

The Bad News (before the Good News) – Text: Amos 1:1-2

Introduction:

The OT was the NT Christians' first Bible. So –

1. Take the words of a prophet seriously.

- a. They are Holy Spirit words.
They are Christ's words.
- b. Amos was a compelled prophet.
Amos wasn't a professional prophet.
Amos' words were the LORD's words.

2. – especially when things seem good.

- a. When things go well for us we are less inclined to listen to God.
 - Moses: “When you eat and are satisfied, be careful you do not forget the LORD.”
(Deuteronomy 6:11b-12a)
 - The Christians at Laodicea: “I am rich, I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.”
(Revelation 3:17)

May it not be us!

b. Amos' day:

- Around 750 BC
- God's people – the North = Israel;
the South = Judah.
- The reigns – long, expansive, peaceful.
Bottom line – political stability – it's all good.
- Society – prosperous – at least the upper classes.

3. – and the message is negative.

- a. How strange! Psalm 23 says the Lord is my Shepherd.
 - The shepherd looks after the sheep – especially protects them from lions.
- b. Here the LORD is not the shepherd – he’s the lion.
 - The LORD is a shepherd to those who hear his voice and follow him.
 - The LORD is a lion against those who hear selectively and suit themselves.
- c. The lions roar had an effect – judgement in the form of drought – total drought.
- d. How similar is the risen Christ’s message to the Laodicean church; judgement here too – the judgement of rejection.

A terrible thing to be rejected by the Lord Jesus.

4. What’s the answer?

- a. Repent, turn back to the LORD.
 - Listen to Amos: Seek the LORD and live. (Amos 5:6)
 - Listen to the risen Jesus:
Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline.
So be earnest, and repent. (Revelation 3:19)
- b. If you need to – open the door.
 - If he’s not really the guest in your life – open the door.
 - If he’s still outside – open the door.

Better to have his as guest than as a lion.