

Do You Hear the Trumpet

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Glad once again to be with you. I wasn't expecting to see Jim... I mean Randy playing for us this morning.

Turn with me in your Bibles, if you would, to the book of Amos. Just in case you weren't reading in Amos this week, I will give you a minute to find what some call one of the minor prophets. But there is nothing minor about this message.

Amos chapter three. I want to read just one verse to you in the beginning. It is found in the midst of quite a lot that has been said about judgment sin against Moab and against Israel by God.

Amos three and verses six.

“Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? shall there be evil in a city, and the LORD hath not done it?”¹

Is it me or are there a lot of sobering things going in this world at present? Just a lot of sobering things.

In my lifetime I have never seen so many earthquakes, tsunamis, fires, just like the past week and weeks tornadoes of the most destructive kind.

And most of it is attributed by man to somebody called mother nature or global warming and a host of other things wherein men try to attribute it to things rather than attribute it to God.

I remember after the earthquake and tsunami and following nuclear situation in Japan one of the Japanese governors said something about God punishing them. And everybody just rose up with one accord and shouted him down. You could not even imagine such a thing to be true.

¹ Amos 3:6.

And then when you add to that all the many wars, conflicts. I believe our country is currently in about three of them openly right now. You hear about people being slaughtered by the hundreds. We have come to the point that it doesn't even really phase us anymore. I can hear about 500 killed in Africa in unrest or 60 shot down in the Syrian street. Whatever it is, it just doesn't hardly phase us anymore. We are hardened to it.

And then when you add to all these things all of the mind boggling crime. I mean, it is just crime doesn't even hardly bear a good name for it anymore, just the most blatant, unheard of wickedness, gruesome, awful murders.

We truly live in the last days. They began actually at the coming Christ.

“[God] Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.”²

But you can mark it down. There is a last days of those last days. And after you hear about all these things you grieve with people in a measure over what happens to them. And you know that there is really no hope for them, not only in their situations currently, but in their prospect, eternity wise, and that these things are simply the beginning of sorrows for most. Can you imagine that?

Christ said, “You will hear of wars and rumors of wars.” He said, “All these things must come to pass. Nation will rise up against nation and kingdom against kingdom and there will be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in divers places.” Then he says this. “All these are the beginning of sorrows.”

Can you imagine having what happens on this earth to be the best thing that will ever happen to you, to have suffered in one of these calamities to be the best thing that you will ever know for all eternity?

And yet it is obvious in light of Scripture that God speaks continually to men in all these judgments. Many trumpets are sounded in many cities just like is spoken in our text.

IN other words he is saying something like this. “Shall there be any evil or calamity?” And he is not talking about moral evil, but he says, “Shall there be any calamity inflicted on wicked cities which does not proceed from God, that does not come as the effect of his wrath?”

And so he asked all these very stirred up questions and they are intended to convince people that they have reason and cause of alarm because of their monstrous iniquities which call down the vengeance of God.

He will punish iniquity. And even the fact that men do so many of these things, whether they attribute what takes place in all these calamities as being simply an act of nature or something like this or whether they actually cannot deny that something happens at the

² Hebrews 1:2.

hand of wicked men and women, whether or not be the case, in doing these things what they in their wicked hearts want to do, they carry out the purpose of God in all things.

If a man on one hand slays another man as it goes on every day, or whether on the other hand he attributes what is obviously a judgment and calamity of God, whether he attributes that to something else, no matter whatever it is, God carries out his purpose.

And as they carry out the purpose of God, these things do not excuse their sin, nor does it diminish the sure judgment that he will execute on them personally for it. Just mark it down. All things are of God. That is what this verse is saying.

He says, “Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid?”³

What is a trumpet in this situation? It is a warning.

And he says, “Shall there be evil in a city [calamity] and the LORD hath not done it?”⁴

All things are of God. It may not fit your idea of God. It certainly doesn't fit the idea of most of the world. But all things are of God. He works all things after the counsel of his own will.

Turn over, first of all, to Isaiah chapter 14 and look down in verse 24.

“The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand.”⁵

In other words, nothing that men do in time alters what God has purposed before time.

That I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders. This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations.⁶

Do you like universal statements? There is one. All the earth, all nations, this is the purpose of God. What? To do whatever he will.

“For the LORD of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?”⁷

That is the God of the Bible.

³ Amos 3:6.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Isaiah 14:24.

⁶ Isaiah 14:25-26.

⁷ Isaiah 14:27.

Turn over in Isaiah chapter 45. Listen to what he says in Isaiah 45 and that seventh verse.

Here is God who does not want to be prettied up or altered for your taste buds or mine.

He says, "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things."⁸

Whatever it is, whatever calamity, whatever comes to pass, he said, "I am the Lord."

And then he says by the psalmist, he says, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."⁹

You see, the only reason there is a world going on right now is because of God's restraint. If he lifted all his restraint off of all men and women, it would last only as long as it took us to kill one another down to the fittest in the end. That would be one man standing.

But it is his purpose.

And the greatest example of that is in the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ on what would be, outwardly, the greatest demonstration of man's wickedness and vileness and corruption. It says when he was crucified the apostle Peter immediately after our Lord's death and resurrection, he stood there on the day of Pentecost and there was something in the midst of all he said that had to be made known.

He said, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge [or foreordination] of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."¹⁰

You did it doing just what you wanted to do. You did it with malice. You did it with angry hearts. You did it with hatred against God. But in doing so you carried out the determinate counsel and foreordained purpose of God. And then just as if we might not have got that he goes on a little bit later in Acts four and says it in this way.

The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.¹¹

That is no accident.

⁸ Isaiah 45:7.

⁹ Psalm 76:10.

¹⁰ Acts 2:23.

¹¹ Acts 4:26-28.

But while all these actions of evil men and women not only in what they actually do, but also in how they respond to what are literally acts of God, while they show how depraved and how vile and how sinful we are by nature, the response to these things by those who live, now, not just by those who die at somebody else's hand, not just those who die in a tornado or an earthquake or a tsunami, but those who live. Our response to them, those of us who live and remain may show more of our hearts and our evil and our unbelief than theirs.

Turn over to the book of Revelation in Revelation chapter nine. In Revelation we have so much symbolic representation of God's purpose and God's judgment against his enemies in the world. And we find statements in Revelation nine and other places like this in verse 20.

It says, "And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues..."¹²

Now God sent plagues in judgment. But he says:

And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.¹³

In other words, God sent awful plagues just like he sent to Pharaoh and the people of Egypt, just like he did on so many occasions in the Old Testament. He repented not.

Turn over to Revelation chapter 16 and verse eight.

And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues.¹⁴

Did you see that: and they repented not to give him glory. God who had power over these plagues.

"And they repented not to give him the glory."¹⁵

And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain,

¹² Revelation 9:20.

¹³ Revelation 9:20-21.

¹⁴ Revelation 16:8-9.

¹⁵ Revelation 16:9.

And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores,
and repented not of their deeds.¹⁶

Now the Bible says plainly that God commands all men everywhere to repent. Repentance can be described or defined, I suppose, briefly as some have, as a change of heart and mind concerning God.

In Acts 17 the apostle says:

Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him [he raised the judge] from the dead.¹⁷

Now when lesser judgments come and they come every day, when nations and when individuals come under these certain judgments, they are simply shadows and warnings of the judgment to come.

As a matter of fact, they are messages of mercy. Can you imagine that? Every time that God lives his restraining hand on men and on the elements and these things break forth, they not only remind men of his frailty, of his dangers that are all around him every day, but they are particular messages of mercy wherein he reminds us of the sure and certain judgment to come.

Everyone who dies outside of Christ, these things will simply be the beginning of sorrows to them. And how men and women respond to these lesser judgments, this reveals the true hearts and the real natures of men and women and reveals the God that they really trust, because people begin to say, "Why did God let this happen to us" as if to say, "We really deserve better than this." That is what we are really saying. Or, "If I was God, I would do things different from this."

And they attribute these things to all other sources imagined and they turn in these hours to the gods of their false religions. They turn to false preachers. They turn to their religious trinkets. They turn to a false hope. They turn to other sinners just like themselves, but they do not turn to the living god.

Now fire all throughout this book has been given as symbolic of divine wrath and judgment. And here are these men and women that we find in the Revelation and other places. All this is picturing a panoramic view of everything that takes place on this earth, shows us in the end that God in Christ is victorious not only to save all his people, but over all his enemies.

¹⁶ Revelation 16:10-11.

¹⁷ Acts 17:29-31.

There are people who are really funny about how they want to die. I don't want to die at the hand of... I don't want somebody to shoot me. Let's ban all the guns.

Well, kill me quick with a gun before you cut me up with a knife.

Or we don't want to die in an earthquake or we don't want to die particularly in a tornado or we don't want to die this way. What does it matter? All these things as we find them pictured in Scripture and in history, they are but just lesser judgments of God.

And it says in those two instances here in the Revelation, sometimes when they were with plagues, sometimes when they were burned with fire, it didn't matter what it is, it all boils down to this.

“They repented not to give [God the] glory.”¹⁸

And the greatest evidence of our fallen state, our blindness, our spiritual deadness if left to ourselves is that having faced or in our cases having heard of, known to be true, all these judgments that are taking place all around us he said we repent not to give God the glory, because none will ever of themselves repent.

I don't care if the most awful tornado rips through Albany tomorrow morning and destroys half the town and three-fourths of the people in it, you won't find one person who as the Scriptures teaches it, will repent to give God the glory. You won't.

That is how blind, that is how dead we are... That is how much enmity is in our heart and mind against the living God.

You see, repentance is the gift of God. And it is what I would call the Siamese twin of faith. And it is only in and because of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is the gift that God sovereignly gives to his people to his elect people. There are only one people on this earth that will ever repent and those people are the people of God which he chose in Christ before the world began which Christ came into this world to die for and to whom the Spirit of God reveals the truth and gives them this life which is demonstrated in repentance and faith concerning God.

The apostle says in Acts five concerning Christ, he said, “Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.”¹⁹

Well, it is obvious there that the Israel there is not the nation of Israel, isn't it? But he is talking about spiritual Israel. He is talking about that people that is in Christ and he says that God exalted Christ as the prince and Savior of this people for to gift them repentance, a gift of repentance.

¹⁸ Revelation 16:9.

¹⁹ Acts 5:31.

You read such things as Acts 11 when the gospel was preached it says, “When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.”²⁰

How did these Gentiles believe when most of these Jews did not believe and repent? How is it that all of the sudden they heard the gospel and they repented?

God granted it. he gave it.

You see, it is a part of that salvation. It is all of grace. Everything is a gift. Even the faith by which we believe is the gift. Righteousness is described by the apostle Paul in the book of Romans as the gift of righteousness. Christ himself is described as that unspeakable gift. Everything is of grace. So the only way that any sinner, any fallen son or daughter of Adam, the only way they are ever found repenting is by God’s gift of grace.

Listen to what Paul writes to Timothy. He says:

And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.²¹

Did you get that last part? Repentance has got something to do with bringing sinners in their salvation to acknowledge the truth. It is not about a man quitting his drinking. It is not about a woman quitting her running around. It is not what all these... it is not about somebody walking down an aisle or being dipped into somebody’s pool or experiencing a reformation, a transformation in their life or their morals or character or anything like that. It has got something to do with God bringing us to acknowledge, to affirm the truth.

You see, most folks think that repentance is merely being sorry for sin. They say, “You need to repent of your sins.”

I don’t even know what all my sins are, do you?

If you can remember and know all of your sins, you certainly must not be much of a sinner, not like me anyway. I don’t even know what all my sins are. I may know a few things that I have committed in sin. I certainly am sure there is a multitude that I have omitted in sin, but I don’t even know what they are and most have this idea that repentance is being like Esau who was sorry for the consequences of sin.

But these preachers on television weeping and crying, oh, they say, “He is sorry for his sin. He is sorry. He is repenting of his sin.”

²⁰ Acts 11:18.

²¹ 1 Timothy 2:24-25.

No, he is sorry because he got caught in his sin. You see, repentance is first—and we ought to always remember this—toward God. It has something to do with being brought by grace to acknowledge the truth concerning God. It has to do with being brought to acknowledging in the light of who God is the truth about who we are and the truth about Christ as the only way, the only Savior, the only righteousness, the only way to approach God, the only way to be accepted by God. There is no other.

Turn over to Luke chapter 13. Now listen to this. Our Lord was always preaching. Oh, he did a miracle here and he did a miracle there. But everywhere you see that it was simply to confirm who he was and to confirm the message that he preached and he was always teaching.

Well, it says in verse one, “There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans.”²²

They were repeating a recent news story. Did you hear this? Oh, this is awful. Listen.

It says, “The Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.”²³

He just slaughtered. He had had them slaughtered.

“And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things?”²⁴

You know, if bad things happen to people they must have been bad people. That is kind of the way we think. And our Lord knew that was they thought.

Well, all these people getting shot in this country or decapitated in this country, all these people blown away in a tornado over here in this state and whatever it is, all these people were murdered by this crazed man who walked in a restaurant or something.

Do you think they were worse people than you are tonight? [?] by nature.

Now listen to this.

“I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.”²⁵

Listen to the next verse.

“Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them.”²⁶

²² Luke 13:1.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Luke 13:2.

²⁵ Luke 13:3.

²⁶ Luke 13:4.

That is a big gossip I am sure in that day. There are some people over here by this tower and the tower, as they say, accidentally fell and it came crumbling down on all them and killed them all, 18 people.

“Think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.”²⁷

It may not be by a tower falling on you. It may not be by this thing or that thing. It may not be at the hands of a dictator or a madman. He said, “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.”²⁸

What happens is in the light of all these things, all these trumpets that are sounding, that is what they are. That is what he likens them to.

They said over in Alabama and these places, you know, that are kind of tornado prone we think anyway that those sirens just blared and blared and blared. What were they? They were like trumpets. Why were they blaring for? They were warnings.

And yet here we have all these warnings around us in various times. We have all these trumpets that are sounded in all the cities. He said, “Are these things happening, these calamities come and it is the Lord that hasn’t done them? Are you so blind, so stupid, so willfully ignorant?”

You know they say there is no man so blind as the man who will not see. Are you so blind? Are you so spiritually dead you can’t tell that here all these warnings all around you? The trumpet is sounding? You think it is not the Lord doing all this?

And if you are left spared and living it is a message and a warning of mercy. Judgment is coming. And it is not simply some madman standing on a corner waiving a sign talking about the end of the world. It is the message that declares a sure and certain judgment at the hand of a holy and a just God you are going to face.

And what do they do? Probably they will flock to their places of religion. And they will profess religion. They will have that repentance that is born in a storm that always dies in the calm. And they will come and they will make their bargains with God, but not to God as he is revealed in the gospel. They will make their agreements. They will make their bargains with God with somebody named Jesus, but not to him who is the Lord of lords and the King of kings. And they are not coming before God as he is as the sinners that we are.

And for sure they don’t hear the real trumpet. It is another trumpet that is sounding.

²⁷ Luke 13:4-5.

²⁸ Luke 13:5.

You know on the day of atonement in the year of the jubilee when that sacrifice was offered, when that high priest went in with that sacrifice and that blood was sprinkled on the altar, trumpets were to be sounded all through the land that the day of jubilee was there.

Do you know what that was? That was a marvelous time. It was the day that all debts were forgiven. It was the day that all slaves were released. It was the day that all land that was taken in business agreements and that was sold because of need and such as that, all the lands were returned to the family that owned them. You see, the day of Jubilee, the year of jubilee was simply a picture of grace. And it wasn't some brass trumpet that was sounded.

What they did was they took the ram's horn, the shofar and they sounded this sound of jubilee all throughout the land, through this ram's horn, this shofar and that was the trumpet that sounded the message.

What was that? It was a message of salvation. In other words, that ram had to die for there to be that sound.

Just like it was with Abraham and Isaac on Mount Moriah when that ram was caught by his horns in the thicket and God pointed him out and said to Abraham, "Don't slay this son. Slay this sacrifice. Slay this substitute in his place. And let that boy go free."

That is what this is all about. This is what Christ crucified is all about. And in the midst of all these trumpets and warnings God in even greater mercy sounds out to this day, although it seems very quiet and although it is not in many places, but yet to his people he sounds out this gospel trumpet which is good news, glad tidings.

And do you know what? If you deserve judgment, if you are brought to find out that you really are deserving of wrath and hell and judgment from God, that this is what you really deserve, that you are headed for it sure and certain and all of the sudden you hear a sound of a trumpet that is not a warning, but it is good news.

You see, repentance, the apostle says, is unto life. What does that mean? I know it means a lot of different things, but it is actually to be brought from the way that leads to death to the way that leads to life. That is why in Scripture we find the broad way that leads to destruction, the narrow way that leads to life, the ways that seem right to us actually it is the way that seemeth right to a man, but the ways thereof are the way of death.

There are a whole lot of ways, but they all amount to one way that leads to death. Your righteousness, your works, your will, your worthiness, all these things they are ways to death.

It is to be brought from that way to Christ who is the way. It is to be brought and to turn by God's grace from our way to God's way which is in Christ, from self justification to the only way that God can be just and justify a sinner which is the way of the cross, from

trusting in our selves that we are righteous to resting in his righteousness imputed to us. It is, as is said in Scripture, repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Do you know where the greatest example of repentance is to be found in Scripture in my humble opinion? Philippians three. Paul having not just done it once, but in a constant repentance is speaking of all the things that he once trusted in, the fact that he was a Pharisee, the fact that he was a Hebrew, the fact that he was a keeper of the law, the fact that he was moral, the fact that he had the esteem of his peers, all these things. What men and women are taught by preachers in our day they ought to strive for. And if you are anything near this, you can be a member of our church.

That is what he repented of. He is not repenting of being a drunk or a whoremonger or a thief or a liar or a murderer or any of these things. He is repenting of those things that he once trusted in. God would accept him and reward him on the basis of it.

Now here are all these trumpets. And it is kind of like us being a little cracker box. Did you ever notice how these tornadoes it is like they have got radar on a mobile home.

[?] It is just the way it is it seems like. It just... we have got... in my county now we have got hurricanes, you know. That is what we have where I live. We have got all kinds of strict codes now. You put one in, it will have more ground strap tie downs than you can even imagine.

Here you and I are like one of those first ones that were made, look like a little shoebox. Do you remember them? Here we are sitting there in it. That is our refuge. We don't have any tie downs. And the tornado of judgment is headed towards us. An alarm sounds. The man on the weather says it is coming your way. You know, now they say it will be here at this time, here at that time, here the next time. It is coming your way.

Well, you will just get you a little piece of hemp rope somewhere and tie it to the tongue of it and a wood stake and drive it down in the ground a little bit. Will you do that? Get you a pillow and wrap it around your head. That is the way we are as sinners before God.

No, the Bible says there is a refuge, a man who is a hiding place in the storm. There is a righteousness that you can be clothed in and stand before the thrice holy God and be accepted in his sight. There is a sacrifice that will put away all the sins that bring on this judgment.

As a matter of fact, if you look on that cross, you will find he is already borne it.

...if we have been brought to repentance and are therefore constantly repenting of any and all false gods and renouncing our own works and will. We are trusting in Christ. It is because God's free and sovereign mercy has been extended to us.

The goodness of God has led us to repentance.

“For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.”²⁹

Men ask men and women. They always them why these tragedies happen. But if we know anything about God and his holiness and justice and have any sense of our sin, we might wonder why he hadn't already destroyed the whole world by fire already.

We hear about these awful calamities. They hear the trumpet sounds and they have so high value of ourselves which they will... a good God wouldn't do this, a holy God would.

Why doesn't God, being who he is and you and I certainly being what we are and everybody else just like it, why doesn't he just go ahead and send a wind that sweeps the planet clean, sends a fire that consumes every living soul like he did the flood. Why doesn't he just cause the earthquake to erupt with... I mean the earth erupt with earthquakes? There is a reason.

Peter says it is coming. He said they doubted it in the day of the flood. They will doubt it at the end. He said this world will be consumed with a fire.

He says:

But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward.³⁰

Who is us-ward? Well, he began this epistle distinguishing the fact that this letter is written to God's elect.

“...not willing that any should perish.”³¹

He is not willing that any of his family, any of his children, any of his elect ones, any he loves, any Christ died for, he is not willing that any of them should perish, “but that all should come to repentance.”³²

He is going to bring every one of them to repentance. They won't repent at the sound of thunder or storms or roaring winds or anything like that. But when the Spirit of God takes the gospel it gives God all the glory. When he comes in power to their minds and to their hearts, when he gives them repentance and faith to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ

²⁹ 2 Corinthians 7:10.

³⁰ 2 Peter 3:7-9.

³¹ 2 Peter 3:9

³² Ibid.

and it won't matter then to them if they die in a tornado or an earthquake or a hurricane or a heart attack or a bullet or whatever it is. Just the sooner they go out to meet the living God.

Do we hear the trumpets? God help us to hear the trumpet.