

PRAYER MEETING
"TROUBLE IN THE CITY"

Introduction

Amos here connects evil and God. The question is: How are they related?

Relevance

The relevance is all too obvious. How are we to think of the London bombings today – so evil and so cleverly planned when world-leaders are in Gleneagles.

1. There are different ideas on this:

1) God is entirely unconnected with evil.

Even some churchmen say this: "God has nothing to do with evil/calamity."

OBJECTION: But how then is God in control?

2) God has given freedom of will to all men.

Consequently he cannot stop evil.

OBJECTION: But the same objection holds. Can any event happen apart from God?

2. The true view is here in Amos: There cannot be any evil on earth apart from the will and purpose of God:

1) We do not mean that God's the author of sin. This is morally impossible.

2) But that God allows sin for wise and good reasons.

3) This is not a bare permission but a regulating of man's sin by God's absolute and sovereign power.

OBSERVE: This is what the TEXT means.

3. The following examples help us to see it:

1) The sin of Adam and coming of Christ

2) The hardening of Pharaoh's heart.

2 "wills"

3) The crucifixion of Christ: Acts 2:23; 3:18.

4) The rise of Antichrist. See 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12

5) The unbelief of the Jews. Romans 11:11

4. How we are to view God's part in such events:

He leaves the creature to his own freedom of will and permits the evil consequences to come about for wise and good reasons:

e.g. Pharaoh's hardening – how was he hardened – and why?

DOCTRINE: God's part in evil events is always holy and good. He cannot do evil, nor have an evil motive:

5. How might we view God's relation to the terrorist crimes today in London?

OBSERVE: We have no infallible guide for interpreting God's providences as a rule. But we are to learn lessons:

1) Punishment for sin: See ref. to Antichrist above

2) Our duty of repentance: the Tower of Siloam: Luke 13:5

3) To warn men (closely related): Romans 11:19-22

CONCLUSION

How should we interpret this providence? Surely, it is God's loud voice to repentance.

PSALM

94:11 – 15

7: 12 – 17

94: 20 -23