

Study 4

Judgement Has its Limits

Amos 9

Study by Jeremy Wales

In chapter 9, the final vision of the prophet Amos, the message of God's judgement on Israel comes to a climax. Be warned: you might be horrified by the extent of God's judgement on his own people. Of course, it's not like the earlier parts of Amos left us completely unprepared... though wait til you hear the end!

Before you start the passage ...

"Christians are just hypocrites"

Have you ever heard someone say that? What do you think they mean? Do they have a point?

This is it

Read Amos 9:1-10

Quick Questions (7 minutes tops!)

1. Where's God standing when destruction starts? What's the first thing to go? (9:1)
2. How will God deal with the survivors? (9:1-4)
3. What's the guarantee that the judgement will be effective? (9:5-6)
4. What can Israel no longer trust in? (9:7)

5. What are some people still thinking? (9:10)

6. What's the one note of hope? (9:8)

Think it Through

7. Which themes from earlier in Amos have been summed up here?

Compare 3:14, 4:4-5, 5:5-6 ➤ 9:1

4:13, 5:8-9 ➤ 9:5-6

1:3-2:16 ➤ 9:7

5:18-20 ➤ 9:10

8. How do you feel personally about God's actions in 9:1-4? Would you prefer God left evil unpunished?

9. Will any be saved? 9:1-4 said 'no survivors', 9:8 says 'the sinful kingdom will be destroyed from the face of the earth'. But now Amos says that Israel will survive! What clue does 9:10 give as to how someone might **not** be judged as a sinner?

Saving the Best for Last

After such a long time of almost nothing but sin and judgement, Amos finally gets a sneak peak at the **other** side of judgement day ...

Read Amos 9:11-15

Previously, Israel was going to be judged just like the other the nations (1:3-2:16). They'd already endured famine and thirst (4:6-8). They'd never escape the coming judgement because their king supported their sin (7:10-13). So everything - even their buildings - was going to be destroyed (3:15, 6:11, especially 5:11). Finally they'd be exiled from the promised land (5:27, 6:7, 7:17).

Quick Questions

How will God **reverse** each of these things in the end?

10. King judged:

11. Israel and the nations judged:

12. Famine and thirst:

13. Buildings destroyed:

14. Exile:

15. When will this all happen? (9:11, compare 5:18-20, 8:3, 8:9-10)

Living in the 'Day of the Lord'

It turns out the 'Day of the Lord' is not quite the "salvation" Israel is expecting. Instead of being a national celebration, it's going to bring **judgement** for the unfaithful. National Israel will come to an end! But there WILL BE salvation for those who long for righteousness. There will be a whole new start for the new people of God.

We saw last week how God's judgement and salvation culminated in the cross of Jesus Christ. So how does that make a difference to us, living today?

Read Acts 15:12-17

16. Which parts of Amos 9:11-15 does James say have already happened?

17. So which parts are what is "still to come"?

In the next few verses James recommends to the new Gentile Christians how they can **SHOW** the Israelites they have turned from pagan idolatry to worship the true God of Israel. They can **SHOW** that the salvation promised to Israel has started!

18. How can we show the people around us that the salvation of Christ has started, that it's real? Thinking back over the themes of Amos in particular, how can we be more than "Christian hypocrites"?

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