



Restorer

REASON FOR PUNISHING ISRAEL

Amos 1-3

Teaching Notes

INTRO

There are 12 minor prophets including Amos. He was in the northern province. His name meant *burden*. Amos was an everyday person from a small village ten miles south of Jerusalem named Tekoa.

Amos was the only prophet to announce his occupation before he was called to be a prophet. He was a sheep breeder and not of priestly or noble descent. God used everyday people to bring His Word. He stated he was not a prophet or the son of a prophet. So basically, he took care of trees and sheep. Acts 4:13 gave the account of the men that followed Jesus. The passage outlined the qualifications of Peter and John. They were uneducated and untrained regular people, but they had been in the presence of Jesus.

Amos' writing took place while Jeroboam II was king, between 793 and 753 B.C. He wrote two years before a memorable earthquake. Zechariah mentioned the earthquake 200 years after it had happened as referenced in Zechariah 14:5.

MacArthur stated, "Amos was a Judean prophet called to deliver a message primarily to the northern tribes of Israel (Amos 7:15). Politically, it was a time of prosperity for Israel under the long and secure reign of Jeroboam II who, following the example of his father Joash (2 Kings 13:25), significantly 'restored the territory of Israel' (2 Kings 14:25). It was also a time of peace with both Judah (cf. 5:5) and her more distant neighbors; the ever-present menace of Assyria was subdued, possibly because of Nineveh's repentance at the preaching of Jonah (Jonah 3:10). Spiritually, however, it was a time of rampant corruption and moral decay (Amos 4:1; 5:10-13; 2 Kings 14:24)."¹

Amos 4:1 was an example of the decay of their spirituality where wealthy women oppressed the poor and crushed the needy. Amos had two messages to bring. There was a lack of true justice and lack of true worship. According to MacArthur, "In the midst of their ritualistic performance of worship, they were not pursuing the Lord with their hearts (Amos 4:4-5; 5:4-6), nor following His standard of justice with their neighbors (Amos 5:10-13; 6:12)."² There were no standards.

As prophets were giving the Word from God, no one wanted to hear from them. In Amos 9, there was reference to what a *Restorer* would look like. In Amos 9:11-15 God said He would restore all that He had promised. It was a foreshadowing of what Christ would do in their lives. God showed what a *Restorer* looked like. The Lord declared that He would bring about the restoration.

TEACHING

Amos 1:1-5: Chapter 1 started with a description of Amos, who he was, and what he would do. The first of several judgements that were to come was addressed in verses 3-5. Judgement would come against Syria and specifically to Damascus, the capital city, for cruelty. The crimes of Syria were numerous and along the lines of ungodliness in the worst form.

Amos 1:6-8: the Lord would not relent from punishing the nations. In Gaza, a city in Philistia, their crimes were in regards to their role in oppression and opposition to God's people. They were making slaves of the people.

Amos 1:9-10: The pattern of Scripture in the first verses of chapter 1 were repeated in verses 9-10. Judgement was coming against Tyre in the region of Phoenicia, along the Mediterranean.

Amos 1:11-12: By verses 11-12 God had told Hosea to tell the people that He would judge all these cities. McGee stated, "The judgement against Edom was because of their revengeful spirit. Back of revenge one ordinarily finds jealousy. The Edomites were jealous of their brothers."³

Amos 1:13-15: In verses 13-15 judgement came against the Ammonites for their cruelty and violent crimes. Rabbah was the capital city of Ammon

¹ John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Bible Commentary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2005), pp. 992.

² MacArthur, p. 992.

³ J. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible Volume 3: Proverbs-Malachi*, (Nashville Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1983), p. 687.



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Amos 2:1-3: Chapter 2 continues the list of cities that would be judged by God. Moab was the next city mentioned that would face judgement because of their disrespect of the dead royalty. Verse 1-3 in chapter 2 fit better with chapter 1.

Amos 2:4-5: There was a shift in verses 4-5. Hosea now addressed the judgement that would come to Judah and Israel. The judgement was no longer about the surrounding nations. The kings and prophets had rejected the instruction of the Lord. Israel was no different from the other cities that were facing judgement. Their leaders led the people astray. There was no respect for the instruction and the Law of God.

Amos 2:6-16: These verses specifically addressed the judgement that was to come against Israel. The sins of Israel were no different from the sins of the other cities, every statement of judgement against every city mentioned, three crimes, maybe four, that had been committed against God and God's people.

Amos 3:1-2: Chapter 3 implies that God had an intimate and chosen relationship with the people of Israel. Yet, Israel was guilty of multiple sins against God including immorality, blasphemy, and various other sins. McGee said, "This is a great principle that God puts down here. He intends to judge in a harsher manner those who have received light than those who are in darkness."⁴ Israel should know God's way. The Israelites disobeyed to the extent that judgement was now coming. They had abandoned God's standard.

Amos 3:3-8: Next, five questions are raised that should receive a negative answer, and two questions are raised that should get a positive answer. Constable said, "Amos asked seven rhetorical questions in verses 3-6 to help the Israelites appreciate the inevitability of their judgment. In each one, the prophet pointed out that a certain cause inevitably produces a certain effect. The five questions in verses 3-5 expect a negative answer, and the two in verse 6 expect a positive one. Verses 7-8 draw the conclusion. The comparisons start out peacefully (two people walking together), but increase in intensity (to a city under attack). This creates an ominous rhetorical tone."⁵ God was going to reveal Himself to His people and He did that through the prophet Amos. He forewarned His people of His judgement.

The people were not capable of doing right. Pagan nations appeared to be more righteous than Israel. Judgement was going to come to Israel in the form of adversaries that would punish them.

CLOSING

Amos implied there would be a small remnant of Israel that would remain after the judgement. God seemed to be fed up with His people. God would destroy their false religions. And because of their misuse of wealth, Israel would face judgement. The message had not changed, God expected obedience. Eventually, God would still show up and restore the situation and His people.

⁴ McGee, 694.

⁵ Thomas Constable, *Constable's Expository (Bible Study Notes): Amos*, p. 34; available at <https://planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/amos.pdf>.