

Judgment is Coming

Amos 6

Intro

Let's jump back into Amos this morning as we pick up our study in chapter 6...

Amos 6 (NKJV)

**1 Woe to you who are at ease in Zion,
And trust in Mount Samaria,
Notable persons in the chief nation,
To whom the house of Israel comes!**

Amos is warning the ***Southern Kingdom of Judah*** — represented by **Zion** — and he is warning the ***Northern Kingdom of Israel*** — represented by **Mount Samaria**...

- These two nations were prospering financially and they were **at ease** in their capitals...

The leaders of these nations felt good about their position relative to other nations...

- These leaders were in places of prominence and people looked up to them — they were **notable persons**...

And all of that seemed good on a *surface level* — but none of it truly mattered because ***neither nation was trusting in the Lord***...

And this is a hard truth but we must come to grips with it...

How **we** view ourselves is **not what matters** — how **others** view us is **not what matters** — how **God** views us **is what matters...**

- And the God had a negative view of Judah and Israel because Judah and Israel **continued to walk in unrepentant disobedience...**

And the hard truth is that God will only tolerate unrepentant disobedience for so long...

*This is true for both the **unbeliever** and for the **believer...***

For the unbeliever, the final end of unrepentant disobedience is condemnation at the Great White Throne Judgment and eternal separation from God and from all good in Hell...

For the believer, unrepentant disobedience leads to the chastening of the Lord in this life and to the loss of rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ...

Paul warns the believers of Corinth about the judgment of the Lord in...

1 Corinthians 11:31-32 (NKJV)

31 For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.

32 But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.

In light of these truths, all unbelievers should immediately come to the Lord Jesus in repentance and find forgiveness and grace in Him...[expand]

- And as believers, we should come to the Lord Jesus in repentance — often — seeking continual forgiveness and grace as we imperfectly run the race of faith...[expand]

Psalm 139:23-24 (NKJV)

**23 Search me, O God, and know my heart;
Try me, and know my anxieties *[thoughts]*;
24 And see if there is any wicked way in me,
And lead me in the way everlasting.**

- [expand — ask God to examine our hearts and reveal our sin — then we repent of whatever God reveals — God can also use fellow believers in this process of revealing...]

Proverbs 18:1 (NKJV)

**A man who isolates himself seeks his own desire;
He rages against all wise judgment.**

Proverbs 27:5-6 (NKJV)

**5 Open rebuke is better
Than love carefully concealed.
6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend,
But the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.**

Let's continue on now in Amos 6 to vs...

**2 Go over to Calneh and see;
And from there go to Hamath the great;
Then go down to Gath of the Philistines.
Are you better than these kingdoms?
Or is their territory greater than your territory?**

Here Amos challenges the leaders of Israel and Judah to consider other capitals that had fallen to foreign invaders...

- *Were Zion and Samaria better than those capitals?...*

Couldn't the same fate fall on Zion and Samaria that fell on those cities?...

- Zion and Samaria needed to realize that they were ***not special in and of themselves*** — they were ***only special because God had intervened on their behalf...***

And the same is true of us — we are special because of who God is and not because of who we are...

As human beings, we bear the image of God because God has made us that way...

- ***As believers, we have been saved because God chose to send His Son to die for us...***

As believers, we are enabled to bear spiritual fruit because we are in a connected relationship with the Lord Jesus and with the Holy Spirit...

As believers, we are able to serve one another sacrificially and effectively because the Holy Spirit has both gifted us and empowered us so that those gifts might be active in our lives...

With these truths in mind, would you please turn to...

1 Corinthians 1:26-31 (NKJV)

26 For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.

27 But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty;

28 and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are,

29 that no flesh should glory in His presence.

30 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption—

31 that, as it is written, "He who glories, let him glory in the LORD."

Please turn back now to Amos 6 as we move into vs...

3 Woe to you who put far off the day of doom,

The leaders of Israel had **put far off the day of doom** — in other words, they assumed that judgment for their disobedience wouldn't happen any time soon...

This is the same sort of attitude that we read about when we studied 2 Peter 3 — people think that because judgment hasn't come yet then it is never going to come...

- ***But that is simply not true — judgment is being delayed because God prefers mercy over judgment...***

To remind ourselves of this truth, would you please turn to...

2 Peter 3:9-13 (NKJV)

9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.

11 Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,

12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?

13 Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Now, please turn back to Amos 6 as we continue on in vs 3...

Who cause the seat of violence to come near;

This is the terrible irony of refusing to accept the fact that God will judge sin...

- This false belief actually opens the door to increasing violence...

This has happened again and again throughout human history...

You see, when a society rejects the truth that Almighty God will judge sin — then that society will do whatever is right in its own eyes...

- ***And violence is the inevitable result — because I will want what you have and you will want what I have and it will ultimately come down to violence...***

James 4:1 (NKJV)

Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members?

*Paul quotes from the Old Testament when he writes of this **away-from-God** life in...*

Romans 3:15-18 (NKJV)

- 15 "Their feet are swift to shed blood;
- 16 Destruction and misery are in their ways;
- 17 And the way of peace they have not known."
- 18 "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

Dallas Willard — Renovation of the Heart

“One begins to get smart when he or she fears being crosswise of God: fear of not doing what he wants and not being as he requires. Fear is the anticipation of harm. The intelligent person recognizes that his or her well-being lies in being in harmony with God and what God is doing in the ‘kingdom.’ God is not mean, but he is dangerous. It is the same with other great forces he has placed in reality. Electricity and nuclear power, for example, are not mean, but they are dangerous. One who does not, in a certain sense, ‘worry’ about God simply isn’t smart.”

Moving on in Amos 6 to vs 4-6...

**4 Who lie on beds of ivory,
Stretch out on your couches,
Eat lambs from the flock**

And calves from the midst of the stall;

**5 Who sing idly to the sound of stringed instruments,
And invent for yourselves musical instruments like David;**

**6 Who drink wine from bowls,
And anoint yourselves with the best ointments,
But are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.**

The leaders of Israel were living lives of ease at the expense of the common people...

- Instead of serving the people, these ungodly leaders were impoverishing the people through extreme taxation...

Instead of humbly worshiping God through song, these ungodly leaders were inventing new musical instruments simply to entertain themselves...

- Instead of offering the best of what they had to the Lord, these ungodly leaders indulged themselves by offering the best wines and ointments to themselves...

**7 Therefore they shall now go captive
as the first of the captives,
And those who recline at banquets shall be removed.**

The self-indulgent leaders would be the first to go into captivity and their life of ease would come to an end...

Now, to see a terrifying warning to the ungodly rich, please turn to...

James 5:1-6 (NKJV)

1 Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you!

2 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten.

3 Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days.

4 Indeed the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.

5 You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter.

6 You have condemned, you have murdered the just; he does not resist you.

Matthew 16:26 (NKJV)

“For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”

Please turn back to Amos 6 as we move into vs...

8 The Lord GOD has sworn by Himself,

This idea of God swearing by Himself is explained in...

Hebrews 6:13 (NKJV)

For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself...

- [expand — this is the most powerful oath that God can make...]

Continuing on in vs 8...

The Lord GOD has sworn by Himself,

The LORD God of hosts says:

"I abhor the pride of Jacob,

And hate his palaces;

Therefore I will deliver up the city

And all that is in it.”

*Here we see that the Lord has sworn by Himself that He would overthrow Israel and that the root source of their sin was **pride...***

Dallas Willard — Renovation of the Heart

“Those are surely right who have recognized in pride the root of all disobedience. We think we are ‘big enough’ to take our lives into our own hands and disobey, instead of ‘[humbling ourselves] under the mighty hand of God’...And this will certainly be driven by the thought that if we do not take things into our own hands, we will not get what we want—another blow to our pride. Our attitude should be, to the contrary, that there is no particular reason why I should get what I want, because I am not in charge of the universe.”

I believe that Willard has understood the heart of the issue...

And this fundamental truth — that pride is the root of all disobedience — connects with what the Lord Jesus taught us to pray in the model prayer...

**“Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come.
Your will be done
On earth as it is in heaven...”**

We must understand that this is absolutely essential — this is foundational — this is the most basic ground of reality — God’s will being done...

Think with me for a moment about what existed before Creation...

Only God existed — only the perfect Three-In-One God — Father, Son and Holy Spirit — nothing else and no one else existed...

And this infinite, eternal, omnipotent God **willed** to create the universe...

- It was **His will** — manifested through His words — that brought everything into existence...

Before creation, only **His will** existed — and it was **His will** to create — and in that creating He chose to create beings with **wills of their own**...

- **The greatest of these beings with wills of their own were angels and humans...**

Angels had the privilege of seeing God face-to-face and of being able to move between our world and the unseen world...

- But human beings had the incredible privilege of being made in God's image — of sharing His likeness in a way that we cannot fully understand...

Now, both angels and human beings were given **wills of their own** — both of these classes of creatures were given the ability of self-determination — they could make use of their wills as they chose...

- We understand from the scriptures that there came a time when an angel named Lucifer **used his will to rebel against God** and in that rebellion a number of the angels **used their wills** to follow Lucifer in his **willful rebellion**...

This rebellious host makes up the principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this age, the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places that Paul writes about in **Ephesians 6:12...**

- Now, we understand that the fallen angel Lucifer has many names including Satan, the devil, the great dragon and the serpent of old...

And as the serpent, this fallen angel used his ***rebellious will*** to tempt Adam and Eve to ***follow him in rebellion...***

- The serpent — Satan himself — convinced Adam and Eve to ***exercise their will in opposition to God's will — to go their own way — to do their own thing...***

Tragically, Adam and Eve chose to give in to the temptation of pride and reject the will of God in favor of their own will...

The consequences were immediate — shame at their nakedness, disharmony in their relationship with one another, and a desire to hide from the presence of God...

And this gives us great insight into why God hates pride so much — it let's us know why pride is the poisonous root from which every other sin grows...

- ***You see, God's will is good, it is perfect, it is righteous, it cannot be improved upon...***

It is God's will that all would be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth — it is God's will that every person would know Him and live in the abundance of His love...

- ***It is God's will that we know Him intimately and enjoy Him increasingly day by day for all of eternity...***

It is God's will that we would become truly good as He is good and in that process grow into ever deeper relationship with Him...

But pride wants none of what God so graciously offers...

Pride simply says, “No.” — Pride says, “*I do not want God's will to be done. I want my will to be done.*”

- And that simple step — that prideful exchange of God's will for self-will — sends both angels and humans onto a collision course with judgment...

You see, the biggest lie on planet earth is that ***you can do whatever you want and get away with it...***

- That is simply not true — ***all*** who walk in unrepentant disobedience will suffer judgment...

I mentioned it earlier in this study and I will mention it again...

For the unbeliever, the final end of unrepentant disobedience is condemnation at the Great White Throne Judgment and eternal separation from God and from all good in Hell...

For the believer, unrepentant disobedience leads to the chastening of the Lord in this life and to the loss of rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ...

But it doesn't have to be this way — we can choose to repent of our pride — of our self-will — and simply align ourselves with God's perfect will...

John Calvin

“For as the surest source of destruction to men is to obey themselves, so the only haven of safety is to have no other will, no other wisdom, than to follow the Lord wherever he leads. Let this, then, be the first step, to abandon ourselves, and devote the whole energy of our minds to the service of God.”

With this truth in mind, I would encourage each of us to memorize the words of the Lord Jesus in...

John 6:38 (NKJV)

“For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.”

These words of the Lord Jesus cannot be explained away — they are what they are...

These words show us — in no uncertain terms — that the greatest Man who ever lived — the only perfect human being who ever lived — refused to walk in self-will...

Instead of walking in self-will, He chose to exercise His will in doing ***only*** the will of the Father...

- ***In light of this beautiful truth, how absurdly prideful could I be to think that I could improve upon the perfect, sinless life of the Lord Jesus by choosing a different path?...***

That I could choose a life of self-willed disobedience and somehow expect that God would be ok with it?...

Now, perhaps the most dangerous thing about pride is that it blinds the person who is walking in it...

- ***Tragically, the prideful person is usually the last one to know that he is walking in pride...***

Since this is the reality of the situation, we would be wise to invite people into our lives to call us on our pride...

- Pride is often manifested by anger and irritability, by complaints and self-pity, by entitlement and self-righteousness...

We would be wise to give trusted people access to our lives so that we might have our pride exposed — and then we repent of our pride — and then we seek to walk in God's will...

Now, before we move on in Amos, please don't let this moment pass without understanding the following truth...

If you and I walk in our own unrepentant self-will there will be a reckoning — there will be consequences...

We are fools if we think that we can keep walking in unrepentant disobedience day after day after day because we are assuming that God's mercy and grace will make it all go away...

We must understand that willful, unrepentant disobedience will have consequences...

The only safe place, the only wise place, the only place that the abundant life may be found is in a life that is centered on walking in the will of God...

- As we continually surrender our wills to His will — as we fervently pray for His will to be done on earth as it is in Heaven — then we will find peace and joy in our walk with Him...

We will find that His yoke is easy and His burden is light — we will learn from Him and find that He is gentle and lowly of heart — and we will find rest for our souls...

Let's turn our attention back to Amos 6 as we move into vs 9-10...

9 Then it shall come to pass, that if ten men remain in one house, they shall die.

10 And when a relative of the dead, with one who will burn the bodies, picks up the bodies to take them out of the house, he will say to one inside the house,

"Are there any more with you?"

Then someone will say, "None."

And he will say, "Hold your tongue!

For we dare not mention the name of the LORD."

- [expand — a bit confusing / judgment will bring death / someone hiding? / fail to repent after destruction? / know that it is God doing the destroying?...]

Continuing on in Amos 6 to vs...

**11 For behold, the LORD gives a command:
He will break the great house into bits,
And the little house into pieces.**

Both the rich and poor would suffer when Israel was overthrown by Assyria — both the great houses and the little houses would be destroyed...

**12 Do horses run on rocks?
Does one plow there with oxen?
Yet you have turned justice into gall,
And the fruit of righteousness into wormwood,**

The idea here is things are not as they should be...

- The leaders of Israel had turned everything upside down — justice and righteousness were nowhere to be found — bitterness and poison were found instead...

**13 You who rejoice over Lo Debar,
Who say, "Have we not taken Karnaim for ourselves
By our own strength?"**

**14 "But, behold, I will raise up a nation against you,
O house of Israel,"
Says the LORD God of hosts;**

**"And they will afflict you from the entrance of Hamath
To the Valley of the Arabah."**

The Israelites were boasting about themselves and their military victories but God was not impressed...

- In fact, when God brought the deserved judgment against them then all would be lost...

Conclusion

And this is how it always ends...

- ***Pride — which manifests itself in some form of self-willed disobedience — always leads to judgment...***

But there is a way of escape — repentance...

- ***To lay down our pride — our self-will — and to seek to do God's will — and His will alone...***

Because only God's will is good and safe and fruitful...

- ***Only in His will do we find the way of peace and hope and life...***

Everything good — everything worth having and everything worth being — is found in His will alone...

Let's pray...