

Series: Now More Than Ever

Message: What In The World Is Going On?

Passage: Amos 1:2-2:16

Outline:

The Sins of the Nations

The Sins of God's People

Overview: Having been called by God to go from his native Judah to the land of Israel to deliver God's prophetic word to his people, Amos gives his first great oracle. In it he calls out the nations around Israel for their wickedness. One by one he singles them out in beautiful poetic symmetry naming the depths of their sins and pronouncing judgment on them. Seven nations are named and when he has finished Amos has drawn a geographic circle around Israel. Then in a surprise move, he adds an eighth, Israel herself. They are the bulls eye for his prophetic arrow. For the rest of the book, Amos will be God's mouthpiece exposing Israel's sin, her betrayal of her God, her abdication of her mission, and the place to find hope.

Engaging with each other:

1. Just to test your knowledge of geography try to answer these "Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego?" questions.
 - If Carmen Sandiego went back 3,000 years to see the first man-made rice paddies, what country would she visit?
 - What country covers almost half of South America?
 - Which Scandinavian country shares a peninsula with Sweden?

Engaging with the Bible

1. For each of the following nations describe what are the essential sinful acts that the prophet is exposing?
 - Damascus (Syria)
 - Gaza
 - Tyre
 - Edom
 - Ammon
 - Moab
2. What is different about the sin of Judah from these other nations?
3. The seven proclamations of judgment are to the nations that surround Israel. What do you think the people of Israel might be thinking as they hear/read these prophetic words?
4. Why does the eighth proclamation of judgment come as a surprise to the people of Israel?

5. The judgment on Israel was in response to a number of offenses. How would you categorize these offenses?
6. How are these contrasted to God's faithfulness to Israel?
7. In Amos 2:13-16 there is a sevenfold description of what is coming. What kind of picture is being painted of their future?

Engaging with our lives

1. What are some of the parallel ways that the sins of the pagan nations of Amos' day compare to the sins of the nations we see in our day?
2. What would it look like for the (our) church to be more of a light in the darkness of a sinful world?
3. What issue of injustice in our world stirs your heart most to action? What can you do this week to learn how to combat this issue?