

The Attackers: Shepherd Leaders: Amos: The Integrity & Severity of God, Rom 11:22; Idolatry Brought Severity to the Northern Kingdom; Amos's Dies Irae: "Day of Wrath"; Illustration of Divine Wrath, Amos 5:19–24; Black Sheep: the Alexander Coppersmith Syndrome: Introduction: the Worship of Artemis in Ephesus: Paul's Enemies: The 7 Sons of Sceva, Acts 19:8–10; "The Way," a Metonymy for Jesus as the Only Way for Salvation, v. 9

75. Paul summarizes the divine attitude toward client nation Israel in:

Romans 11:22 - Behold the integrity of God [**blessings from the justice of God**] and the severity of God [**punishment from the justice of God**]; on the one hand severity to those who fell [**Jewish unbelievers**], but on the other hand the integrity of God to you [**Gentile believers**], if [**3dCC**] you persist in the sphere of the integrity of God, otherwise you also [**Gentile believers**] will be cut off by divine discipline. (CTL & EXT)

76. Severity came to the Jews because of idolatry; integrity was demonstrated to the Gentiles who replaced the Jews in history as client nations to God.

77. Beginning with chapter 1, verse 3, Amos begins the Dies Irae \dē-ās ē'-rā\: "Day of Wrath," of his requiem.

78. The Dies Irae in requiem masses describes the day of judgment at the Second Advent. That is not the subject of Amos but judgment is about to fall on the Northern Kingdom and what follows in his prophecy may be described as the harbinger of the Day of Wrath imposed by the severity of God.

79. A sample passage in Amos illustrates the divine attitude toward a reversionistic people who exhibit a four-decade rejection of divine grace in exchange for the worship of false gods:

Amos 5:18 - Alas, you who are longing for the day of the Lord,[†] for what purpose will the day of the Lord be to you? It will be darkness and not light;

80. Those who deviate from doctrine in favor of religion often do not respond positively to the severity of God.

81. Instead they anxiously expect the Second Advent which they hypocritically assume will exchange their "days of wrath" for deliverance and glory.

82. To the contrary, the Second Advent is a time of judgment—"darkness and not light"—for the wicked.

Amos 5:19 - As when a man flees from a lion and a bear meets him, or goes home, leans his hand against the wall and a snake bites him.

v. 20 - Will not the day of the Lord be darkness instead of light, even gloom with no brightness in it?

83. At this point the Lord resumes His commentary with a series of indictments regarding the superficial nature of their religious observances:

Amos 5:21 - "I hate, I reject your festivals, nor do I delight in your solemn assemblies.

[†] The Jews of the Old Testament did not understand the two advents of Christ; nevertheless, it is the Second Advent that is referenced in this passage.

v. 22 - "Even though you offer up to Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings, I will not accept them; and I will not even look at the peace offerings of your fatlings.

v. 23 - "Take away from Me the noise of your songs; I will not even listen to the sound of your harps.

v. 24 - "But let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream."

III. Black Sheep:

A. Introduction:

1. No matter which category of authority you may possess or fall under, all should be aware of those who set themselves up as a threat to the divine system of order.
2. Those in authority should keep an eye out for those with the evil eye; those under authority should keep an eye on themselves lest they acquire an evil eye.
3. Paul, as the alpha apostle, provides an example of a person with maximum authority. He was under constant abuse from many sources.
4. By virtue of the ongoing attacks against him, Paul learned some basic principles of human nature:
 - (1) You will never be free of those who seek to destroy your reputation.
 - (2) You will never be free of those who seek to discredit the Word of God.
 - (3) These attacks come from those inside the church as well as from outside of it.
 - (4) We will classify these attacks as the Alexander Coppersmith Syndrome.
5. A syndrome is a group of signs or symptoms that occur together and characterize a particular abnormality or condition.²
6. We are introduced to Alexander Coppersmith in 2 Timothy 4:14-15. He is a metalworker in the city of Ephesus where Timothy is pastor-teacher of one of its local churches.
7. The city of Ephesus was considered the religious center for the Roman province of Asia and the worship of the goddess Artemis.
8. Artemis was considered the "mother goddess of the earth" and was depicted in statues carved in wood and on coinage:

The upper part of her body was completely covered with rows of breasts to signify that she was the mother of all life. (p. 842)

The temple of Diana³ was not properly the home of the goddess. She lived in nature; she was everywhere there was life, the mother of all living things; all offerings of every possible nature were therefore acceptable to her; hence the vast wealth which poured into her temple.⁴ (p. 843)

² Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th ed., s.v.: "syndrome."

³ Diana is the Latinized form of the Greek word for Artemis (Ἄρτεμις).

⁴ E. J. Banks, "Diana (Artemis)," in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956), 2:842-843.

9. There is some background information that is necessary before we analyze the Alexander's attacks on Paul at Ephesus.
10. Paul had had previous encounters with the followers of Artemis and especially those who were involved with the peripheral aspects related to her worship.
11. Those who opposed Paul in Ephesus include the seven sons of Sceva and Demetrius the silversmith in Acts 19, Hymenaeus and Alexander in 1 Timothy 1:19, Hymenaeus and Philetus in 2 Timothy 2:17-18, and Alexander Coppersmith in 2 Timothy 4:14-15.
12. Each of these passages reveals attacks on the Word of God received during the first century in general and in Paul's ministry in particular.
13. By observing each of these passages we will also discern that some of the incidents that confront Paul are not all that dissimilar from the ones Christianity faces today.
14. Also the behavior of the people involved reminds us of current events, especially the satanic strategy associated with mobs.

B. The Seven Sons of Sceva: Acts 19:13-17:

1. This passage takes place in Ephesus where Paul began a three-year ministry, two of which he taught doctrine both in the local synagogue and at the school of Tyrannus \ Tī-rān'-us\ (Τύραννος).

Acts 19:8 - Paul entered the synagogue and continued speaking out boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God.

v. 9 - But when some were becoming hardened [they rejected the gospel] and disobedient [they did not believe], speaking evil of the Way [a metonymy⁵ for Jesus] before the people, he withdrew [separated] from them and took away the disciples, reasoning daily in the school [σχολή (*scholē*): instruction at a medical school] of Tyrannus.

v. 10 - This took place for two years, so that all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.

⁵ “Metonymy, a figure of speech that replaces the name of one thing with the name of something else closely associated with it” (Chris Baldick, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1990], 135.