



THE BOOK OF AMOS

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**NEXT
LEVEL** 
ONLINE
OZARK CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

Session 1: Amos Introduction and Background (Amos 1:1)

Intro to the Minor Prophets

1. God called certain individuals to be his mouthpiece: the prophets.
2. The word “prophet” means to “bubble forth” meaning to speak enthusiastically.
3. Augustine noted the term “Minor” only referred to their literary length, not the importance of their content. The minor prophets have less narrative surrounding their oracles, making them significantly shorter than Isaiah, Jeremiah, or Ezekiel.

Historical Context of Amos

“The words of Amos, one of the shepherds of Tekoa—the vision he saw concerning Israel two years before the earthquake when Uzziah was king of Judah and Jeroboam son of Jehoash was king of Israel” (1:1).

1. Uzziah, King of Judah (2 Kings 15:1-5; 2 Chron 26:1-23)
2. Jeroboam II, King of Israel (2 Kings 14:25-29)
3. “Two years before the earthquake.”

Background of Amos the Prophet

1. Amos’ Hebrew name means “Burden Bearer.”
2. 1:1 and 7:14 share that Amos tended sycamore-fig trees and was a “shepherd.”
3. “I was neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet.”
4. Amos is from Tekoa which is ten miles south of Jerusalem.

Application

1. Amos is a great example to do things we do not feel qualified to do in places where we do not feel qualified to go.
2. Many of us live with or around people with calloused hearts toward God.
3. Like Amos, we need to concentrate on our commissioning and God will handle the results.

Session 1 Discussion Questions

1. Why do most Christians struggle reading the Minor Prophets?
2. How does understanding the historical context help us understand the content of Amos?
3. Amos' name means "Burden Bearer" which is a reflection of the ministry God called him to. What burdens your heart? How do you respond to that burden?

Session 2: Prepare to Meet Your God (Amos 1:2-4:13)

Introductory Poem

“The Lord roars from Zion and thunders from Jerusalem, the pastures of the shepherds dry up, and the top of Carmel withers” (1:2).

Judgment on Neighboring Nations

1. The oracle to each people group follows a poetic pattern.
 - “This is what the Lord says.”
 - “For three sins, even four, I will not relent.”
2. The nations: Damascus, Gaza, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, and Moab.
3. These nations have abused the Hebrews for centuries.
4. As Amos boldly proclaims judgment on each nation for their atrocities against the Hebrews, you can picture the Israelites cheering and celebrating.

Surprise Judgment on Judah and Israel

1. At the pinnacle of celebration, God’s fury will not relent from these detestable nations. We read a plot twist.
2. Against Judah (Amos 2:4-5)
3. Against Israel (Amos 2:6-16)
4. Therefore, God promises that Israel will be punished for their sins. (Amos 3:12).

Prepare to meet your God.

“Therefore this is what I will do to you, Israel, and because I will do this to you, Israel, prepare to meet your God” (Amos 4:12).

Session 2 Discussion Questions

1. How do the poetical nuances of Amos' writing enhance the intensity of his message?
2. Is there a place in the church today of intense preaching that calls people out for their sin? Did Jesus ever speak this way? How do you personally respond to this style of preaching?
3. In what areas of life are you not prepared to meet your God (Amos 4:12)? How can this be remedied?

Session 3: The Day of the Lord (Amos 5:1-17)

Lamenting Israel

1. Amos then recites a lament for “Virgin Israel” who has fallen with no one to lift her up. This is a personification of a nation that has not been conquered yet in order to shock them into the reality to come.
2. These 17 verses are a true call to repentance:
 - They cannot get divine counsel from false, non-existent gods. They need to seek the Lord to live.
 - The leaders must start providing true justice for the people.
 - If they do not stop hurting each other, wailing would be heard in every corner of Israel because God would “pass through” their midst like the Angel of Death (5:16-17; cf. Ex 12:12).

Repentance

1. Repentance means to turn around. Easier said than done in many areas of life.
2. Three times in these 17 verses God says to “Seek the Lord and live” or “seek good and live” (Amos 5:4, 6, 14-15).
3. Rather than worrying about what sins are going to hit us today, look for the Lord. Seek the attributes of God that you want to incorporate into your life and aim for that.

Session 3 Discussion Questions

1. What words or phrases stand out in this section of Amos that you needed to read today? Why?
2. Justice is always an important part of our political and social concerns.
 - A. What are the justice issues Amos addresses?
 - B. What role do his concerns play in our contemporary discussions?
 - C. How should the church respond to injustices toward the poor and defenseless?
3. Have you ever lamented over your sins? Did this remorse lead to repentance?

Session 4: Double Woes (Amos 5:18-6:14)

Double Woes

Amos will now lay out details of two specific reasons for Israel to “woe.”

1. You longed for the Day of the Lord. But because of their wickedness, they too will be on the receiving end of that justice (Amos 5:18-27).
2. Two sins
 - Complacency: Israel should not feel secure. Even in their lives of luxury, music, food, and wine, those who do not grieve the ruin caused by sin will be the first to go into exile (6:1-7).
 - Pride: God abhors the pridefulness of Jacob. Pride is the only sin that makes everyone else around you sick except for you. He will smash the great palaces and humble abodes alike (6:8-14).

The problem is that Israel felt secure because they were God’s covenant people. They can’t wait for the day of the Lord. Amos warns that the Day of the Lord is good news for true people of God who are obedient. But Israel has been unfaithful and will experience the darkness of that day (Amos 5:18, 20).

Application

1. It is our complacency and pride that lead to our self-reliance rather than being dependent on God within the boundaries of protection he sets for us.
2. Romans 11:22: “Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off.”
 - God’s wrath and love are not on opposite ends of the spectrum.
3. The threats and reality of Assyrian exile were meant to shock Israel into repentance so they could enjoy the blessings of God again.

4. God loves his children. It brings him sorrow when he sees the mess humanity creates when we push past the boundaries he creates. It harms others, it harms us. It causes him to cry out, "Woe!"

Session 4 Discussion Questions

1. How would you respond if someone asked you, "What will the Day of the Lord be like?"
2. What would cause God to cry "Woe" in your community today?
3. God is both kind and stern (Romans 11:22). He is both wrath and love. These qualities are not in opposition to one another. How is God's wrathful judgment a form of his love?
4. Do you believe that God draws us to repentance because he wants to protect us, not punish us? If this is true, why do we often push against his boundaries?
5. Does God's grace compel you to trust and obey him? Slow down and think about this for a while. What blessings are we denying by not trusting and obeying God?

Session 5: The Plumbline & Restoration (Amos 7:1-17)

Trio of Visions (Amos 7:1-9)

1. Locust
2. Fire
3. Plumbline
 - God will spare them no longer.
 - The high places of Isaac
 - “With my sword, I will rise against the house of Jeroboam.”

Amos Banished from Israel

1. Amaziah the priest sends word to Jeroboam II.
2. Amaziah accuses Amos of being a prophet for hire (7:12-13).
3. Amos response.

Application

1. This narrative is a reminder of the danger of speaking the truth of God to people who don't want to hear it.
2. Amos recounts his calling. He was neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet. He was not part of the famous school of the prophets, nor is it in his heritage. He breeds sheep, he tends to sycamore-fig trees by trade, but his calling is from God. So is yours. It's been said that God does not call the qualified, He qualifies the called.
3. Can I encourage you to not quit, even if living out God's calling gets rough?

Session 5 Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever had a vision from the Lord? Describe it. Did you understand it? How did you respond to it?
2. What if the Lord held a plumb line up to your community or to you personally? What areas are not in line with the Lord's Word and will? What steps need to be taken to straighten these issues?
3. Amos was obedient to God, yet was rejected and told to leave by the leaders of Israel. Just because we are doing what is right in the eyes of God does not mean people will accept our message of truth. Have you ever experienced a similar situation?
4. "When God calls you to it, he sees you through it." In what ways has this proven to be true in your life?

Session 6: The Fruit Basket and the Finale (Amos 8:1-9:15)

The Fourth Vision (Amos 8)

1. Ripe summer fruit
2. There will be a famine, not from bread or water but a famine of the Word of God.
 - Immediate context: People will long for a word from the Lord but will not find it.
 - Future Context: Through silence, God creates a yearning to hear from him again.

Destruction and Restoration of Israel (Amos 9)

1. More Doom
 - God will bring the temple crashing down.
 - The pillars of the temple were called Boaz (means strength) and Jakin (means security).
 - “I will keep my eye on them for harm and not for good.”
2. Hope
 - The closing prophecy in Amos 9:11-15 starts with “In that day” referencing the Day of the Lord we talked about. Through the book of Amos, we see this wrathful God disciplining his wicked and unfaithful children that have violated their part of the covenant.
 - We see a graceful God who remembers his part of the covenant. He restores, bringing goodness and abundance back to the nation of Israel.
 - Amos closes with a glimpse of how this is fulfilled through the Messiah, Jesus.

Session 6 Discussion Questions

1. How does it feel when God says he will keep his eye on Israel for harm, not good (Amos 9:4)? Do you think he would say that to anyone today?
2. Amos shifts to a positive view of the Day of the Lord in 9:11-15? Detail how this provides hope and links to the Messiah?
3. As we close, ask yourself a few questions. First, do I look like Amos, the prophet with a plumb line?
 - A. Do I stand true to God's Word? Do I hunger and thirst for the Word of God daily? Or, does my day-to-day indicate that I bow down to modern gods?
 - B. Am I obedient to my calling to speak the truth to people who may not want to hear it? Or, do I pretend like everything is spiritually OK with the people around me?
 - C. Do I place my hope in the Messiah who will right all wrongs in this messed up world we live in? Or, do I conform to culture and hurt others in the process?

This video was made possible with support from:

