

Readings

Scripture

¹I saw the Lord standing beside the altar, and he said: "Strike the capitals until the thresholds shake, and shatter them on the heads of all the people; and those who are left of them I will kill with the sword; not one of them shall flee away; not one of them shall escape.

²"If they dig into Sheol, from there shall my hand take them; if they climb up to heaven, from there I will bring them down. ³If they hide themselves on the top of Carmel, from there I will search them out and take them; and if they hide from my sight at the bottom of the sea, there I will command the serpent, and it shall bite them. ⁴And if they go into captivity before their enemies, there I will command the sword, and it shall kill them; and I will fix my eyes upon them for evil and not for good."

⁵The Lord God of hosts, he who touches the earth and it melts, and all who dwell in it mourn, and all of it rises like the Nile, and sinks again, like the Nile of Egypt; ⁶who builds his upper chambers in the heavens and founds his vault upon the earth; who calls for the waters of the sea and pours them out upon the surface of the earth—the Lord is his name.

⁷"Are you not like the Cushites to me, O people of Israel?" declares the Lord. "Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir? ⁸Behold, the eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from the surface of the ground, except that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob," declares the Lord.

⁹"For behold, I will command, and shake the house of Israel among all the nations as one shakes with a sieve, but no pebble shall fall to the earth. ¹⁰All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword, who say, 'Disaster shall not overtake or meet us.'

¹¹"In that day I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen and repair its breaches, and raise up its ruins and rebuild it as in the days of old, ¹²that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations who are called by my name," declares the Lord who does this.

¹³"Behold, the days are coming," declares the Lord, "when the plowman shall overtake the reaper and the treader of grapes him who sows the seed; the mountains shall drip sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it. ¹⁴I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel, and they shall rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine, and they shall make gardens and eat their fruit. ¹⁵I will plant them on their land, and they shall never again be uprooted out of the land that I have given them," says the Lord your God.

- Amos 9:1-15 (English Standard Version)

Sermon Outline

The Sting of Discipline

Amos 9:1-15

Return With All Your Heart

Brad Anderson

God only disciplines the ones he loves. (Revelation 3:19-20; Amos 3:2)

The passing sorrow of God's discipline: God refuses indifference... (Amos 9:1-10)

The enduring joy of God's discipline: God restores everything... (Amos 9:11-15)

Reflection Questions

(taken in part from the Serendipity Study Bible for Groups)

- Who do you admire for: a) "Telling it like it is"? b) Taking criticism and making positive improvements?
- Do you prefer to face up to a problem and get it over with, or do you tend to put it off as long as possible? Give an example.
- What is meant by Amos seeing the Lord "standing by the altar" and the temple sanctuary coming down on their heads in Amos 9:1?
- How does this vision compare to the ones that preceded it? Are things getting better? Staying the same? Getting worse? How so?
- How does this vision expand, confirm, or contradict what you know of God?
- Is the Exodus of no more significance than the migration of other peoples the world over? Or what does Amos 9:7 imply?
- Knowing that Amos was written to the Northern Tribes as those divided from the Southern Tribes, looking at Amos 9:11-15, what does this restoration of David's Kingdom mean for Israel? What would it look like for Israel to find their spiritual restoration in Judah?
- Why would God not destroy all of Judah? (Amos 9:8) Use other scripture to defend your answer, begin with other verses in Amos and expand your defense.
- How do you attempt to hide from God: a) Ignore certain pressing issues? b) Skip church? c) Keep on moving and don't slow down. d) Stop praying and reading the Bible? e) Other?
- When have you felt as though you were back in the Promised Land after a long exile?