in this country, we ever give anything but a clear and certain sound: abortion is wrong. It's a complete disregard of the sanctity of human life and those creatures made in the image of God, human beings.

All right, let's go a little bit further here and let's go to B in our outline, another culminating sin, if you will, that these nations were committing that brought God's judgment and that is B: violating a brotherly commandment, violating a covenant, I should say. Violating a brotherly covenant. Now, this is very interesting. We see this in verses 9 through 12 and I think the point God is making here is that if God becomes your friend or if God befriends you, he will keep his word to you. That's just the way God is. That's an inherent aspect of his very holy character. If he befriends one, he is faithful to that covenant and that word to that one. So here's what God is saying: when you willingly, premeditatedly, knowingly violate your promise and your word in some sort of brotherly relationship, you are radically against the character of God. You are sinning against one who is made in the image of God. Are you following me on this? "You're so against, you are so violating the dignity for which I made you."

And he points this out, first of all, in Phoenicia. Look at it there, if you will, in chapter 1, verse 9, "Thus says the LORD," here's their major city, "For three transgressions of Tyre and for four," what he's saying, "For four, here's the one that really gets my attention, I will not revoke its punishment, Because they delivered up an entire population to Edom And did not remember the covenant of brotherhood." Interesting. I mean, of all the things you and I would think would bring God's judgment, that one would have not come to my mind. You violated the covenant of brotherhood.

Now, they likewise as the first part of this verse points out, partook in inhuman slave trade, but also in verse 9, they are guilty of covenant breaking, that is, of going back on a solemn vow made between friends. Can I just pause here and say, brothers and sisters, whatever we are, let's be people of our word. Now, look, as I said before, we are never perfectly faithful as God is because we are not omniscient nor omnipotent. We can tell a brother or sister, "I will do this," and not realize things could happen we can't control. We could get sick and not be able to perform what we promised. But our hearts need to be genuine about it and make it right when we can. But God is a God who always keeps his word. But that's not what happened here, this is not a situation where they were just unable to fulfill it, they premeditatedly, deceptively for selfish reasons violated their verbal agreement with another nation.

Now, the likely episode that the prophet is responding to is the covenant the king of Tyre made with King Solomon. Let me just point this out to you in 1 Kings 5:12, "The LORD gave wisdom to Solomon, just as He promised him; and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon," that's the king of Tyre, "and the two of them made a covenant." So they made a covenant, king of Tyre of Phoenicia and King Solomon of Israel. Then 1 Kings 9:10-11, "It came about at the end of twenty years in which Solomon had built the two houses, the house of the LORD and the king's house (Hiram king of Tyre had supplied Solomon with cedar and cypress timber and gold according to all his desire), then King Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee." So evidently they weren't

brothers in the true sense but there was a brotherly covenant agreement. "We are friends. I'll give you this wood and this gold to build the house of the Lord and the king's house," Hiram of Tyre said and Solomon said, "Well, I'll give you twenty cities in Galilee." That was their agreement.

But 1 Kings 9:12 says, "So Hiram came out from Tyre to see the cities which Solomon had given him, and they did not please him." He made the agreement, he committed himself to it, he made a vow, then when it unfolded he wasn't happy with it. Now, we don't know all that unfolded after that but obviously the king of Tyre was very willful in breaking this covenant and vow agreement between him and Solomon. So there was a long-standing brotherly covenant and in dishonesty and for selfish gain and advancement, the king of Tyre of Phoenicia violates that covenant. The point again is: we are God's creatures made in God's image and one thing God would never do is break his word of promise, especially to those he has befriended, and he takes seriously the deceptive scheming of those who would violate a brotherly covenant for selfish gain with no regard for the effect on the other party. For this, God would judge Phoenicia and her people. I don't know about you but this, I wouldn't have thought this. God says, "I want people to keep their word and especially if they become close and trust each other."

Now, look at verse 10, if you will, chapter 1. "So I will send fire upon the wall of Tyre And it will consume her citadels." That's the fire of war coming against to destroy her. So can I just challenge you to be careful. Let's do this as we're bringing up our children, let's teach them, "We keep our word in this family." When difficult things arise and uncomfortable things arise, require your children to keep their word even if it is difficult at times.

One of my girls when they were smaller, they asked me about a certain thing. Now, it was really a garden-variety thing and most of you wouldn't think anything was wrong with it but I wasn't comfortable with it and I said to that child, I said, "Well, okay, at church on Sunday you can just come down to the front and tell the whole church family you're going to denounce Christ." Now, I didn't mean it literally but I wanted to say, "You've made a commitment to a church family and your behavior needs to back that up." Now, my children sin just like I sin and we all sin and some of you are looking at me like, "Oh gosh, you're a horrible father." It's okay. There's a lot more context here. It was warmer and sweeter than you think. But my point being is if our children make commitments and vows and promises, let's teach them to keep them because God takes that very seriously. In our families, in our neighborhoods, in our workplaces, you men make business deals, you ladies make a business deal, keep your word. I like it when I hear a guy in business say, "This didn't really work out for me. There are some things I didn't understand but that's what I told you I would do so that's what I'm going to do." Don't you let when the profits come in and they look good, don't you let that tempt you to not keep your vow of promise to someone you've been dealing with.

Well, going a little further and we get to Edom here in verses 11 and 12 and Edom is the classic example of violating a brotherly covenant. Verse 11 says, "Thus says the LORD, 'For three transgressions of Edom and for four I will not revoke its punishment, Because

he pursued his brother with the sword, While he stifled his compassion; His anger also tore continually, And he maintained his fury forever." In other words, Edom just would not get over this bitter unforgiveness he had toward his brother. Verse 12, "So I will send fire upon Teman And it will consume the citadels of Bozrah." Now, Edom, as you know, is another name for Esau. The Edomites are the descendants of Esau and Esau is the brother to Jacob. Jacob, of course, became Israel. So you have Esau, head of the Edomites, and Jacob becoming the head of the nation of Israel and there was hatred between them, but the prophet points out here this was primarily coming from the side of Edom or Esau. He wouldn't let it go. He would not forgive. He would not let the hatchet be buried, if you will. He brewed and festered in this bitter unforgiveness toward his brother and how God judged him for it. As a matter fact on the other side, to Jacob and to Israel, God commanded Israel not to hate the Edomites because "for he is your brother."

So there is just something in God's heart about a brotherly covenant or agreement or relationship that God wants us to work at. But the bitter hatred of Esau or Edom for Jacob, for Israel, was perpetuated in the land of Edom and in their descendants. As a matter of fact, history records that every time Esau's descendants, the Edomites, had a chance to hit at Israel when she was down or vulnerable, they took the strike. It was just an unending, never ending quest for revenge against Israel. Do we not still see that in the Middle East today? A never ending hatred and bitterness and God says, "I will judge them for that." So God says unforgiving or rather being unforgiving and swelling and brewing in bitterness God will not tolerate.

Now, thirdly, C in our outline, another sin that they came to in these nations that God said I am going to judge them for is: cruelty toward the helpless. Cruelty toward the helpless. Scholars will point out that Israel had quite a good record of showing compassion and showing concern for others and the prophets were often sent to Israel to remind them and rebuke them if they were not functioning with compassion and care for those around them.

Now, it begins with Ammon. What a violent and horrible and monstrous thing the Ammonites did here. Notice verse 13, "Thus says the LORD, 'For three transgressions of the sons of Ammon and for four I will not revoke its punishment, Because they ripped open the pregnant women of Gilead In order to enlarge their borders.'" Now, this likely happened in the ninth century during the campaign of King Hazael against Israel and the motive, literally taking the pregnant women and ripping them open and killing the woman and the child was literally so there would not be many descendants in Israel so the king of Ammon could expand his own borders and overrun Israel's borders. So this monstrous cruelty was certainly a disregard for the sanctity of human life. It was an utterly callous lack of compassion for the most helpless and the most vulnerable, pregnant women, and they just butchered them.

So let us remind ourselves and let us remember that God has special concern for the helpless. Now, balance again: I'm not talking about the willful, able-bodied whiners, blame shifters and excuse makers. Are you okay with that? Because that's biblical. If he won't work, don't let him eat, the Scriptures say. We're talking about the truly vulnerable

and defenseless who are overrun and treated cruelly just because you can and that's what they did here.

In Psalm 68:5, let me, as a matter of fact, just another token of what our culture is saying in our day: in a recent survey about half of college students expect to be forgiven of their student loans. I'll sign on the line. I'll make an agreement. I'll pay this back but I don't really mean to pay it back. I don't expect to pay it back. What are we doing when the first thing our young people do in life, we teach them to be deceptive and irresponsible about their commitments? I'm not talking about those kind of people who expect handouts and helps when they don't deserve it. This is the truly vulnerable. Psalm 68:5 God said he will be "A father of the fatherless and a judge for the widows."

So this callous devouring of the helpless, in this case pregnant women, just for the material gain and the lust and pursuit of this enemy, brought God's imminent judgment. I think this might be why we see more details of judgment spelled out in verses 14 and 15. Look there, if you will. He just kind of amplifies what he's been saying against the other nations. He says, "'So I will kindle a fire on the wall of Rabbah And it will consume her citadels Amid war cries on the day of battle, And a storm on the day of tempest. Their king will go into exile, He and his princes together,' says the LORD."

Now we jump down to chapter 2, verses 1 through 3 and we're dealing with Moab now but we continue with cruelty toward the helpless. In verses 1 through 3, notice verse 1 of chapter 2, again he says it the same way, "Thus says the LORD, 'For three transgressions of Moab and for four I will not revoke its punishment.'" In other words sin is reaching its high-water mark in all these countries and God says, "There is one sin that just stands out above the others," and he mentions it in each case. Well, for Moab he mentions it at the end of verse 1 of chapter 2, "Because he burned the bones of the king of Edom to lime." He burned the bones of the king of Edom to lime. So here the king of Moab took the corpse of his enemy, the king of Edom, and he burned the corpse and what we are seeing here again is bitter revenge, the seeking of revenge. This is sin in the eyes of God. A seething unforgiveness and boiling hatred led Moab to do such a despicable act against a dead body.

Now, once again, go back to the original concept: creatures made in the image of God, God is saying, "I expect you to function with higher dignity than that even against your captives, even against your enemies." God is saying this type of bitterness and revenge is unacceptable. Hebrews 10:30 is a good reminder for all of us, "For we know Him who said, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay.' And again, 'The Lord will judge His people.'" Now, there is justice in a culture, parents have authority, the civil magistrates have authority and others have authority to bring proper judgment and punishment to evildoers but vengeance is something else. We are not to take vengeance into our own hands. And I think the point here is that we are all individually so guilty before a holy God and for us to seethe in bitter unforgiveness and obsessively focus on our own hurt and on our own selves is to willfully deny the great guilt and offense we have personally against a true holy God.



So God is saying through Amos, "When you did such a thing as to take the corpse of your enemy king and burn it, you were just showing the content of your heart was so proud and arrogant. You had no humility yourself before God that you thought you could take it upon yourself to do such a thing," when a rational look at our own heart shows we have no moral authority to seek vengeance as a fallen sinner who has sins also. God will simply not tolerate long-standing bitter unforgiveness and vengeance seeking. Stop it. Just don't do it. Give it to God. Let it go. Go to the foot of the cross and see what your sins did their and you'll start to get over the unforgiveness and the bitterness you have toward others before it comes to a place where God says, "I waited. I waited. I waited. I waited. And then finally the sin reached the high-water mark." So what a sobering and actually for me a new list of things to think about that brings God to judgment against a people. Now, history does record that the destruction of these nations happened just as the prophet had prophesied.

Now, quickly let me list for you some conclusions for practical application that we can glean from this section of a Amos pronouncing God's judgment against the nations surrounding Israel. First of all, the universality of sin and judgment. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God whether you're a Moabite or an Edomite or an Ammonite or a Philistine or whatever you might be, or Israel, or the church. All are under sin and judgment. The universality of it. Romans 3:9 and 10, "What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin." They are all sin. "As it is written, 'There is none righteous, not even one.'" Aren't you glad that the just judgment we deserve has been taken for us by Christ? That's our only hope. There is nothing inherent in us. We're not of better flesh than the Islamic nations, certainly not of better flesh than yellow-skinned people or red-skinned people or black-skinned people. All are sinners before a holy God and all are under sin and judgment unless they find salvation in Jesus Christ. The universality of sin and judgment.

Secondly, God's judgment is sure and it is thorough. God's judgment is sure and it is thorough. These nations were people made in the image of God and God expects everyone made in the image of God to function with certain dignity and on certain principles. Every attitude and every deed – now listen – every attitude and every deed beneath the holy dignity of God will be remembered and will be judged by God. Can you just fathom for a moment – now listen to me – if you were stood up against the holy righteousness of Almighty God and God said, "In true justice I must bring judgment against everything that's lesser than my holy dignity," we can't fathom the weight of condemnation. Praise God, it was taken for us in Jesus Christ but everyone not in Christ will be judged by God. And I think we have to remember that sin always has a boomerang effect. When we sin against others, there is a way in which God brings it back to punish us.

3. God is long-suffering, giving time for repentance. As I told you, I had made a blunder in some of my research and actually some of the scholars I read pretty much do the same thing, they use the word Jeroboam for the king but we have to remind ourselves there is Jeroboam I and there is Jeroboam II and there is about 100-150 years between the two. Amos is ministering during the reign of Jeroboam II but it is Jeroboam I who initiated the

actual establishment of the Jehovah Baal worship cult in Israel that brought the judgment against Israel. But here's my point: God waited patiently. They would go – listen to me – they would go week after week, month after month, year after year, decade after decade, and now century going into another century of going to indulge in their lustful sinful pleasures with a Baal calf and at the same time, check off that they are doing their ceremonial law to Jehovah God and God was long-suffering. Are you listening to me? Are you listening, child of God? Are you listening to me, false church member? Are you listening to me, false professor who hasn't truly come? You're living wanting a sinful religion. It's in your heart and God is long-suffering but he will not be forever. It was roughly 150 years from the time Jeroboam I initiated this wickedness in the land and Amos takes to the streets to denounce it and pronounce God's judgment against it. God is long-suffering.

4. God judges groups. Have you ever thought about this? God judges groups. Who you connect with and who you associate with can be a part of the reason why you are under the judgment of God. Nations are judged. Families are judged. Churches are judged. In Revelation 2:4 he talks about him being against the church at Ephesus because their love had grown cold. The church of Pergamum in Revelation 2:15 and 16, they would tolerate false doctrine. The church at Thyatira in Revelation 2:20, they appeased the wicked woman, Jezebel, in their congregation. Revelation 3:2, the church at Sardis, they were at ease and they were disobedient. Revelation 3:16, he judged Laodicea because they were lukewarm. In other words, the church you belong could get you into the judgment of God. Be careful what you join. Be careful what you participate with. Be careful where you belong. God is judging these nations.

Now, he does have grace for his remnant and I do believe, this is just my deduction from the balance of biblical truth, that there are good brothers and sisters locked in churches that are no less than the ancient Jehovah bull cults of ancient Israel and those brothers and sisters just haven't been taught well, they don't know much about it and they are doing the best they know how. I believe there is a godly remnant sprinkled out in some very unsound churches and God will take care of them, however, I don't know how the dividing line works. We are accountable for who we connect ourselves to, especially when we consider ourselves serving the Lord. God does judge groups. He judges individuals but he judges groups, collectivities.

5. God is especially concerned with how we view and treat our fellow man. He is especially concerned with how we view and how we treat our fellow man and that is because we are made in the image of God and he is jealous concerning our conduct, and we must reflect our Creator, we must reflect his character, and we must reflect his law, and especially that should be seen in how we treat others. Obviously we are not for lawlessness. Obviously we uphold justice in our courts and in our penal systems. Obviously we do that, but we are to view human life as having a sanctity and a special dignity and we ought to treat people like they are individuals made in the image of God. We should not treat people like a thing or treat people like property. We should not violate brotherly friendships, vows and covenants. And we should never allow any seething unforgiveness and, God forbid, vengeance seeking to be a part of our lifestyle.

6. Our last one: all of this, everything that Amos is saying, everything God is bringing against these countries, all of this is a preview of things to come. It's just a type, if you will, of the final judgment when the heavens split open and Jesus will return not on a donkey's colt, not on the foal of a beast of burden, but on a white charger, and he will come to collect his children and to judge all those not covered by his redeeming blood.

What about you on this Sunday morning, do you know Christ? Do you know his forgiveness? Are you playing church here at Grace Life Church? Have you just gone through the motions? Have you just jumped through a couple of hoops? Let me ask you: do you know that Christ is yours? I'm not asking you is your performance great. I'm not asking you can you dot every "i" and cross every "t" of the law. I'm asking you from your heart: have you embraced and are you trusting in Christ and Christ alone?

You can sit under better preaching but I have been faithful to preach to you the whole counsel of God and you don't want to sit under that kind of preaching all your life and go face God unsaved. Your guilt and your accountability will be much greater than if you had sat under shallow preaching or man-centered preaching. Make sure, make sure you know Christ.

Now listen to me: he is mighty to save. You say, "Pastor, you don't know where I've been." I'm not going to say I don't care because I do care but you may be a mighty sinner but I'm going to tell you, Jesus Christ is mighty to save. I don't care how deep, how dirty, how vile, I'm telling you he is mighty to save. You may have grown up in church and somehow just in common grace have never crossed these lines into really filthy, ugly, dirty stuff but I'm telling you, if you don't know Christ, you'll go straight to hell and have the eternal wrath of God on you forever. And you can have fallen into the muck and mire of the deepest depths of sin and degradation, but if you'll just turn to Christ and say, "Christ, I have no excuse, I have no explanation, I have no appeal but save this wretch. I believe you died for me." He will save you. He's mighty to save.

Aren't you glad for that, folks? Did you hear these judgments against these people and did we not see them all in our own heart to some degree? What a Savior we have. What a salvation. What a forgiveness. Claim it. Walk in it and glory in it and live like you believe it and make sure you know Christ.