Let God Be True!

Prepare to Meet thy God

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Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel:

and because I will do this unto thee,

prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.

Amos 4:12

Theme: Continued sin and refusal to repent and reform after chastening brings judgment without remedy.

Introduction:

1. The text and context are clearly and specifically for the ten tribes of Israel by the minor prophet Amos.
2. The context before and after our chosen text is helpful to see the nature and seriousness of the warning.
3. Application to N.T. believers and Judgment Day is indirect and by doctrine and example, not expressly.
4. God's chastening, called damnation by Paul, can be very severe and take your life while yet on earth.
5. This pastor has known this text for decades and intends its use like Paul (II Cor 5:9-11; Acts 24:25).
6. Pastors are ambassadors of God and Christ, to reconcile the elect and to warn them (II Cor 5:18-21).
7. John the Baptist preached unquenchable fire and Jesus preached hellfire more than any (Luke 12:4-5).
8. Using terror to persuade men is mocked even by most Christians due to compromise (II Tim 4:3-4); so far this year you have heard, *Ye Cannot Serve the LORD*, and, *Do Not Lose Your Full Reward*.
9. Warning of terror is proper preaching, for which you should be thankful and pay close attention. The judgment seat of Christ is terrifying. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Vengeance is God's (Heb 10:30; Deut 32:35); the Lord shall judge His people. Men forget His terror for it is hid in the Bible and not taught. Compromising churches give them a carnal, lite, sinful option.
10. At times preaching must be terror without comfort, like Amos 4. Americans are comforted too much.

Preparatory Reading: Amos 2-5; Amos 9; Isaiah 5; Isaiah 58; Revelation 20.

Simple Outline of Chapter	Simple Lessons of Chapter
1-3 Israel Mocked and Warned for Oppression **4-5** Israel Mocked and Warned for Idolatry **6-11** Israel Mocked and Warned for Rebellion **12** God Is Coming to Judge and End Israel **13** Israel's Glorious God Described for Fear	**1-11** The Reason – Israel's Idolatry and Sins **12** The Result – God Coming in Judgment **13** The Reality – Israel's God Is a Dreadful God * The Remedy – Strict Repentance Quickly * The Review – What Will You Do with God?

Suggested Links:

Before It Is Too Late	Judgment Seat of Christ	The 'R' Factor
Sojourning in Fear	Cross on Judgment Day … The Cross at Judgment Day (2 Sermons)	You Need a Lawyer … You Need a Lawyer (2 Sermons)
Your Sin Will Find You Out … Be Sure Your Sin Will Find You Out	Is There a Burning Hell?	Examine Yourselves
Judgment to Come … Righteousness, Temperance, Judgment to Come	Warnings about Hell … Warnings about Hell (4 Sermons)	Lengthen Your Tranquility

Ye Cannot Serve the LORD … Ye Cannot Serve the LORD (#1)	Appointed to Death/Judgment … Appointed to Death and Judgment	Backsliding / Self-Examination … Backsliding & Self-Examination (1)
Are You Saved?	A Lake, A Book, A Lamb	Running Scared
What Will You Do with this God?	God Hates Compromise	Proverbs 14:14 (backsliding)
Cut It Down!	God Is Jealous	New Bible Economics
Who Is on the LORD's Side?	Belly Worshippers	Perilous Times
Wild Grapes … Wild Grapes (2 Sermons)	Eternal Life Is a Gift	War for Your Soul … War for Your Soul #1

The REASON – God's Holiness Exposed Israel's Hypocrisy – 4:1-11

A. Israel mocked and reproved for oppression (1-3), idolatry (4-5), incorrigibleness (6-11).

B. The LORD God, Jehovah, is holy and swore judgment by His holiness (Amos 4:1-3).
   1. It is possible to deceive or influence most authority and rulers, but not this holy God.
   2. God, by His prophet Amos, a herdsman, mocked the ten tribes as fat, violent cattle.
   3. Rulers in the capital called masters of servants to bring of their oppression to share.
   4. Job gave us a good description of avoiding oppression of the poor (Job 31:13-23).
   5. The coming judgment by His desertion and scattering would be as easy as fishing.
   6. The Spirit used the metaphor of fishing to judge Judah by the Chaldeans (Jer 16:16).
   7. The terrified cows would run through the breaches trying to escape the Assyrians.
   8. Zedekiah of Judah tried this escape but was caught and his sons killed (Jer 39:4-7).
   9. What did they cast into the palace (which Amos used thirteen times for political and financial prosperity)? Their posterity, in desperate fear to escape without hindrance; this is the clearest antecedent; even eating children is found often in such judgment.

C. Amos used sarcastic irony to mock their syncretistic religious mixture (Amos 4:4-5).
   1. Bethel was a chosen center for calf worship of Israel (Amos 3:14; I Kgs 12:25-33).
   2. Gilgal was another place where idolatry occurred (Amos 5:5; Hos 4:15; 9:15; 12:11).
   3. God encouraged these rebels to go to Bethel and sin and then to Gilgal and sin more.
   4. Amos the man of God mocked Israel by ordinances appointed by Moses for Jehovah.
   5. Go ahead, Israel, use leaven God condemned and make a deal of freewill offerings.
   6. Since idolatry and hypocrisy were what Israel chose, God encouraged them by irony.
   7. It is a horrible thing when the people of God love to have it so (Jeremiah 5:25-31).
   8. So it is today that most Christians have turned from truth to fables (II Tim 4:3-4).
   9. The many false teachers that exist today are by rebellious hearers heaping them up.

D. Though chastened variously for sin, Israel obstinately would not repent (Amos 4:6-11).
   1. God sent shortages and famine that were painful, but they did not work (Amos 4:6).
   2. God withheld rain in some cities for thirst of all, but it did not work (Amos 4:7-8).
   3. God sent excessive heat and rain and farming pests, but it did not work (Amos 4:9).
   4. God sent disease, war, degraded military, many corpses, without result (Amos 4:10).
   5. God sent spectacular judgment that reserved some, but it did not work (Amos 4:11).

6. God by His prophet listed five chastening judgments that should have worked, but in each case the outcome was the same, Israel would not repent and return to God.
7. These rebels fulfilled Solomon's warning about hardening by reproof (Pr 29:1; 6:15).
8. When chastening is ignored, God judges severely (Lev 26:18,21,24,28; Zec 7:7-14).

E. What questions should wise men ask to understand and apply the context to themselves?
1. Do you understand the holiness of God, like the blue ribband of it for mere sticks?
2. Have you oppressed any in your life, like a defrauded spouse or dishonored parent?
3. Do you know that God can catch you and fry you for supper as easily as you fish?
4. Have you any hypocrisy in your life that God can mock with His sarcastic irony?
5. Do you attend regularly and volunteer to serve but have a heart cold toward the Lord?
6. Have you been convicted, chastened, or prompted to repent and have not done so?
7. Do you know your heart, mind, or life should be different but you have not changed?

F. Is the next section for you – a sober warning from God that you cannot survive Him?
1. Make sure you hear God by His preachers and not despise prophesying by dreaming.
2. Before the warning of unprecedented punishment for sin, God identified their sins.
3. Never let outward prosperity or religious routine deceive you; God wants holiness.
4. Do not let the activity and noise of life cause you to miss God's frequent reproofs.
5. You must not let the peace, pleasure, and prosperity of this life seduce you from God.
6. Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked … he forsook God and lightly esteemed his Rock.

The RESULT – God's Unprecedented Punishment for Rebels – 4:12

A. Israel did not repent by prophets preaching or God chastening, so He would revenge.
1. Here is a chilling, absolute summons … God ended His patience with their rebellion.
2. This is not a gentle invitation for fellowship but warning of unprecedented judgment.
3. Here is a summons to a courtroom or battlefield that will end in their destruction.
4. God is great in mercy and longsuffering, but His patience ends (Pr 29:1; Rev 2:21).

B. "Therefore," intends a sober conclusion from context; now God will severely punish.
1. You had your chances, many of them (five in context: 6,8,9,10,11), now judgment.
2. God in merciful patience withheld judgment for repentance, but then He judged.
3. This is no additional chance by a meeting between parties but promised retribution.
4. If you play with sin and "get away with it," you have lied to yourself (Ps 50:21-22).

C. "Thus" and "this" are judgment for their sin worse than anything He had done this far.
1. These two adverbs are synonyms, referring to what God was going to do to Israel.
2. God would do something horrific – it was not up for discussion – they were doomed.
3. While the uncertain "thus" and "this" can be a terrifying unknown, it is known terror.

4. There is no clear reference in the immediate context for these two, so we look farther.
5. We reach back to the chapter's opening, where overthrow and removal were stated.
6. See context of chapter five and others (Amos 3:11; 5:3,27; 6:7,14; 7:17; 9:4,9,14).

D. It is personal, by Jehovah God Himself against a particular and specific people, Israel.
1. The language is doubled, *Will I do unto thee, O Israel,* and, *I will do this unto thee*.
2. You cannot have the benefit of God being your God without Him being your Judge.
3. You were personally and specifically created by God for His glory. Give it to Him!

E. God had the worst judgment for His people in the land He gave them – root them out.
1. A secure and prosperous home with God as friend and helper was Israel's blessing.
2. But He would send powerful armies to overthrow them and destroy all they knew.
3. He would then take them far away to live among pagans as despised war captives.
4. They would have nothing of the security and prosperity that they had once enjoyed.
5. God had described it all very clearly through Moses (Deut 28:63-68; Lev 26:33-39).

F. The meeting with God could not be cancelled or remedied due to His patience ending.
1. They could not avoid this meeting. Compare no remedy for Judah (II Chr 36:14-21).
2. Because the previous gentle chastening failed, God declared His final confrontation.
3. This meeting is not for discussion or another chance, God mocked Israel by disaster.
4. He had no intention of changing His plans; they had no ability to resist His plans.

G. He is "thy" God for chastening, since He lets pagans go without it (Ps 73:3-12; 17:14).

H. Do not be misled by the warning to prepare, for there is no preparation when too late.
1. God here basically dares Israel to stand their ground and face His horrific onslaught.
2. God is going to proceed with His judgment, so Israel should try to fortify themselves.
3. The call to prepare is a challenge so see if they can withstand Jehovah omnipotence.
4. It is a summons to court where the Judge has already declared verdict and sentence.
5. There is no remedy by resistance or repentance here in this verse and this context.
6. While the following context of chapter five holds out some hope, there is none here.
7. It is not a request to prepare but a grave warning that damning reality was coming.
8. Meeting certain persons and situations on earth may terrify you, but this is far worse.

I. Never forget these five words – ***Prepare to meet thy God*** – as a daily motive to be holy.

J. You cannot alter the appointment that has been made for you to meet Him (Heb 9:27).

K. And before you face Him on Judgment Day, He can destroy your present life on earth, of which there are countless examples in both testaments of His wrath upon His people.

The REALITY – Jehovah Is the Dreadful God of Judgment – 4:13

A. Immediately after God's call to judgment are seven aspects of His sovereign majesty.

1. Here is the God Israel had to deal with, far different from the two calves of Jeroboam.
2. This God is no passive observer from a distance but a glorious, sovereign Creator.
3. We love the attributes of God, but His dreadful terribleness cannot be ignored … Knowing God.
4. When you are in trouble, the court and judge are key, but none are like God Jehovah.
5. The sentence issued leaves Israel helpless and hopeless, for, lo, this God is almighty.
6. Israel had no escape, defense, or hiding place. Jehovah knows all and rules over all.
7. This God was and is a consuming fire (the universe soon) to be worshipped fearfully.
8. God is love, but His love is very qualified, and prophets ignored love with judgment.
9. Embrace the following attributes, features, and traits of Jehovah to cause Israel fear.

B. First, The LORD is His name, which is Jehovah, the self-existent one revealed to Moses.
   1. God declared His name to Moses as I AM THAT I AM, or Jehovah (Ex 3:14; 6:3).
   2. He intended this to be His known name forever and to all generations (Ex 3:14-15).
   3. The Hebrew tetragrammaton (four consonants) is capitalized LORD (6,825 times).
   4. For much more about this tetragrammaton and the legitimacy of Jehovah … A Name Above Every Name.
   5. Some KJV editions twice added reverence for His proper name with a capital 'T', which is found in places where the formal and proper name of God is the emphasis.
   6. See uses of 'T' for His name (Amos 5:8; 9:6; Jer 10:16; 31:35; 32:18; Is 51:15; 54:5).
   7. There is no other God, but this God Jehovah began showing His works with Moses.
   8. Their self-existent God was totally independent of them, not needing or benefitting.
   9. Israel of old was chastened and punished many times and would be now once again; Jehovah drowned Egypt's army to save them but killed all of them in the wilderness.

C. Second, The God of hosts, a name stating He is Commander of heaven's angelic armies.
   1. An additional name here, emphasized as well by a capital 'T', is The God of hosts.
   2. The glorious majesty of this name is Jehovah as Captain of heaven's angelic armies.
   3. Usually the LORD of hosts, we have a variant here for a glorious King (360 times).
   4. There is no escape or defense by Israel – He has an innumerable army of great angels.
   5. Ask Sennacherib about the power of a single angel that killed 185,000 of his best.
   6. For much more about the angels of God, see a sermon detailing facts of them … The Angels of God (4 Sermons).

D. Third, He created the mountains, which are the largest most permanent things we know.
   1. Man faces mountains and must go around them, or if very small, they bore through.
   2. Man is so weak he must take packaged oxygen with him to climb the highest ones.
   3. Man cannot make or move mountains, so they magnify God's omnipotent power.
   4. If Assyria's mighty empire might be considered a mountain, Jehovah had made them.

E. Fourth, He creates the wind, a mysterious force that tears manmade structures to pieces.

1. Wind is a mystery to man, where it blows, and how it blows in various directions.
2. When God unleashes it, there are few manmade structures made to truly resist it.
3. God's omnipotent power is revealed again by force that man cannot tame or explain.
4. Man is not only helpless to explain it, but also to direct it and before that to create it.

F. Fifth, His omniscience extends to perfect knowledge of man's thoughts to declare them.
1. The LORD Jehovah knows all the thoughts and intents of the heart of every man.
2. Nothing could be hid from Him – internal excuses, secret sins, passive rebellion, etc.
3. He knows all – your fantasies, your bitterness and grudges, your envy and greed, etc.
4. His books show all previous warnings sent you and the conviction you squandered.
5. Let Israel plan the best alliances or defense possible, God knew and would destroy.

G. Sixth, His rule of the elements can end the glory and power of a sunrise into darkness.
1. The sun in the morning on a clear day is a glorious and mighty display of light power.
2. But God can send clouds between it and earth with darkness, rain, and destruction.
3. Though a nation or a man might appear glorious initially, God can obliterate either.
4. If Israel basked in any sustained prosperity, God was fully able to wipe it out quickly.

H. Seventh, He walks over the high places of the earth or what they symbolically represent.
1. The LORD Jehovah is so great that He treads or walks upon the highest mountains.
2. Foolish and profane Israel worshipped their idols there, but Jehovah walked on them.
3. No matter how great a nation, a king, a dynasty, or a man, God could tread on them.
4. High places were appreciated for their greater security, but Jehovah is over them all.

I. This God avenges and makes preparation to avoid Him totally impossible. Believe it.
1. He drowned the earth, burned Sodom and Gomorrah, and shook Mt. Sinai violently.
2. He razed Jerusalem to the ground twice, once by Nebuchadnezzar, and once by Titus.
3. He judged His N.T. people, as Ananias and Sapphira and many at Corinth can testify.
4. He will avenge sexual defrauding a brother, Paul warned and taught (I Thess 4:1-8).
5. He will condemn, and He will judge brothers with grudges between them (Jas 5:9).
6. It is easy to explain things away to other potsherds, but not at all to the God Jehovah.
7. He will yet come in the greatest rule of power to melt the universe with a great noise.
8. When Jehovah sits on the throne of judgment, heaven and earth will flee (Rev 20:11).
9. Make this great and glorious Jehovah your God to love and obey (Psalm 33:12; 144:15).

The REMEDY – Return by Repentance Before Too Late – 5:4-9,14-15

A. There is no remedy in Amos chapter 4, but one of repentance is offered in chapter 5.
1. God reaches a place of no remedy, except for a few (II Chron 36:16; Amos 9:8-10).
2. Israel faced certain destruction and scattering, which came to pass after much pain.

3. God kindly told Israel in chapter 5 to seek Him for mercy (Amos 5:4-6,7-9,14-15).
4. We love repentance and forgiveness like David, Manasseh, Peter (II Chr 33:12-13).

B. Preparing to meet Jesus the Judge at His judgment seat demands your whole attention.
1. Paul warned of the judgment seat of Jesus Christ, and it has been preached … Judgment Seat Of Christ.
2. Probation is limited to this life, there is no second chance once you are before Him.
3. To meet God unprepared is the greatest calamity and abuse of your earthly existence.
4. Solomon wrote how sinners would wail wasted opportunities to repent (Pr 5:11-14).
5. Delay is dangerous; indifference is fatal. Let this O.T. warning greatly convict you.
6. The Lord's patience is immense, but not infinite. Judgment will come. Believe it.

C. Search yourself for backsliding or hypocrisy. Outward religion cannot cover inward sin.
1. Reject outward religious form of any kind rather than the pure righteousness of God.
2. Have you ignored conviction, even mental commitments, to persist in complacency?
3. Stop hiding behind attendance. Admit your pride, love of the world, and hidden sins.
4. Ten months ago you were taught much about backsliding & self-examination … Backsliding & Self-Examination (1).

D. Your only hope is to humble yourself greatly and repent of all sin and reform your life.
1. He has promised forgiveness for the simple confession of sins to Him (I John 1:9).
2. God will not reject a broken and contrite heart that repudiates all sins for holiness.
3. Run to Him by repentance and reformation while mercy's door is open … Before It Is Too Late, While He May Be Found.
4. He will abundantly pardon and will never cast you out, if you come fully repentant.
5. The only hope of surviving a meeting with Jehovah is to stay in Christ (Heb 3:6,14).
6. For more of God's ready reception of repentance and abundant pardon … The R Factor, Forgiven!.

The REVIEW – What Will You Do with This God?

A. Will you love Him with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength and delight in Him only?
B. Solomon examined the purpose of life to find obedience and judgment (Eccl 12:13-14).
C. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, so wake up (Hebrews 10:31).
D. The N.T. is like Amos 4 (Matt 7:21-27; 12:36-37; Rom 2:1-11; II Cor 5:10; Heb 9:27).
E. Paul warned Ephesus to wake up and rise from death to do God's will (Eph 5:14-17).
F. Not just an historical date or prophetic fact … 70 A.D. is our warning (Luke 19:41-44).
G. Perilous times of compromising Christianity are all around us (II Tim 3:1-17; 4:1-4).
1. Sober religion is altered to a carnal, easy, effeminate, lite, worldly form of worship.
2. Faithful Christians will respond with perfect holy living and love sound doctrine.

H. Jesus Christ is here today with His candlestick, watching your response to this sermon.

I. His soon return to destroy the universe should greatly change your life (II Pet 3:10-14).
J. We love being adopted sons of God, but it should lead to a purified life (I John 3:1-3).
K. Jesus taught He will deny many as unknown, and their fall will be great (Matt 7:21-27).
L. Jesus used the unjust steward for the crucial need to plan for the future (Luke 16:1-13).
M. All shall stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ, confidently or with shame (I Jn 2:28).
N. God's greatness can produce fear, praise, and obedience … or terror and hopelessness.
O. Daniel gave Nebuchadnezzar an opportunity to repent, which he fully wasted … Lengthen Your Tranquility.
P. If you gain the whole world but lose your soul now or for eternity, you are a huge fool.
Q. Choosing life's soap bubbles for easy living will lead to vanity and vexation of spirit.
R. Never forget … always remember … make decisions by it … Prepare to meet thy God.

Conclusion:

1. The text and context are clearly and specifically for the ten tribes of Israel by the minor prophet Amos.
2. Any application to the great Day of Judgment is indirect and by doctrine and example, not expressly.
3. But chastening, called damnation by Paul, can be very severe and take your life while living on earth.
4. If you refuse to meet Him with sincere repentance, you will be forced to meet Him in severe judgment.
5. Every person will face God to give an account for every hidden sin, broken law, and rejected grace.
6. If you stood before this God today, are you relying on Christ's righteousness and faithful obedience?
7. Neither the WSJ nor any source of worldly information will ever suggest you think of this warning.
8. Your pastor is a barking dog to warn of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come (Is 56:10).
9. Lord God, help us examine, repent, and walk with Judgment Day and your presence today in mind.