

Readings

Scripture

^{2:6} 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—⁷ 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;⁸ 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.

⁹ "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. ¹⁰ 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. 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.

¹² "But you made the Nazirites drink wine, and commanded the prophets, saying, 'You shall not prophesy.'

¹³ "Behold, I will press you down in your place, as a cart full of sheaves presses down. ¹⁴ Flight shall perish from the swift, and the strong shall not retain his strength, nor shall the mighty save his life; ¹⁵ he who handles the bow shall not stand, and he who is swift of foot shall not save himself, nor shall he who rides the horse save his life; ¹⁶ and he who is stout of heart among the mighty shall flee away naked in that day," declares the Lord.

^{3:1} 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: ² "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.

³ "Do two walk together, unless they have agreed to meet? ⁴ 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? ⁵ 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? 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?

⁷ "For the Lord God does nothing without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets. ⁸ The lion has roared; who will not fear? The Lord God has spoken; who can but prophesy?"

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." ¹⁰ "They do not know how to do right," declares the Lord, "those who store up violence and robbery in their strongholds."

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."

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.

¹³ "Hear, and testify against the house of Jacob," declares the Lord God, the God of hosts, ¹⁴ "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. ¹⁵ 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.

- Amos 2:6-3:15 (English Standard Version)

Sermon Outline

Because God's Justice is Good
Amos 2:6-3:15

Return With All Your Heart
Stephen Baldwin

Why is God's justice good?

Because God's justice displays his covenantal love...we know it is good.

How does the passage show this?

God's justice is good because:

It displays his covenantal love in warning us of judgment (Amos 2:6-15)

- Oppression of the poor for profit
- Systemic sexual perversion sheltered by religion

It displays his covenantal love in rescuing us in grace (Amos 3:1-5)

- Extreme affluence acquired by violence and oppression
- Despite God's cleansing punishment a remnant remains

Reflection Questions

- How can we say from this passage that God's covenantal love warns us of judgment to come? Who is the "us" in this statement?
- Note that the ESV study Bible observes in 2 Peter the theme of sexual permissiveness in all its expressions is a characteristic of false teaching. Where do you see this at work in the church today?
- When the church gets pulled into this compromise, who is actually hurt by it?
- Are these prophecies a word against Christ's church - or a word against America, or England, or Germany, or France, or Syria?
- What effect does God's righteous judgment have upon his people? Upon the nation in which they are citizens?
- Is poverty and oppression of the poor a necessary consequence of the ability to create wealth and abundance?
- Reflect upon Amos 3:9,10 - what is the prophet picturing by calling Ashdod and Egypt to look down on Israel, and see their corruption?
- In Leviticus 18 there is a long list of every kind of sexual sin that God explicitly condemned and he commanded his people not to participate in them. All of them were practiced among the nations they would displace. The gods of those nations were "worshiped" through sexual acts. The worship of Moloch demanded sacrificing children on an image of Moloch that had a furnace inside it. In Genesis 15:16 God said that these sins had not yet become "complete" When Joshua began taking possession of the land, it was a cleansing and grace at the same time.
- What does Leviticus 18:26-30 tell us about God judgment on Israel?
- What effect is it having on God's people today that these very the sins are marketed today in the multi-billion dollar porn and sex-trafficking industry?