

A sermon on
On the present & future
Punishment of the wicked
Amos IV 12
Preached on Shockoe Hill
Sunday morning June 28
1835
James A Riddick

Amos IV12 v. "And because will do this unto thee , prepare to meet thy God O Israel"

The words of our text were ad-ressed tp the Israelites at a time when they had fallen into idol-
atrous worship and had become guilty of the most impious prac-tces of oppression wantonness &
obstinacy. In the preceeding part of the chapter, the prophet recounts the various calamities with
which they had been visited, but which had produced no good effect in correcting their ~~sinful~~ wicked
lives. Finding them incorrigible in their conduct, he predicts a continuation of the ends with which they
had already been severely af-flicted. In view of the heavy judg-ments which were about to overtake the
Israelites, the prophet Amos represents the Almighty speaking to them in the language
of Threatening and Admonitions "And because I will do this unto thee prepare to meet they God O
Israel"

But the language of our text is not peculiar to the Israelites. The vengeance of God is still threatened
against every man and woman who lives in the practice of sin, and to all such the admonition of our text
is constantly urged ~~upon us~~ "Prepare to meet they God"

In accommodating this subject to our present circumstances we shall consider,

I The punishment with which the wicked are threatened, &

II Show how it is to be avoided-

1. First we are to speak of the punishment, with which the wick-ed are threatened. By the wicked
we ~~understand~~ mean those who transgress the law of God- And in every case the infraction of
his law will be attempted with some de-gree of punishment ^even in the present world-

! In the first place it disturbs the mind with painful reflections . sin is frequently very pleasing in
the commission. The gratifications of pride and vanity of the passions and appetites, given a
momentary pleasure it is true-but afterwards it will bite like a serpent and sting like an adder. For

the truth of this as-assertion I refer you to the experience of these who have lived in the practice of sin. Look into ev-ery class of society from the king upon his throne to the humble peasant in his cottage, and when-ever man take pleasure in wick-edness wherever the law of God is violated, there it will be seen that the way of transgressions is hard, that the triumphing of the wicked is but short- Mark the footsteps of the prodigal Son learning his Fathers house & wandering into a strange land, but behold him when he has was-ted his substance in riotous liv-ing and see the mortifying ?-tions of his mind ~~when he ^considers reflections upon his consideration~~ -His patrimony being exhausted he was reduced to such a state of want by the visi-tation of famine in ^the ~~that~~ land that he was compelled to hire himself to a citizen of that country to labor in the neanial and vilest of all employment-And he would gladly have satisfied his hunger with the husks that the swine did eat but no man gave unto him- I have often fancied to myself that I could see this wicked youth clothed in rags sitting down at the root of some ancient(?) oak reflecting upon the sw2eet home of his ~~childhood~~ boyhood & ? the folly of his youth-Far frome-home destitute of money, & fimished(?) with hunger, he (?) the overflowing of his ----- unhappy mind- "How many hired servants of my Fa-thers (said he, have bread enough & to spare and I perish with hun-ger I will arise and go to my Father and will say unto him Father, I have sinned against heav-en and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called they son. Make me as one of they hired servants- How many young men like the prodigal son gather up their substance and go out into the world in pursuit of pleasure, but finally by their improper associations and riotous living they bring upon themselves poverty and disgrace and under the mortifying reflections of their condition. Many have been led to put a termination ^to their existence by their own hand. "There is no peace(?) to the wicked saith my God"

Look at the young lady^sporting -----upon the streams of fashionable manners and reputations, arrayed in all the gewgaws(?) and icicles of fashion skipping over the ball room as busily as the thoughtless humming bird ^ dancing around the flowers of spring and as gay as the butterfly that flut-ters through the field of summer but see her again when she leaves the scene of meriment and hilarity and why is it that she is sad? Why is it that she is restless(?) and un-happy? It is because of the painful reflections of the (?) the sound of the fiddler and the scene of gait and amusement alas! Have but the effect to deepen the gloom of retirement and train the conscience with the things of ^bitter reorse. Look at the gambler around the card table snuffing the midnight taper, suffling and dealing pain0ted paste boards or rattling the uncertain dice his mind deeply agitated or that which he expects to gather from the law of luck. But see him again when his pro-perty is exhausted when his friends forsake him and (?) wants of a numerous ^family and (?) muttering in his ears. You behold now an object of pity, a subject of folly-a ghost confused in a cobweb frame, a soul that already feels the ~~fires~~-kindling of ^the fire which burns to the nethermost hell. These are some of the wages of sin which arise from ^painful ~~bitter~~ reflec-tion-

Look at the drunkard after he has taken a protracted (?) to the neglect of his business, for t the distress of his family-Why is it that he walks and sighs and repents and makes the most solumn vouws of amendment? Because he feels a worm within which gnaws upon his troubled mind. The

reflection of the past leaves his conscience if I may use the expression pierced with ten thorns and stings and bleeding at every hose.

Observe the painful anxiety of every class of the wicked-the swearer and the Sabbath breaker the slanderer and the debauched-why is it that they are alarmed in time of dangers and in view of approaching death? Because----- a guilty conscience tells them that they are unprepared to meet their God-their (?) ho-rizon is overhead with an awful cloud, skirted with light-ning and loaded with eternal thunder- But the ^painful reflections of troubled mind are but the be-ginnings of sorrow that pun-ishment which God has denoun-ced against the wicked.

2. In the second place he has threatened to visit the ---wicked with temperate judgements ~~in the present world~~ wickedness says Solomon overthroweth the sinner-Many have (?) (?) for the innocent into which they have fullen themselves. Haman has a a peculiar fa-vorite at the throne of Persia and in the wickedness of his heart he attempted the destruction of all the Jews within the Kingdom because Mordecai one of their nation refused to do him reverence at the King's gate But the wheel of providence brings a turn and Mordecai is raised upon the top while Haman is crushed beneath its weight Haman prepared a gallows for Mordecai fifty feet high and God reversed his decree and Ha-man was hung upon the gal-lows which he had prepared for Mordecai "The triumphing of the wicked is (but) short"

"The curse of the Lord is on the house of the wicked" "Trouble & anguish shall make him afraid Many have felt the sad reverse of fortune and from compara-tive affluence they have been reduced to the lowest vale of poverty. They heap up wishes but know not who shall gather them-

The years of the wicked says ~~sol~~Solomon shall be shortened and bloody and deceitful men says the Psalmist shall not live out half their days. Thousands of instances continually occure in proof of this solemn fact. How many young men of ge-nius and fortune have blacked their character ruined their health and brought themselves to a premature grave by their hab-its of excess and dissipation & how many have gone hobbling out their days under a weight of bodily afflictions. How true the saying of Job "The wicked man traveleth with pain all his days" a dreadful sound is in his prosperity. The destroyer shall come upon him.

3. In third place God has threat-ened the wicked with everlasting punishment in the torments of hell

The wicked shall be turned into hell ~~with~~ all the nations that forget God- The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not god and that obey not the gospels of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power. Punish-ment being the effect of sin, the effect can never destroy the cause, therefore the punish-ment of the wicked shall endure forever-Reason teaches that God may punish sinners so long as they continue to sin and there is no reason to suppose that those who die impenitent will ever cease to sin, for a sinful volition or exercise will never produce a holy one with aspect

to the duration of future punishment mankind are not proper judges for they know not the diminish of sin God alone can determine this and he speaks of it in the scriptures as “eternal, “everlasting” “for ever and ever” We must therefore renounce the Bible altogether or believe the doctrine of endless future punishment_

The punishment of the wicked will be both bodily and mental. As the body and the soul constitute the person that sinned in this life so they both will constitute the person that will suffer in the life to come, after the separate state ^shall close though before the time the soul ~~only~~ will suffer ^alone There is abundant reason to believe that there will be corporeal punishment in hell because the soul cannot presently suffer without affecting the body. But their sufferings we believe will be _chiefly mental. These will arise from a great variety of sources. In the first place the exercise of memory will form one of the principal sources of their misery-Shut up in the caverns of despair. The wicked must recollect forever the kind admonitions of almighty God-The threatenings and promises of the Holy scriptures- the strivings of the Holy spirit , and the convictions of their own judgment- They will recollect the warning & entreaties of ministers and friend and the various opportunities which they once enjoyed to secure that great salvation ~~which was once within their reach, but~~ which is ^now removed to an infinite distance, ~~and this reflection will provide(?)~~ and the reflection of their privileges abused will produce everlasting regret-and while they lie down in eternal darkness and despair they must exclaim forever “oh that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me, when his candle shined upon my heart and when by his light I walked through darkness- Memory will bring up every act of sin which they have ever committed which will pierce them through ~~their souls~~ like so many cannon balls propelled by all the powder that ever was manufactured by the art of man- They must reflect too that their punishment is eternal- Oh eternity. Eternity who can tell the length of eternity! Philip Melancthon one of the German reformers observes that ^which at Wertember ~~not a (?) occasion place~~ he was walking out one summer evening with several of his fellow students –he the course of their walk they heard an uncommon singing , and following the sound they saw a bird of uncommon figure-one stepping forward, walked in the name of the Father Son and the Holy Ghost what art thou? It replied I am a damned spirit and in flying away, pronounced these words oh eternity, eternity who can tell the length of eternity!-Suppose this earth to be a ball of sand and one grain to be annihilated in a thousand years, yet the length of time that it w? require to waste away the earth at this calculation w? been no more proportion to the ages of eternity than one drop of water to the mighty ocean. Oh think of this and fear to sin against God.

2. Another source of anguish will be the raging desire of ease and pleasure never to be gratified- The wicked will see ~~at a good distance~~ the felicity of heaven at a distance. They will see the tree of life rising above the battlements of heaven bounding with ambrosial fruit; they will see that flowing river ~~(?)~~ WHICH PROCEEDS FROM THE THRONE OF God . the lamb clear as crystal. They must see the adoring millions circling the throne of God rejoicing, clothed in spotless white and wearing upon their head crowns of gold, but never shall they mingle with this illustrious company and share their holy delights “Therefore thus saith the Lord God Behold my servants shall eat but you shall be hungry: behold my servants shall drink, but ye shall be

thirsty: behold my servants shall rejoice but ye shall be ashamed: behold by servants shall sing for joy, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart and howl for vexation of spirit.

3. The last source of punishment which I shall mention, will be the association with the devils and his angels and all the wicked and impenitent persons who have ever lived upon the earth-Imagine that you see the wicked driven away into some dark corner of Jehovah's dominions and start when in the most loathsome prison whose walls are high and strong-see the door close upon them-fate turns the enormous key, deep (?) every bolt upon their destiny-the awful caverns utter a melancholly moan-the key is thrown away never to unlock the door of the awful pit again- but who are there that I hear howling in this dolorous prison-all the wicked without any respect to distinction, age or sex will be there_ the maniac with his wild shrieks_ the drunkard with bloodshot eyes_ the mid-night assassin with savage look the murderer with his hand stained with innocent blood ~~But these will not be alone with the miserable~~ there will be the haughty young man too whose pride will be brought down to hell- there will be the young lady whose life was devoted to fashion, and washed in sin and folly forever she must mill with all the fiends of hell and mingle her shrieks with all the accursed from God- there those miserable beings will remain forever shut up in darkness and shed their tears of sorrow which never will move the compassion of God.

"O (?) stab of deep despair to see my God remove and fix my awful(?) station where I must not taste his love" Dear friend I am done.

Oh! Unthinking man! Thoughtless woman! Whether art thou giving(?)? Is there no knock from within, no whisper from within to shake you from your false security-heaven kindles in terrific ire-Hell moves in hunting flames all creation loudly thunders & declares there is a God- Stop sinners and reflect- you may now escape- the strong holds are nighthy redemption is at hand- knowing the terrors of the Lord we persuade man-the arms of love that encompass me w? all mankind embraces_

(the second manifestation for another sermon)

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