

Amos Chapter 1

Introduction:

Type: Prophetic, the 3rd of the “**minor**” prophets. (Major vs: Minor)

Author: Amos - “Burden Bearer” or “One with a Burden.”

- Amos is different that all the prophets we’ve studied thus far. Unlike the other prophets Amos wasn’t a man whose life was devoted to hearing and speaking the Word of the LORD. He wasn’t a full time prophet so to speak, he didn’t graduate from the “school of the prophets,” he wasn’t a professional “seer.”
- Amos was a regular man that God would use for a season, then presumably afterwards he went back to his flocks and figs.
- He was not a prophet per se, he wasn’t the son of a prophet, he wasn’t part of the priestly line, he was just a common man like us.
- Yet while he was watching and tending his sheep, God spoke to him to go to the Northern kingdom and prophesy against them.
- Amos was a herdsman and a fruit picker from Tekoa, 6 miles Southwest of Bethlehem, 11 miles from Jerusalem. (Below Herodian)
- Although he was from Tekoa in the land of Judah, God called him to go to Israel, the Northern kingdom to prophesy.
- During Jeroboam II’s reign the northern kingdom was at the high water mark of their power and wealth, rich in material things, but very poor in spiritual things, so Amos is sent by God to wake them up and or shake them up.
- Contemporaries: As a child Amos may have known Jonah and Elisha who were passing off the stage as Amos was coming in. Hosea & Joel may have been a contemporary or near predecessor. As Amos was near the end of his ministry, Isaiah and Micah were just beginning. He could potentially crossed paths with any of these other OT prophets.
- Amos was a sheep breeder, a shepherd, a fruit picker a man of lowly estate, from a lowly location, sent out of his own country to the Northern kingdom to a prosperous powerful people. Amos was very much a “layman,” a humble farmer and shepherd who was not an official member of the Jewish religious or political establishment.

1 Corinthians 1:27 “But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty.”

Time written: During the reign of king Uzziah, approximately 800 BC, about 30 years before the fall of the Northern kingdom. This is about 200 years after the establishment of the Northern kingdom and its idolatry.

- Joel and Amos are very different books. Joel prophesied to a people in a time of great distress, the plagues of locusts, and the economic hardship that comes with it. Amos is prophesying to a prosperous people enjoying the good life of prosperity and power who will soon experience judgment for their idolatrous ways.

Written to: Northern kingdom, Gentile nations.

Theme: Warning of the coming judgment and the promise of ultimate restoration.

- Background: Amos ministers at a time when both the Southern kingdom of Judah and the Northern kingdom of Israel are prospering. Both kingdoms are enjoying prosperity and security; king Uzziah would reign over Judah for over 50 years and enjoying both economic and military success. Jeroboam II who reigned over the Northern kingdom for 40 years - while both kingdoms prospered outwardly, there was an inward rot that was growing and eating away at both kingdoms.

Outline:

- Chapters 1-2 Amos denounces 8 nations for their treatment of Israel and their ensuing judgment.
- Chapters 3-6 describes the guilt and punishment of Israel.
- Chapters 7-9 Amos describes 5 visions of approaching judgment.
- Chapter 9 ends with the future restoration of Israel, V:’s 11-15

V: 1 Amos give us a little bit about his background. He was a sheep breeder, something akin to a shepherd, but it’s a slightly different word.

Amos 7:14 “Then Amos answered, and said to Amaziah: “I was no prophet, nor was I a son of a prophet, but I was a sheepbreeder and a tender of sycamore fruit.”

- Sycamore fruit being figs from the fig tree. He was a fruit picker as well.

[Sheepbreeder / shepherd:](#)

Psalm 78:70-72 “⁷⁰He also chose David His servant, and took him from the sheepfolds; ⁷¹from following the ewes that had young He brought him, to

shepherd Jacob His people, and Israel His inheritance. ⁷²So he shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart, and guided them by the skillfulness of his hands.”

- Abraham, Isaac, Jacob - all herdsmen, shepherds, Moses spent 40 years learning how to be a shepherd, then sent back to lead the flock of Israel out of Egypt.

Our Lord Jesus:

John 10:11 “I am the good Shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.”

3 time stamps:

- King Uzziah reigned over Judah from 790-740 BC, 50 years.
- King Jeroboam II, son of Joash ruled over the Northern kingdom of Israel from 793-753 BC, 40 years.

“... *two years before the earthquake.*”

- According to the historian Josephus, the earthquake happened at about the same time that Uzziah was struck with leprosy which would place Amos’ prophecy at about 790 BC. This is mentioned in other prophecies as well.
- When the earthquake happened many people fled from Jerusalem, something that Zechariah also mentions:

Speaking of our Lord’s return and setting His feet on the Mt. of Olives:

Zechariah 14:5 “Then you shall flee through My mountain valley, for the mountain valley shall reach to Azal. Yes, you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah.”

- These are “*the words of Amos*” about that “*which he saw.*” So is it a prophecy or a vision? Yes.

2 Peter 1:19-21 “¹⁹And so we have a more sure word / the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawn and the morning star rises in your hearts; ²⁰knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, ²¹for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”

V: 2 The LORD roars from Zion - and He will do so again as the Lion of the tribe of Judah!

Proverbs 20:2 “The wrath of a king is like the roaring of a lion; whoever provokes him to anger sins against his own life.”

Jeremiah 25:30 "... the LORD will roar from on high, and utter His voice from His holy habitation; He will roar mightily against His fold. He will give a shout, as those who tread the grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth."

- From Jerusalem to Carmel, there will be mourning and withering, dried up, deadness. Covering most if not all of Samaria, the Northern kingdom.

V: 3a God begins to describe His judgment of the various kingdoms that will come against Israel, even before they do what they're going to do.

- Damascus / Syria is up first: For three transgressions - and for four...
- We see this phrase 7 times in the first two chapters. Each time it's the same phrase with a different kingdom inserted - and in each instance it doesn't list 3 things then a fourth it just give a basic indictment against each perspective kingdom.
- It's a phrase that states they've crossed the line, they've gone over the limit.

Genesis 15:16 "But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."

- Meaning there was a limit that they had not yet reached.
- Now the Syrians and king Ben-Hadad - for three transgressions, which is the limit, like strike 3, and now for four - having gone over the limit... judgment falls.

V: 3b-5 In this case because they have "threshed" Gilead with implements of iron.

- History: **2 Kings Ch. 8** - Ben-Hadad, king of Damascus got sick, he sent his servant Hazael to enquire of Elisha whether he would survive or not. Elisha told Hazael that Ben-Hadad would recover, but that he would also die another way.
- Elisha then began to stare Hazael down, knowing that he would return and tell the king that he will survive, then he proceeds to murder the king, taking a wet cloth and suffocating him. Hazael then usurped the throne.
- He then attacked Israel in the area or the Golan Heights, otherwise known as Gilead - and was vicious in his attack, massacring the people, ripping open the pregnant women and destroying their babies.
- Tiglathpileser would fulfill this prophecy, he would conquer Damascus and take them all captive to Kir.
- The Valley of Aven is the same as Bethel, where one of their gold calves were.

- Beth Eden is another name for Damascus - the House of Delight.”
- Because of these atrocities God “will send fire” / judgment into the house of Hazeel. (1:4, 7, 10, 12, 14, 2:2, 2:5) 7X’s.

V: 6-8 Moving onto the impending judgment of Gaza:

- The jig is up, the limit has been reached and surpassed.
- This again is based on how they treated Israel, even though Israel was to be judged, the excessive cruelty employed was far and above what was reasonable.

Genesis 12:3 “I will bless those who bless you and curse him who curses you.”

- Edom is the area East of Israel, the Idumeans, perennial enemies of Israel.
- They were selling the Jews into slavery.

Romans 12:19 “Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, “vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” saith the Lord.”

- Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Ekron - major cities of the Philistines (Gath). Israel never completely drove the Philistines out and were a constant thorn in their side.

Zephaniah 2:4 “For Gaza shall be forsaken, and Ashkelon desolate; they shall drive out Ashdod at noonday, and Ekron shall be uprooted.”

V: 9-10 Tyre - again the litmus, how they dealt with Israel - did they help or did they hurt?

- They delivered the captives to Edom, to the Edomites.
- They ignored the covenant of brotherhood.
- During David’s reign, Hiram the king of Tyre was an admirer of David, they had a treaty, of mutual defense, Hiram supplied lumber for the Temple, they dwelt together in brotherly peace - then it all changed and Tyre helped those who hurt Israel.

Jeremiah 47:4 “Because of the day that comes to plunder all the Philistines, to cut off from Tyre and Sidon every helper who remains; for the LORD shall plunder the Philistines, the remnant of Caphtor.”

- Referencing the Philistines who came from the Island of Crete.

V: 11-12 The Edomites. Abraham begot Isaac. Rebekah conceived twins but the children in her womb struggled together within her.

Genesis 25:23 “And the LORD said to her: two nations are in your womb, two peoples shall be separated from your body; one people shall be stronger than the other, and the older shall serve the younger.”

- The Edomites were also perennial enemies of Israel, taking every advantage to do them harm, even to this day.
- They were cruel to God’s people and He will send fire upon their principal cities, they shall be devoured.

Psalms 83:3-8 “³They have taken crafty counsel against Your people, and consulted together against Your sheltered ones. ⁴They have said, “come, and let us cut them off from being a nation, that the name of Israel may be remembered no more.” ⁵For they have consulted together with one consent; they form a confederacy against You: ⁶The tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites; Moab and the Hagrites; ⁷Gabal, Ammon, and Amalek; Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre; ⁸Assyria also has joined with them; they have helped the children of Lot.”

V: 13-15 The Ammonites have filled up their measure and gone over.

- Specific mention is made of killing the children in the womb again referencing what took place in Gilead as the Golan was invaded with the help of the Ammonites.
- Fire will be kindled in Rabbah, or modern day Amman, Jordan.

Ezekiel 25:2-7 “²Son of man, set your face against the Ammonites, and prophecy against them. ³Say to the Ammonites, “hear the word of the Lord GOD! Thus says the Lord God: Because you said, ‘aha!’ against My sanctuary when it was profaned, and against the land of Israel when it was desolate, and against the house of Judah when they went into captivity, ⁴indeed, therefore, I will deliver you as a possession to the men of the East, and they shall set their encampments among you and make their dwellings among you; they shall eat your fruit, and they shall drink your milk. ⁵And I will make Rabbah a stable for camels and Ammon a resting place for the flocks. Then you shall know that I am the LORD.” ⁶For thus says the Lord GOD: because you clapped your hands, stamped your feet, and rejoiced in heart with all your disdain for the land of Israel, ⁷indeed, therefore, I will stretch out My hand against you, and give you as plunder to the nations; I will cut you off from the peoples, and I will cause you to perish from the countries; I will destroy you, and you shall know that I am the LORD.”

- Very much a constant - how did they deal with Israel?

Genesis 12:3 “I will bless those who bless thee, and I will curse him who curses you.”

- Overall Amos is sent to the Northern kingdom who live in rebellion to God's law, from there he speaks to different groups of people who don't regard His Word - non-believers - who will one day be held accountable for the requirements of God's Word whether they believe or not!
- God Word is the final standard for all humanity! We would do well to take heed to it!

John 3:16 “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him would not perish but have everlasting life.”