

IGNORING GOD'S WARNING SIGNS

Amos 4:6-12

Introduction: From its very beginning Israel had its ups and downs with God. Sometimes Israel was obedient and therefore God blessed the people. Sometimes Israel was disobedient and self-reliant and God would send prophets with messages of warnings and then if they didn't heed the prophet's messages, God would send stronger warning signs and if those were ignored, God would send disaster. Israel was proud of its military strength and battle victories, therefore Israel felt that they were in God's favor. Sadly there were but two classes of people, the very rich and the very poor and it seemed that they were forgetting God's laws and ways. In the text Amos is speaking of God's warnings and the people of Israel ignoring them. America is following Israel's pattern and has not recognized God's warnings and is headed for inevitable calamities.

I. GOD'S WARNINGS WERE UNRECOGNIZED

1. God sent famine upon them - *Amos 4:6*
2. God withheld the rains - *Amos 4:7-8*
 - When rain was needed for the crops, it just didn't rain and the people simply thought that they were in a drought for things like that happened.
 - It must be remembered that God is in control of the rain as well as everything else and it is normal to think that it just a weather phenomenon and not give any thought that it just might be God trying to say something.
3. God sent agriculture failure - *Amos 4:9*
 - When all the insects invaded the crops, the people still did not stop to think that just maybe God was trying to tell them something.
4. God sent war upon Israel - *Amos 4:10-11*
 - God sent warning after warning to Israel and they never recognized that God was trying to tell them something yet the people remained unaware and ignorant of what God was doing.

II. GOD SENDS WARNINGS TO ALL WHO IGNORE HIM

1. God will send warnings to other nations.
 - God used other nations to bring His own people back to Him.
 - God rewards nations who fear and serve Him and punishes those who ignore Him and abuse the helpless.
 - Any nation that refuses to acknowledge God and ignores His laws are eventually destroyed.
 - *"...The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God..."*
(*Psalm 9:17*)
 - Nations of today, especially America, must either change or suffer the consequences.

2. God will not only warn nations, but individuals as well.
 - Countless Christians can testify to the fact that God stepped into their lives and brought problems, disaster, hurt and failures to get their attention and when they failed to listen, to heed God's warnings, God got their attention in a most severe way and that time, they listened and some had scars, etc. to remind them of their not listening.
 - God has used sickness, injury, even death to family members to get other members of the family to listen to Him.
 - Often one must experience loss in order to experience the highest gain that God gives.

III. CHRISTIANS NEED TO UNDERSTAND WHY GOD HAS TO WARN AND PUNISH

1. Warnings and punishment are proof of WHO God is. (*Hebrews 12:7*)
 - Where there is no discipline, there is no obedience, no true Fatherhood.
 - Ever see a spoiled, disobedient child you would like to "take a hand to?"
 - Because Christians are God's children, God will send us warnings, then if unheeded, He will punish us and hopefully we will learn more about God.
2. When troubles come in life, God deals with us with His love. (*Hebrews 12:6*)
 - Those God does not love, He does not send warnings or punishes.
 - If you have received warnings and even punishment from God, it is because He loves you and wants you to listen to Him.
3. God disciplines and corrects His children in order that they may be changed into what He wants them to be, in His likeness. (*Hebrews 12:9-10; Matthew 18:8*)
4. When one understands why God has punished him/her then he/she is restored to God's fellowship and a better understanding of God is made. (*Hebrews 12:11*)

CONCLUSION:

1. God seeks people by means of His grace and goodness. (*Psalms 119:71*)
2. If we turn a deaf ear and heart to God's goodness, He may send us warnings, and if we ignore those warnings, He may send affliction and troubles.
3. America has turned a deaf ear and heart to God and God has sent warnings such as 9/11, floods, fires, earthquakes, oil crisis in the Gulf of Mexico and a God-less government. If God's people in America do not return to Him, then God is going to send punishment.
4. Israel was/is God's nation to the Jews, America is God's nation to the Gentile world. What will happen next to America if we continue on as Israel did?