

Is Your God a Kitten or a Lion?

Scripture Reading — Amos 1:1-2

“The Lord roars from Zion and thunders from Jerusalem.”
Amos 1:2 —

Do you picture God as a kitten or a lion?

Kittens are tame and playful; lions terrify us. Many of us prefer to imagine God as tame and not too demanding. The idea of God as a lion—fierce and overpowering— is not how we prefer to think of God.

Israel pictured God as more of a kitten than a lion: soft on sin and indifferent to injustice. As a result, the wealthy mistreated the poor. The justice system favored the rich. The wicked thrived while the righteous suffered. And Israel acted as though God didn't care.

Amos warns Israel that God is on the prowl, and, like a lion, he will roar in judgment against sin. At first, Amos speaks about judgment on the nations around Israel (see Amos 1:3-2:5), and the people of Israel would have nodded in approval about this punishment for their enemies. But then Amos warns Israel that they too are the target of God's judgment. God the Lion was going to punish his people for their sin and injustice.

In time, God roared in judgment. At the cross, God roared in judgment against all our sin. Yet God came not only as a Lion but also as a Lamb. God sent Jesus as the sacrificial Lamb to carry our sin. In Christ, we see God's hatred for sin and his love for sinners.

Let's give thanks to him today!

Prayer

O God, you hate our sin. Forgive us when we fall short. Thank you for providing the Lamb who takes away our sin! Help us to hate our sin and grow in your grace. Amen.

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