

Hello. /We will now begin our 15<sup>th</sup> lecture on the Minor Prophets. /Amos 2 is about sin and judgment. /Verses 1-3: Moab's sin and judgment. /Verses 4-5: Judah's sin and judgment. /Verses 6-16: Israel's sin and judgment. /In our last lecture, we stopped at 2:3. /Today, we will start at 2:4.

/Verse 4. Please read. /Thus says the LORD: "For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment, because they have rejected the law of the LORD, and have not kept his statutes, but their lies have led them astray, those after which their fathers walked.

/The first of Judah's sin was rejecting the law of the LORD. /When the believer rejects the will of God, God will intervene. /A faith that does not follow God's word is bound to fail. /We can only find God's protection when we live by the word of God.

/The second sin was not keeping God's statutes. /The people of Judah did not remember the Sabbath, Sabbatical year, the year of jubilee, and regulations. /Their third sin was being carried away by false things. /At the time, the people of Judah served both God and idols in their syncretic faith.

/Even today, there are many believers who serve both God and idols. /We must remember that these people will face the judgment of God.

/Verse 5. /This is a prophesy of the judgment of Judah. /The prophecy was fulfilled two hundred years later in 586 B.C., when Babylon invaded Judah. /And in the far future, it was once again destroyed by Rome.

/God wants the people of Judah to repent and return to God so they may receive God's blessing. /Verses 6-15 are about Judah's sins and God's judgment that will fall upon Judah.

/Verses 6-8. /Thus says the LORD: "For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment, because they sell the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of sandals— those who trample the head of the poor into the dust of the earth and turn aside the way of the afflicted; a man and his father go in to the same girl, so that my holy name is profaned; they lay themselves down beside every altar on garments taken in pledge, and in the house of their God they drink the wine of those who have been fined.

/Israel's sinful acts are explained in detail. /The first sin is the sin of selling the righteous for silver. /This behavior disregards human rights. /Believers must honor human rights.

/The second sin is the sin of selling the needy for a pair of sandals. /In today's terms, it would be called human trafficking. It is the act of kidnapping girls and selling them to other nations or to the red-light districts.

/Such behavior of abusing the weaknesses of the poor and selling them away is a very cruel sin. /The third sin is the sin of trampling the head of the poor into the dust of the earth. /This means to covet the small possessions of the poor.

/Those who persecute the poor are scorning their Creator. /We must sympathize with the poor, mourning with them and rejoicing with them. /The fourth sin is the sin of turning aside the way of the afflicted.

/This means persecuting others, alienating them, and making them disadvantageous so that they cannot walk the proper path. /The fifth sin is the sin of a man and his father going in to the same girl and treating the LORD's holy name with profanity.

/This conduct shows the severe state of sexual immorality. /What this means is that father and son both visit the females priests of Baal and Asherah. /It is a heinous and lewd sin.

/The sixth sin is the sin of laying themselves down beside every altar on garments taken in pledge. /In the Middle Eastern region, there is a large difference in temperature from day and night. /When they steal garments and do not return them, they are depriving people of their basic rights for survival.

/The seventh sin is the sin of drinking the wine of those who have been fined. /The people drank the wine obtained through oppression in the temple of idols. /The eighth sin is the sin of feeding wine to the Nazirites.

/And the ninth sin is the sin of forbidding the prophets from prophesying. /Therefore, from verse 9, the Bible prophesies the fall of Israel.

/Verses 9-10. /“Yet it was I who destroyed the Amorite before them, whose height was like the height of the cedars and who was as strong as the oaks; I destroyed his fruit above and his roots beneath. Also it was I who brought you up out of the land of Egypt and led you forty years in the wilderness, to possess the land of the Amorite.

/Israel's sin was great because they betrayed the God who saved them. /They made God, who helps them, their enemy. /God guided Israel out of the desert with his grace of salvation, guidance, and protection.

/Rather, instead of being thankful for grace, they suppressed the Nazirites and oppressed the prophets. /They had forgotten God's grace and had gone far away from God.

/Verse 11. /And I raised up some of your sons for prophets, and some of your young men for Nazirites. Is it not indeed so, O people of Israel?” declares the LORD.

/In order to give the people a life filled with grace, God prepared everything, including appointing prophets and Nazirites. /Regardless, Israel abandoned God and embraced the world, and this brought them to destruction.

/Verse 12. /“But you made the Nazirites drink wine, and commanded the prophets, saying, ‘You shall not prophesy.’

/God appointed spiritual leaders so the people could receive God’s grace, truth, and guidance in their lives. /However, they suppressed the spiritual leaders, and by persecuting prophets, they did not learn the lessons they needed.

/Because the people hated being rebuked and only sought words that were good to hear, they headed down a road of destruction. /Eventually, they had brought destruction upon themselves. /Verses 13-16 are about Israel’s punishments for betraying grace.

/Verses 13-14. /“Behold, I will press you down in your place, as a cart full of sheaves presses down. Flight shall perish from the swift, and the strong shall not retain his strength, nor shall the mighty save his life;

/When a cart full of sheaves presses down on the ground, it mashes the mud beneath it. /In this way, God’s judgment will destroy everything. /Therefore, when a great war begins, the swift, the strong, the warriors, nor the bowmen will survive.

/Everything will be lost, and nothing will be left. /When God’s judgment is upon us, how can politics, the National Assembly, real estate, or money benefit us? How will our background, health, power, or education be of use?

/Only those who stand in the presence of God and are protected by God will be made eternally strong. /We need to understand the limitations of humans and go forward relying on God alone. /We need to believe in God’s protection, guidance, and claims, and we need to live by God’s grace alone.

/The believer is victorious when he obeys the word of God, trusts in God, and receives God’s grace.

/Now we will look at Amos 3. /The title of chapter 3 is “The Prediction of God’s Secrets.” /These are the prophecies of Amos, the shepherd from Tekoa of South Judah who was called by God.

/Verses 1-3: The LORD only knows Israel. /Verses 4-5: Because there is a cause, there is a result. /Verses 6-8: Be afraid after listening to the prophecy of judgment. /Verses 9-10: Because of Samaria’s sins, they will be judged by other nations. /Verses 11-15: The LORD repays Israel for its sins.

/Verse 1. Please read. /Hear this word that the LORD has spoken against you, O people of Israel, against the whole family that I brought up out of the land of Egypt:

/The Israelites are the people of salvation and the covenant. God has spoken against his chosen people, the Israelites. /Like a father disciplining a child, God disciplines Israel because he loves them.

/Verse 2. /“You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.

/God says, “You only have I known of all the families of the earth.” /There is no way God does not know the other families of the earth. /When he says, “You only have I known,” he is saying that he only loves them, and he gave them special salvation.

/But as great is the grace we receive, so is our responsibility. When we could not keep up with God’s demands, then God punishes us. /The verse says, “Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.”

/God poured out his love and interest to the Israelites, but because they abandoned God, God says he will intervene and bring them back to him.

/Verse 3. /“Do two walk together, unless they have agreed to meet?

/Two people can walk together when their hearts agree. /Amos’s prophecies were delivered when he walked together with God. /Therefore, because God is with Amos, Amos’s prophecies should not be viewed carelessly, but they should be feared.

/Believers must see if the lessons of prophets are in line with God. /When the prophets’ words are God’s words, then believers must humbly accept the words.

/Verses 4-5. /Does a lion roar in the forest, when he has no prey? Does a young lion cry out from his den, if he has taken nothing? Does a bird fall in a snare on the earth, when there is no trap for it? Does a snare spring up from the ground, when it has taken nothing?

/God’s prophecy of judgment, which is like a lion, does not appear without reason. There is reason for God’s punishment. /A lion roars for a reason, so will God not have a reason for saying he will punish Israel?

/It is difficult for someone to repent when he thinks that the disaster that has befallen him is a coincidence. /A snare in the verse is a cage for trapping birds. /The verse asks why a bird would hop around in a snare when it has not been captured. /Judgment and disaster are not coincidental events.

/Verse 6. /Is a trumpet blown in a city, and the people are not afraid? Does disaster come to a city, unless the LORD has done it?

/When the trumpet for war is blown, the people in the city are afraid and worried. /Similarly, when God blows his trumpet of warning, the people are afraid. /Amos, who knew about God’s judgment and plans, could not refrain from roaring like a lion. /We too need to have a burning heart like Amos.

/Verse 7. /“For the Lord GOD does nothing without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets.

/Like a person telling his friend everything he has in his heart, God reveals his secret to his servants. /Before God carries out his plans, he appears before the prophets, gives us warnings and a chance to repent, and finally does what he had planned.

/Verse 8. /The lion has roared; who will not fear? The Lord GOD has spoken; who can but prophesy?”

/Because prophecies are God’s words to prophets, the prophet must prophesy as he has heard from God. /Prophets deliver words of warning and words of blessing. /In verses 9-10, Samaria’s sins are pointed out.

/Verse 9. /Proclaim to the strongholds in Ashdod and to the strongholds in the land of Egypt, and say, “Assemble yourselves on the mountains of Samaria, and see the great tumults within her, and the oppressed in her midst.”

/Ashdod is a city of the Philistines, and Egypt is a place where the Israelites were slaves for 400 years. /Samaria is the city of the king of Israel. /God rebukes Israel for the sins committed within the kingdom of Samaria, sins that are not committed in Philistia or Egypt.

/When God’s people become corrupt, when the church becomes corrupt, we become more evil than the people of the world.

/Verse 10. /“They do not know how to do right,” declares the LORD, “those who store up violence and robbery in their strongholds.”

/Their sins were sins of noisiness, violence, and robbery. /God appointed leaders for them, leaders who were supposed to lead the people with love, but they ruled with violence and robbery. /In verses 11-12, the sinful Samaria is punished.

/Verse 11. /Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: “An adversary shall surround the land and bring down your defenses from you, and your strongholds shall be plundered.”

/God uses foreign nations to punish Israel, who has forgotten its calling, sought after things of the world, and abused its power. /When God abandons Israel and when the enemy attacks, Israel will easily be destroyed. /Also, when the believer sins, the forces around us arise, and plunderers appear.

/Verse 12. /Thus says the LORD: “As the shepherd rescues from the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear, so shall the people of Israel who dwell in Samaria be rescued, with the corner of a couch and part of a bed.

/Like the two legs and a piece of ear of a lamb rescued from a lion, a small number will survive God's judgment because of his mercy.

/The church may become corrupt and the generation may change, but the few people who properly fear God are saved. /We need to be these "few people."

/The enemy is numerous, but God tells the people to not be afraid. /Those who endure until the end are saved. /We need to be those who endure until the very end. /Verses 13-15 prophesy about Samaria's day of judgment.

/Verse 13. /"Hear, and testify against the house of Jacob," declares the Lord GOD, the God of hosts,

/The verse tells those who have heard God's warning to deliver the warning as it is.

/Verses 14-15. /"that on the day I punish Israel for his transgressions, I will punish the altars of Bethel, and the horns of the altar shall be cut off and fall to the ground. I will strike the winter house along with the summer house, and the houses of ivory shall perish, and the great houses shall come to an end," declares the LORD.

/Bethel is a holy place where God met with Jacob. /Therefore, the place was named Bethel to mean "house of God." /But because Bethel became a central place for worshipping idols and building altars, God says he will punish them.

/Faith of the present is important. /Faith of the past does not matter. /Israel's other sin was extravagance. /God does not bless us so that we can be extravagant and proud.

/He gives us our possessions so that we may work for God, using what we have to spread the Gospel of truth. /In order to destroy these sins, God sends the Assyrians.

/I will tell you the moral of chapter 3. /Although Israel was God's beloved people, when they sin and do not repent, God punished them. /Also, God's words of the disasters that would strike Israel were not empty words.

/They were not empty words because the words declared by the prophets were given by the LORD God. /We need to listen to God's words of warning and leave our place of sin. /Then, we will be able to receive God's grace and blessings.

/Now we will study Amos 4. /The title of chapter 4 is "The Cows of Bashan." /Verses 1-3: The sins of the Samaritan women and God's punishment. /Verses 4-5: God rebukes Israel for worshipping idols. /Verses 6-11: God rebukes Israel for not repenting after another punishment. /Verses 12-13: God admonishes them to prepare to meet God.

/Verse 1. Please read. /"Hear this word, you cows of Bashan, who are on the mountain of Samaria, who oppress the poor, who crush the needy, who say to your husbands, 'Bring, that we may drink!'

/Bashan was a mountainous, fertile region to the east of Judah with many pastures. /The cows of Bashan symbolize the extravagant and lazy women of Israel. /Due to their growing wealth, the women lived extravagantly while oppressing their people.

/When they drank wine, they suppressed their husbands. /These corrupt women used their power to dominate their husbands. /However, these things are not in line with the word of God.

/Verse 2. /The Lord GOD has sworn by his holiness that, behold, the days are coming upon you, when they shall take you away with hooks, even the last of you with fishhooks.

/To deal with these women, God says he has sworn by his holiness. This shows how evil and perverse their sins were. /God says he will take them away with hooks, the last ones with fishhooks.

/This is a prophecy of the Assyrians invading and taking them away with the hooks. These moments were actually engraved in old stones. /God says they will face these horrors, horrors that are difficult to watch.

/Verse 3. /And you shall go out through the breaches, each one straight ahead; and you shall be cast out into Harmon,” declares the LORD.

/Because of the war, the city will fall, and people will be taken as prisoners. /When they are dragged away as prisoners and become ill, they will be thrown into the valley of cliffs. /The word shows us that when we become one with the world, we end up losing everything we have.

/Verses 4-5. /“Come to Bethel, and transgress; to Gilgal, and multiply transgression; bring your sacrifices every morning, your tithes every three days; offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving of that which is leavened, and proclaim freewill offerings, publish them; for so you love to do, O people of Israel!” declares the Lord GOD.

/These verses rebuke Israel for worshiping false gods. /Bethel and Gilgal used to be places of worshiping God, but they became dwelling places of idols. /The word says, “Bring your sacrifices every morning, your tithes every three days.”

/According to the law, if the people give tithes that they are to offer to God in three years in three days, it will be useless unless the people repent. /Offering sacrifices while worshiping idols is pointless.

/We need to realize that the restoration of true faith, the restoration of our lifestyles, and the restoration of true worship are important. /Verses 6-11 are about five types of disasters. /The first is famine.

/Verse 6. /“I gave you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and lack of bread in all your places, yet you did not return to me,” declares the LORD.

/When God says, “I gave you cleanness of teeth in all your cities,” he means that the people lacked food, and therefore could not use their teeth. /The people misused their abundant resources, and the result was tragic. /We need to properly apply our health, possessions, and talents. /If the people still do not return, God says he will send a draught.

/Verses 7-8. /“I also withheld the rain from you when there were yet three months to the harvest; I would send rain on one city, and send no rain on another city; one field would have rain, and the field on which it did not rain would wither; so two or three cities would wander to another city to drink water, and would not be satisfied; yet you did not return to me,” declares the LORD.

/The early rain must come in mid-October, and the late rain must come in mid-March. /However, when the rain did not fall three months before the harvest, all the grains dried up and their efforts were fruitless. /When we find ourselves in a place of trouble, we need to immediately discover the will of God. /The third disaster is the disaster of blight and insects.

/Verse 9. /“I struck you with blight and mildew; your many gardens and your vineyards, your fig trees and your olive trees the locust devoured; yet you did not return to me,” declares the LORD.

/God struck Israel with blight, mildew, and locusts. /He gave them a chance to repent and return to him, but Israel did not return. /Now, God says he will send yet another disaster of plague and war. /The fourth disaster is plague, and the fifth is war.

/Verse 10. /“I sent among you a pestilence after the manner of Egypt; I killed your young men with the sword, and carried away your horses, and I made the stench of your camp go up into your nostrils; yet you did not return to me,” declares the LORD.

/God sent a plague like the one he sent in Egypt. /The punishment that was upon the stubborn Pharaoh and his people was now upon God’s people. /Even still, Israel did not listen, so God gave them the disaster of war.

/In war, the young die. /Corpses are too numerous to handle, and the smell of rotting bodies sting the nostrils. /God disciplines those who do not repent, and in the end, he destroys them.

/Verse 11. /“I overthrew some of you, as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and you were as a brand plucked out of the burning; yet you did not return to me,” declares the LORD.



/The result of war will be their downfall like that of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. / When God's chosen people abandoned him, they faced the same disasters that fell on Egypt and Sodom and Gomorrah.

/Therefore, only a small number of people are saved. /Amidst his judgment, God shows his mercy to some people. /Verses 12-13 tell the people to prepare for God's judgment.

/Verse 12. /“Therefore thus I will do to you, O Israel; because I will do this to you, prepare to meet your God, O Israel!”

/God is speaking to Israel, who did not properly come before God. Now they must prepare to meet God. /They need to prepare to stand before the judgment of God.

/We need to prepare ourselves in fear and nervousness as if we are soon about to meet God. /Then, our thoughts, attitudes, and spiritual posture will become proper.

/Verse 13. /For behold, he who forms the mountains and creates the wind, and declares to man what is his thought, who makes the morning darkness, and treads on the heights of the earth— the LORD, the God of hosts, is his name!

/God our Judge, whom we will meet, is the creator of the mountains and fields. /He created the wind, and he reveals his will to people. /The Almighty God makes the morning dark, and he steps on the high places of the earth. /We need to have a faith that fears this God.

/Here is the conclusion for chapter 4. /Famine, draught, and insects were the result of Israel's sin.

/God sent these disasters to bring the people to repentance. /We need to quickly recognize God's messages of warning, and we need to return to him.

/This concludes the 15<sup>th</sup> lecture on the Minor Prophets. /Thank you.