

Discussion Notes – October 23, 2009

“I Am No Prophet, Nor a Prophet’s Son”

Passages

1: all – Faults of other regions and people

3:14 – “Horns of the alter shall be cut down”, why would he take away from God?

3:3-8 – series of questions God asks

9:14-15 – God says he will restore the fortunes to Israel

4:12 – Wrath of God

9:8 – God will destroy everything except the house of Jacob

8:11 – Amos says that God will send a famine of hearing the words of the Lord

7:10-17 – Stand off between Amos and Amaziah

5:15, 6:6, etc. – He refers to the children of Joseph

1:all

-Why is it significant to call out the faults of other people as a rhetorical strategy?

- He wants to accuse other people for their faults because the Israelites have fallen in many ways.

- The people would be more likely to listen if he is building them up and talking down about other people. He wanted to make sure the people were going to listen.

3:14

-The alter is a thing for God, why would they inflict harm to a dedication for God.

- If the people are not worshipping God, they may see no problem with defacing the alter.

- The alter has been changed and it is not as elegant as it used to be, so it could be an attempt to return back to its original state.

- The sins of the Israelites were so great that God felt the need to destroy their alter and show them they are not worthy of his presence.

- The shrine could be some type of national identity relating religion and nationalism. The alter could be a defining characteristic of the Israelites, but by destroying it, God may exhibit his power.

3:3-8

-the series of the questions can be an attempt to explain why things are happening.

- what is the purpose of so much repetition

- rhetorical device to make the portrayal poetic in structure

- more of a device for the flow of the questions and promises

- adds to the argument, adding up many things trying to get the point across. The events cannot fall into place by chance, they are an exhibit of the power of God.

9:14-15

-The book is the criticism of Israel, but the last two verses describe how he will save His people Israel.

- He wants them to return to the days of old and become the blessed people they once were.

- Maybe this is his way of telling them that they did screw up and the covenant is still there, but they were going to suffer in order to recover that covenant

4:12

-The previous signs were small compared to the punishment he was about to invoke upon the people Israel because they didn't change.

- Chapter 9 goes into much detail about the wrath God will inflict upon them

Why would you return to someone who is inflicting punishment?

- Fear can make people come back to God
- Old Testament portrays a God of fear so it could be a different in portrayal of God
- God does remind them of all the things they were able to do because of His help, but now they do not reciprocate the appreciation God expects.

9:8

-God gives a "monologue" on his plans for the earth, but he does want to leave the house of Jacob.

- He could be giving the opportunity for people to repent. He will inflict enough punishment for the Israelites to realize that they messed up, but God will never break His covenant.

8:11

-The famine of hearing the words of the Lord can be seen as a vengeful God.

-God is giving a warning and scaring the people that He may revoke His covenant and his counsel.

-The famine of not having God can be the worst possible way to hurt Israel.

7:10-17

-Amaziah is the high priest of Israel he defies Amos' presence in the temple and king.

-Amos retaliates with prophesying the awful fate for Amaziah's family.

-The reaction of Amos can be seen as a retaliation to Amaziah's hardheadedness, because Amaziah is refuting Amos, Amos relays a horrible fate to him.

-“I am no prophet”, there could be a stigmatism attached to the title of a prophet so Amos wants defy that statement.