

Prepare to Meet Your God

“Martin Luther King Jr.’s Speech” – Amos 5:1-6:14 – May 25, 2008

Overview of Our Study

PREPARE TO MEET YOUR GOD			
<i>An 8-Week Study of the Book of Amos</i>			
Outline of Amos	Message Title	Bible Text	Date
8 Prophecies	Prepare to Meet Your God	Amos 1:1-2	May 4
	What Matters to God	Amos 1:3-2:16	May 11
3 Sermons	How to Return to God	Amos 3:1-4:13	May 18
	Martin Luther King’s Speech	Amos 5:1-6:14	May 25
6 Visions	Three Visions from God	Amos 7:1-17	June 1
	Prayer Conference at GF	Terry Teykl	June 8
	A Famine of God’s Word	Amos 8:1-14	June 15
	Judgment Day	Amos 9:1-10	June 22
	The Day of the Lord	Amos 9:11-15	June 29

Martin Luther King Jr.’s Speech

- Title: “I’ve Been to the Mountaintop”
- Date: April 3, 1968
- Location: Church of God in Christ Headquarters in Memphis, Tennessee
- Situation in America: Unfair treatment of African-Americans
- Situation in Memphis: Unfair treatment of African-American sanitation workers in Memphis
- Quote: “The issue is injustice. The issue is the refusal of Memphis to be fair and honest in its dealings with its public servants, who happen to be sanitation workers.”
- Quotes Amos 5:24

Amos’ Speech in 5:1-6:14

THE PROBLEM

- 1) You turn justice into bitter treatment of others (5:7a; 6:12)
- 2) You throw right living on the ground like its dirt (5:7b)
- 3) You don’t want to be corrected or hear the truth (5:10)
- 4) You trample on the poor (5:11a)
- 5) You oppress the righteous and take bribes (5:12b)
- 6) You deprive the poor of justice in the courts (5:12c)
- 7) You long for the day of the Lord when you have no idea what that really means for you (5:18-20)
- 8) You “worship” Me religiously while it is not true worship at all because you are mistreating the poor (5:21-26)
- 9) You are prideful and complacent (6:1,8,13)

THE COMING PUNISHMENT

- 1) Israel will fall (5:2)
- 2) Israel will be defeated and destroyed (5:3,5-6; 6:14)
- 3) Israel will go into exile (5:5) and be oppressed (6:14)
- 4) The rich people of Israel will no longer live in their fancy houses eating their fancy food (5:11)
- 5) The people of Israel will wail (5:16-17) – Two woes
 - (a) Woe to you who long for the day of the Lord (5:18-27)
 - (b) Woe to you who are complacent (6:1-14)

THE SOLUTION

- 1) Seek the Lord and live (5:4,6)
- 2) Hate evil and seek good so that you may live (5:14)
- 3) Maintain justice (5:15)

A Summary of MLK and Amos

- In a word: justice (Amos 5:7,12,15,24; 6:12)
- In a sentence: There is injustice here, and God wants justice.
- Definition of “justice” = rightness.
 1. Doing what is right.
 2. Treating others fairly and with equity.
 3. Defending the rights of the poor and needy.
 4. Lining up with God’s standards of rightness.
 5. Punishment that is rightly due to one who violates the law.
- **Isaiah 56:1** – *Maintain justice and do what is right.*
- **Psalms 98:9** – *The Lord will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples with equity.*
- **Proverbs 31:9** – *Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.*
- The people of Memphis were not being just. They were not treating black sanitation workers and white sanitation workers the same.
- The people of Israel were not being just. The rich were taking advantage of the poor in court and getting even richer while the poor were getting poorer. The rich were hoarding money and living extravagantly while the poor were starving and mistreated.
- Amos 5:24
- Jesus’ summary of the OT on justice
 - **Mark 12:31** – *Love your neighbor as yourself.*
 - **Luke 6:31** – *Do to others as you would have them do to you.*
- A summary of Amos, MLK, and Jesus: “God wants us to treat people right, fair, and with equity. Bottomline: God wants us to treat others the same way that we want them to treat us.”

Application #1 – Am I treating others rightly? Am I treating others with fairness and equity? Am I treating others the same way that I would want them to treat me if our roles were switched?

- Marriage – Am I seeking to meet my spouse’s needs in the same way in which I want my spouse to meet my needs?
- Parenting – Am I parenting my child the way I would want my child to parent me if the roles were switched?
- Childhood – Am I obeying my parents the way I would want them to obey me if our roles were switched? Am I obeying my teachers...?
- Workplace – Am I treating my co-workers....?
- School – Am I treating that “undesirable person”...?
- Poor – Am I treating the poor in the same way that I would want them to treat me if our roles/status/position were switched?
- Other:
- My action step is....

Application Highlight – “The Church Has Left the Building” is a great application of the Book of Amos. If I were poor and in a bad spot, I would want someone from Grace Fellowship to skip worship on Sunday, July 27, 2008 and come and help me. Sign up for one of the 41 compassion projects out on the porch today.

The Justice of God

- God deals fairly and equally with everyone’s sin (Romans 3:23; 6:23)
- It is right and fair that a holy God judge all people who have rebelled against Him by pouring out His wrath and punishment on them and separating them from His holy Presence forever (Revelation 20:11-15).
- God’s justice is perfect and eternal (Revelation 15:3).
- God’s love is perfect and eternal (1 John 4:16).
- How can a perfectly **just** God not punish sinners with eternal separation from His holy Presence?
- How can a perfectly **loving** God punish sinners forever?
- The answer is the most creative, most incredible action ever in all of history.
- **Psalm 85:10** – *(In God’s salvation) love and faithfulness meet together; righteousness and peace kiss each other.*
- God the Son became one of us. God the Father then poured out all of His wrath and punishment on His own Son who served as a substitute scapegoat in our place (1 John 2:2; Romans 3:25-26; 2 Corinth 5:21).
- In doing so, God’s justice was perfectly fulfilled (right punishment occurred) and God’s love was perfectly fulfilled. Justice and love kissed! (Ps. 85:10)
- It is not enough to just know this. Each one of us must decide whether to receive this free gift of salvation from the punishment of our sins (John 1:12; Ephesians 2:8-9).
- **Application #2** – Have you received this free gift?

The Rest of the MLK Speech Story

- “I’ve Been to the Mountaintop” was MLK’s last speech on earth
- The next day, April 4, 1968, MLK was assassinated while he was standing on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis
- **This murder was wrong and unjust!** Yet, many historians believe that MLK’s assassination was the turning point in achieving more equality for the African-American community in the USA.
- **Revelation 12:11** - *They overcame (satan) by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.*
- **Matthew 16:24-25** - *Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for Me will find it.*
- Martin Luther King, Jr. – “I submit to you that if a man hasn’t discovered something he will die for, he isn’t fit to live.”
- **Application #3** – What does it mean for me to take up my cross and follow Jesus Christ?
- <http://www.mlkonline.net/video-martin-luther-king-last-speech.html>

Questions to Discuss with My Family, Friends, and Small Group

1. What do you know about the life work of Martin Luther King, Jr.? Share things you know about his life and mission.
2. Read Amos 5:1-6:14 aloud and discuss its meaning and applications using these notes. What are your applications?