

## THEME: EMPTY RELIGION

## TOPIC: SELF-AWARENESS

### AMOS 1:1-2:5; MATTHEW 7:1-6

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**Author Leo Tolstoy once wrote** – *“Everyone thinks of Changing the World, but no one thinks of changing themselves.”*

**Question: How can we avoid empty religion?**

**Amos1:1** The words of Amos, who was among the shepherds of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake. **2** And he said: “The Lord roars from Zion and utters his voice from Jerusalem; the pastures of the shepherds mourn, and the top of Carmel withers.”

**3 Thus says the Lord:** “For three transgressions of **Damascus**, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment, **because they have threshed Gilead with threshing sledges of iron.** **4** So I will send a fire upon the house of Hazael, and it shall devour the strongholds of Ben-hadad. **5** I will break the gate-bar of Damascus, and cut off the inhabitants from the Valley of Aven, and him who holds the scepter from Beth-eden; and the people of Syria shall go into exile to Kir,” says the Lord.

**6 Thus says the Lord:** “For three transgressions of **Gaza**, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment, **because they carried into exile a whole people to deliver them up to Edom.** **7** So I will send a fire upon the wall of Gaza, and it shall devour her strongholds. **8** I will cut off the inhabitants from Ashdod, and him who holds the scepter from Ashkelon; I will turn my hand against Ekron, and the remnant of the Philistines shall perish,” says the Lord God.

**9 Thus says the Lord:** “For three transgressions of **Tyre**, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment, **because they delivered up a whole people to Edom, and did not remember the covenant of brotherhood.** **10** So I will send a fire upon the wall of Tyre, and it shall devour her strongholds.”

**11 Thus says the Lord:** “For three transgressions of **Edom**, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment, **because he pursued his brother with the sword and cast off all pity, and his anger tore perpetually, and he kept his wrath forever.** **12** So I will send a fire upon Teman, and it shall devour the strongholds of Bozrah.”

**13 Thus says the Lord:** “For three transgressions of the **Ammonites**, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment, **because they have ripped open pregnant women in Gilead, that they might enlarge their border.** **14** So I will kindle a fire in the wall of Rabbah, and it shall devour her strongholds, with shouting on the day of battle, with a tempest in the day of the whirlwind; **15** and their king shall go into exile, he and his princes together,” says the Lord.

**Amos 2:1 Thus says the Lord:** “For three transgressions of **Moab**, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment, **because he burned to lime the bones of the king of Edom.** **2** So I will send a fire upon Moab, and it shall devour the strongholds of Kerioth, and Moab shall die amid uproar, amid shouting and the sound of the trumpet; **3** I will cut off the ruler from its midst, and will kill all its princes with him,” says the Lord.

**4 Thus says the Lord:** “For three transgressions of **Judah**, and for four, **I will not revoke the punishment, because they have rejected the law of the Lord, and have not kept his statutes, but their lies have led them astray, those after which their fathers walked.** **5** So I will send a fire upon Judah, and it shall devour the strongholds of Jerusalem.”

#### I. RECOGNIZE GOD CARES ABOUT THE SIN OF THE WORLD

#### II. FOCUS ON YOUR SIN MORE THAN OTHERS

**Matthew 7:1** “Judge not, that you be not judged. **2** For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. **3** Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? **4** Or how can you say to your brother, ‘**Let me take the speck out of your eye,**’ when there is the log in your own eye? **5** You hypocrite, **first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.**

**6** “Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.

**Question: Who’s sin do you care most about?**

#### III. CULTIVATE AN AWARENESS OF SELF

- Share your sin with God
- Ask people you trust to speak into your blind-spots
- Let God’s grace humble you...