

Messengers of Doom

“Surely the Lord God does nothing unless He reveals His secret counsel to His servants the prophets. A lion has roared! Who can but fear? The Lord has spoken! Who can but prophesy?” (Amos 3:7-8)

Oh, would to God that there were more prophets of the Lord in the land of America today, men of God who possessed the following:

- A call from God to speak His Word to His people
- A capacity to perceive the degenerating condition of the American culture
- An inescapable burden placed upon them by both the apostasy of the visible Protestant Church and the apathy of the invisible Protestant Church
- A burning desire to proclaim the vision and mission placed on them by God
- A willingness to endure rejection and ridicule because of their message – even by those closest to them
- An unshakeable confidence in God’s mercy and desire to bless His people
- A passion to see revival in the lives of God’s people

Such was the ministry of Amos. Having been called by God, he was equipped by God for his prophetic mission to the Northern Tribes of Israel. He possessed a keen insight into the moral, political, and spiritual status quo of his times. His capacity to observe and judge the condition of God’s people put a fire into his belly that would not be extinguished. He would preach the righteous judgment of God, even if it cost him his life.

Amos had heard from the Lord. “The lion has roared! Who can but fear?” This herdsman had heard the growl of the lion, as he tended his flocks in Tekoah. He feared what the sharp claws and flesh-rending teeth of a hungry lion could do to his flock. And he knew what the wrath of God would do to his disobedient children.

Amos had heard directly from God. He was under divine orders. “The Lord has spoken! Who can but prophesy?” He was compelled by God’s call to preach God’s words of future punishment of the Nation of Israel. He had no choice in the matter. He had to obey God’s mandate for his own life. But how was his message to be received?

“Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent word to Jeroboam, King of Israel, saying ‘Amos has conspired against you in the midst of the house of Israel: the land is unable to endure all his words. For thus Amos says, Jeroboam will die by the sword and Israel will certainly go from its land into exile.’”¹

Wow! Here the chief spiritual leader of the visible house of God’s people “squealed” on Amos to the King; he “ratted him out” in our contemporary jargon. Amos’ preaching was not acceptable to Israel’s religious leaders. So Amaziah the priest told Amos:

¹ Amos 7:10-11

“Go, you seer, flee away to the land of Judah, and there eat bread and there do your prophesying but no longer prophesy at Bethel, for it is a sanctuary of the King and a Royal Residence.”²

The Priest bluntly said, “Amos, go back to where you came from. Quit preaching to us! Go home to Judah and tend your sheep, make your meager living, mind your own business, and, if you must, preach to your own people!”

Amos’ retort to Amaziah was blunt and to the point. He would obey God’s command for him to prophecy, whether the religious leaders liked it or not. And as far as the apostate priest was concerned, he would prophesy his demise by saying,

“Your wife will become a harlot in the city, your sons and your daughters will fall by the sword, your land will be parceled up by a measuring line, and you yourself will die upon unclean soil. Moreover, Israel will certainly go from its land into exile.”³

Talk about guts! Talk about spiritual intestinal fortitude! Amos had it in abundance. He was God’s prophet for the hour. No threat from a religious phony would deter him from preaching God’s truth to His erring, backsliding people.

Reader, let me ask you this vital question: Where are God’s prophets of doom to preach to God’s people in America, proclaiming God’s righteous judgment upon the apostate leaders and members of the mainline denominations and God’s disfavor with the lethargy and worldliness of many in our Evangelical churches?

The following conditions should readily demonstrate America’s moral corruption:

- The abandonment of our Christian heritage established at the founding of this country
- The intellectual dishonesty and misleading of our populace by the historical revisionists
- The acceptance of the drug culture as status quo for the common man
- The increase of lawlessness and crime
- The corruption of our revolving-door criminal justice system
- The dumbing down of our educational institutions
- The continued demand for abortion and increasing call for euthanasia
- The absence of the male role-model and the rise of militant feminism
- The destruction of the role of the American family
- The promotion of perverted life-styles as normal sociological behavior
- The embrace of humanism, secularism, pluralism and relativism as our national worldview
- The increasing craving for material affluence, while the poor of the world perish

² Amos 7:12-13

³ Amos 7:17

The big questions are: Where has the Church been while the Nation's foundations have been eroded and destroyed? Why are we, as a nation, seen as a morally decadent world power bent on imperialistic schemes, rather than the Godly nation that was once known for more noble pursuits? The God of Heaven has not changed. He lacks no authority to empower His people to be light, salt, and a sanctifying influence on the surrounding ungodly culture. The God of ancient Israel has not lessened His demands for righteous living by His people in the 21st Century. His purposes for His people in America are no different, in essence, than His purposes for ancient Israel. And when Christ's Church in America fails to do what God has intended Her to do, His judgment upon Her and Her punishment from the mouths of His prophets should be no less courageous than that of the record we find of God's ancient prophets to Israel.

We are taught in the New Testament that when Christ *"ascended on high, he led captive a host of captives, and He gave gifts to men...And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ...."*⁴

We know who the Apostles were – those who were called to be such and had witnessed the resurrection of Jesus Christ. However, it is evident that something is lacking in the building up of Christ's body. The Church militant and triumphant in past decades of American history cannot be denied. Today Church has become lethargic and weak. The Church has lost the power of God to enable her to produce any profound, positive influence on the culture of the Nation. The Church, like ancient Israel has compromised with the surrounding culture, afraid to be different, tolerant of all sorts of ungodliness, failing to be the salt and light to which She has been called. Where are the Godly men – the prophets of 50 years ago – the A. W. Tozer's and the Leonard Ravenhill's? Where are those courageous men whose perceptive vision tells us just how far we have backslidden? Where are those God-called prophets who can predictively envision the spiritual chastisement of God due the invisible Church for her backsliding and failure to fulfill Her divine purpose in a world floundering in the darkness and lost in sin?

QUESTIONS:

1. Do you hear any preaching like that of the Old Testament Prophets at your church?
2. Can you name any of those contemporary church leaders who are proclaiming our need for spiritual revival in the Church?
3. What do you think will become of America, spiritually, if we never see spiritual revival among God's people and moral reformation in our culture?
4. In what ways do you think God may choose to punish America for her apparent, flagrant sin?
5. Are you personally grieved at what you see on the American scene today?
6. What do you intend to do about it?
7. Are you concerned enough to make a commitment to pray for revival in the lives of God's people?

⁴ Ephesians 4:8, 11-12