**THE LION ROARS**

**A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF AMOS**

**(THE PROPHECY AGAINST MOAB AND JUDAH )**

Main Idea: Of all people, Christians need to practice the same forgiveness their heavenly Father gave them and to value His Word. Holding these things lightly brings the judgment of God.

Amos 2:1 – 5 Lesson 4

Introduction – The last two nations God pronounces judgment on before dealing with the Northern Kingdom of Israel are Moab and Judah. God highlights the sinfulness of those who take vengeance into their own hands and denounces those who are disgusted with His Word.

1. **THE LION ROARS AGAINST MOAB,** vs. 1 – 3
   1. Today we come to another relative of Israel who was also a descendant of Lot through his oldest daughter. If you’ll remember, Lot had an incestuous relationship with his two daughters.
   2. Though they were relatives, they hated Israel. In Numbers 22, Moab was the country that tried to hire Balaam to curse Israel while Israel was on their journey to the Promised Land. Also, during the time of the Judges Moab severely oppressed Israel.
   3. Moab had several gods they worshipped. Chemosh was their *fish* god. When Jeremiah is prophesying against Moab he says to them in **Jeremiah 48:7 For because thou hast trusted in thy works and in thy treasures, thou shalt also be taken: and CHEMOSH shall go forth into captivity with his priests** **and with his princes together.** And Baalpeor was the god of Mount Peor. It was their god they worshipped in a very ungodly and sensual way. History records that one ruler came to Peor to worship this new *god* but when he got there and saw the manner in which they did it, he became so disgusted that he and his men attacked and killed its worshippers. Needless to say, Moab was not a nation of integrity or morality. Because of that they easily cast off any conviction about respect of their brethren or elders.
   4. The sin God addresses on top of the ones we have previously mentioned, was *“because they burned the bones of the king of Edom into lime,”* vs. 1.
   5. Moab never got over the fact that Edom had joined forces with Israel and Judah in a previous battle to attack them (2 Kings 3). So, when they had the opportunity, they dug up, exhumed the bones of the king of Edom and burned them. Some historians even say that with the lime of those bones the king of Moab plastered his palace walls to disgust the Edomites.
   6. But mark it down… this was an act against Israel. Though Moab was angry against Edom, their anger was because they had joined forces with the despicable nation of Israel.
   7. You know…it’s one thing to be bitter against people in their lifetime. But it’s another to try to exact punishment on them in the grave. It’s like trying to reach out to them in the afterlife and trying to get vengeance. It’s like saying, “*If I couldn’t get revenge on you in your life, at least I’ll do what I can... to do so in your death.”* It was disgracing the dead. It’s dragging the mourning relatives through painful grief... and loving it. It’s like saying; (with a tone of anger) “*If I can’t hurt the king personally, now that he’s dead, I’ll hurt his loved ones. And since Judah was the one who convinced Edom to go into battle against Moab, this is the best way we can try to inflict pain on them as well. We’ll burn the bones of the king of Edom.*”
   8. A man’s bones are a representation of his very being. It’s all he has left to represent him on this earth. For good or for bad, a man’s bones represent all the memories and the life the man lived. If you’ll remember, Joseph made Israel promise they would carry his bones out of Egypt when He delivered them and carry them into the Promised Land.
   9. One word describes all the wicked actions we discussed about Moab... and that word is *VENGEANCE*. When a person takes it upon themselves to carry out self-willed justice, they have just robbed God of what belongs only to Him.
   10. **Deuteronomy 32:35 To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence**; **Rom 12:19**  **Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.**
   11. As Christians, we need to be sure we settle our differences with one another before the sun goes down. It is a sin to still be grudging somebody especially once they have gone to the grave.
   12. God pronounces judgment on Moab in verses 2, 3 for their gross sin...
2. **THE LION ROARS AGAINST JUDAH**, vs. 4, 5
   1. Prior to this prophecy God had dealt with the heathen nations surrounding Israel. Now God turns to the people of God themselves. If God judges the heathen who don’t have a knowledge of the will and plan of God, how much more will He judge His people who *do* know His Word?
   2. God holds us to a higher standard that have been given light. **Luke 12:48 For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more**. So God comes to Judah with His message of judgment. As always, God gives the reason they are being judged first and then moves on to the judgment itself.
   3. The first reason for God’s judgment was “…***because they have despised the law of the LORD***,” The word *despised* literally means that. They were disgusted with it. They despised it. If someone brought up something about God’s Word they were quickly shot down. No one attended the readings by the priests of God... if a priest actually did read it. If they had anything in their houses that reminded them of the law they got rid of it. If an elder who still held to God’s Word would say anything to them about their wicked lifestyle and quote a verse from the law, they would look at them with scorn and no doubt rebuke them. They hated to hear God’s Word. How sad!
   4. The next reason God lists for why He is judging them is “***and have not kept his commandments*,**” If you despise God’s Word you’re sure not going to keep it. If it’s disgusting to you, you’re not going to do what it says. If it stings your conscience when you hear about it… the last thing you want to do is *obey* it! So, they started living like the world around them… which leads to the next reason God was judging them.
   5. “…***and their lies caused them to err, after the which their fathers have walked***:” This is a reference to them worshipping idols. Remember, their fathers worshipped the golden calf that Aaron made them. They worshipped Baalpeor, Ashtoreth and Baalim. The godly were bowing down to wood and stone! Imagine you walking into the room of your child one night to see how they were sleeping and you find them in the middle of the room with a dim light bowing before some idol. *It would appall you!* Immediately you would understand why they had been having trouble obeying you. That’s what God is seeing with Judah… *stunning!*
   6. Then God tells them their judgment - Verse five – It took a couple hundred years before Nebuchadnezzar came to Jerusalem and burned the royal city with fire. Judah scorned the prophets and said that it will *never* happen! Later the Romans did the same. It was truly some of the saddest events recorded. For seventy years Judah sat in captivity learning the critical importance of knowing and keeping God’s Word.

**Discuss:**

1. How were the Moabites related to Israel. What was their overriding sin in God’s eyes? How can Christians today begin to display Moabitish traits. Is God’s mind about this any different today than in the OT?
2. Are there any traits in America today that parallel the attitude of those in Juda concerning the Word of God? Name as many of them as come to mind.
3. How does neglecting God’s Word begin to affect our respect and honor of His Word?