



Does God punish a nation?

What role does the prophetic play in national judgment? Hint Amos 3:7

A comprehensive look at the Book of Amos answers this resounding question our nation is faced with after every natural disaster or after attacks such as 9/11. Amos was a burden-bearer. He was a writing prophet. A sheep herder by trade, he did not claim to be a prophet, only that he was just called by God to deliver a word. He was known as the prophet who prophesied harsh words in a smooth, prosperous season. He was called to prophesy an uncompromising message, which would have him expelled from the royal sanctuary at Bethel. Amos was in conflict with the religious leaders of the day, especially Amaziah who commanded him to leave and never prophesy there again *“For it is the Kings sanctuary, and it is the royal residence.” Amos 7:13*

His message:

God was greatly displeased with this nation and its neighbors. Punishment was inevitable unless true repentance would occur, and justice and righteousness would run down like water Amos 5:24. Israel had broken covenant with God and for this there would be a great shaking of the House of Israel. A sifting would occur. Amos 9:9

To look at Amos, is to look at the prophetic:

Amos was said to have stammering lips and slow of speech. His style was plain and rustic. We learn important lessons from Amos concerning the life and mission of the office of a prophet:

- 1. There is a specific group targeted to receive the word of the Lord.**
- 2. There is a specific time or season for that word to go forth.**
- 3. There is a specific message that goes forth.**
- 4. There are differences in style of oracles. There is order, however, the priest did not have authority over what the Lord commanded this prophet to do, and there were consequences to him for trying to stop the word of the Lord from going forth. Are there consequences today for stopping the prophetic voice of the Lord? What are the safety measures put in place by the written word?**
- 5. The office of the prophet today still requires a heart to bear the burden of God. How do we see this in the typical church setting today?**

God’s heart and the heart of a burden-bearer:

Therefore I said: Look away from me, let me weep bitter tears; do not try to comfort



me for the destruction of my beloved people. Isaiah 22:4

Commanding the prophet not to speak was a common occurrence in the OT.

What does the NT say about receiving prophetic word for you today?

6. The office of the prophet today calls for repentance and reformation.
Does this scripture line up with our understanding of NT definition of a prophet?
7. God does nothing without first revealing it to his prophets.
How does society as well as the church view this truth?
Does the church readily accept judgment on the land as prophesied by today's prophets?

Nation

1. Does God bring judgment on the land?
2. Does God bring judgment through fire, drought, pestilence, and famine?
3. Does God use foreign nations to bring punishment to His own people?
4. If you believe this is so, how then can you believe God is still a loving, caring God?
5. What are some of the sins that brought about judgment to a nation?

Why did judgment come to the Israelites?

1. They thought they were immune.
2. False mindsets of being "Chosen".
To be chosen means what?
To whom much has been given from him much will be required... Luke 12:48
3. They took their relationship with God for granted, and expected to be blessed in the middle of their mess.
How does this statement relate to your own life and actions?
Covenant breaking is explicitly discussed in *Deut 27-29*.
What implications does this have for us today?
Are there areas of your life you need to repent from your own actions?
Oppression---3:3-8
Catastrophe---3:11-15

Understanding statements found in the first 7 judgments

1. The Lord roars from Zion
 - a. The Lord is angry with His people.
 - b. There is righteous judgment, but there is also mercy.
 - c. In Zion, there is a mercy seat.



- d. God warns us before He strikes.
2. **Fire for refinement or judgment. Chastisement it meant to bring us to repentance**
On that day the branch of the Lord shall be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land shall be the pride and glory of the survivors of Israel. Whoever is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy, everyone who has been recorded for life in Jerusalem once the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion and cleansed the bloodstream of Jerusalem from its midst by a spirit of judgment and by a spirit of burning. Isaiah 4:2
3. **3 transgressions, no 4---meaning many**
4. **“I will not revoke it”---for the sin of persecution, God has given long reprieve, and has often turned away their punishment but He will turn away no more.**