

**Connecting Through the Word**  
**Amos – “The Lion Has Roared”**  
**Amos 3:7-8**

**Amos 1:1-2**

*The words of Amos, who was among the shepherds of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake.*

*And he said: “The LORD roars from Zion and utters his voice from Jerusalem; the pastures of the shepherds mourn, and the top of Carmel withers.”*

**Amos 3:1-8**

*1 Hear this word that the LORD has spoken against you, O people of Israel, against the whole family that I brought up out of the land of Egypt:*

*2 “You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.*

*3 “Do two walk together, unless they have agreed to meet?*

*4 Does a lion roar in the forest, when he has no prey? Does a young lion cry out from his den, if he has taken nothing?*

*5 Does a bird fall in a snare on the earth, when there is no trap for it? Does a snare spring up from the ground, when it has taken nothing?*

*6 Is a trumpet blown in a city, and the people are not afraid? Does disaster come to a city, unless the LORD has done it?*

*7 “For the Lord GOD does nothing without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets.*

*8 The lion has roared; who will not fear? The Lord GOD has spoken; who can but prophesy?”*

Amos ("burden bearer") was a herdsman and a cultivator of sycamore trees (Amos 1:1; 7:14) when the Lord called him to be a prophet. He lived in the village of Tekoa, about eleven miles from Jerusalem, during the reigns of Uzziah in Judah (790-740 B.C.) and Jeroboam II in the Northern Kingdom of Israel (793-753).

Amos was a "layman," a humble farmer and shepherd who was not an official member of the Jewish religious or political establishment.

At this time, both Judah and Israel were enjoying prosperity and security. Luxury abounded (3:10-15; 5:1-6), and "religion" was popular. Israel flocked to the royal chapel at Bethel (4:4-5), and Judah celebrated the feasts enthusiastically (5:21-22), but the sins of both nations were eroding the religious and moral fiber of the people. Making money was more important than worshiping God (8:5); the rich exploited the poor, the judicial system was corrupt, and injustice flourished (5:11-15, 24; 8:4-6).

If the Prophet Amos were to come to our world today, he would probably feel very much at home; for he lived at a time such as ours when society was changing radically. Both Israel and Judah were at peace with their neighbors, which meant that their wealth and energy could be used for developing their nations instead of fighting their enemies.

Both kingdoms were prosperous; their cities were expanding rapidly; and a new wealthy merchant class was developing in society. The two kingdoms were moving from an agricultural to a commercial society and experiencing both the benefits and problems that come with that change. However, in spite of their material success, all was not well with God's chosen people.

There were ills aplenty in all the lands of that day, the Gentile nations as well as the Jewish kingdoms of Israel and Judah; and Amos wasn't afraid to name them. He opened his book with a denunciation of the sins of six Gentile nations, and no doubt the people of Israel and Judah applauded his words.

Nothing would make the Jews happier than to see the Lord judge the surrounding nations. But when Amos denounced Judah and Israel, that was a different story; and his popularity began to suffer at that point.

God wanted to get the nations' attention, but people weren't listening. You'd think they could hear a lion roar or the thunder roll

and know that danger was at hand.

**Eight times Amos used the phrase "for three transgressions and for four," a Jewish idiom that means "an indefinite number that has finally come to the end."**

God is longsuffering with sinners (2 Peter 3:9), but He marks what they do and His patience eventually runs out. To try God's patience is to tempt the Lord; and when we tempt the Lord, we invite judgment.

### **Judgment on the Surrounding Gentile Nations**

Amos proclaimed God's judgment on the following six Gentile nations.

Damascus – Syria

Gaza – Philistia

Tyre – Phoenicia

Edom – Descendants of Esau

Ammon – Descendants of Lot

Moab – Descendants of Lot

Before we listen to God's messages to Judah and Israel, we should pause to reflect on the messages we have just studied that were delivered to six Gentile nations. *God expected these Gentiles to listen to a Jewish prophet and heed what he said!* Though not under the Mosaic Law, these nations were responsible to God for what they did; and responsibility brings accountability.

God sees what the nations do, and He judges them accordingly. World news from day to day may give the impression that evil leaders and violent subversive groups are getting away with terrible crimes, but God is still on the throne and will punish evildoers in His good time. It is God who controls the rise and fall of the nations (Acts 17:24-28), and His judgments are always just.

### **Judgment on the kingdom of Judah (Amos 2:4-5)**

In his six messages, Amos had announced judgment to the nations surrounding Israel and Judah, starting with Syria in the northwest and ending with the trans-Jordanic nations of Ammon, Moab, and Edom.

As his fellow Jews heard these denunciations of the Gentiles, no doubt they applauded and wanted to hear more. But when Amos focused on Israel and Judah (his own land), that changed their attitude completely. The very idea of a Jewish prophet classifying God's chosen people with the Gentile "dogs"! "We know we aren't a perfect people," the people of Judah would argue, "but at least we worship the true and living God!"

Yes, the temple was filled with people bringing their sacrifices, but Judah was a nation given over to idolatry. "Their lies [idols] lead them astray, lies which their fathers followed" (2:4). They were wandering like lost animals and like drunken men. The Gentiles had sinned against conscience and the laws of brotherhood and humanity, but the Jews had despised and rejected the very laws of God, given to them by Moses. Theirs was the greater sin, for greater privilege always brings greater responsibility (Rom. 2:17-3:9).

### **Judgment on the kingdom of Israel (Amos 2:6-16)**

Both Israel and Judah were enjoying peace and prosperity, and divine judgment was the furthest thing from their minds. Remember, Jewish theology equated prosperity with God's blessing; and as long as the people were enjoying "the good life," they were sure God was pleased with them. They knew what the Law said about their sins, but they chose to ignore the warnings.

Amos first exposes their sinful present and names three flagrant sins.

**To begin with, the people of the Northern Kingdom were guilty of injustice (Amos 2:6-7).**

Supported by corrupt judges, the rich were suing the poor, who couldn't pay their bills, and forcing them into servitude and slavery. Even if they couldn't pay for a pair of shoes, the poor were neither forgiven nor assisted. Instead, they were trampled

like the dust of the earth. As we shall see in our continued studies, the Prophet Amos has a great deal to say about caring for the poor (see 4:1; 5:11; 8:6; also Deut. 15:7-11; Ex. 23:6-9; Prov. 14:31; 17:15).

**Their second gross sin was immorality (Amos 2:7b)**, with fathers and sons visiting the same prostitute! These may have been "cult prostitutes" who were a part of the heathen idolatrous worship. Thus there was a double sin involved: immorality and idolatry. Or the girl may have been a household servant or a common prostitute. You would think that a father would want to be a better example to his son by obeying the Law of Moses (Ex. 22:16; Deut. 22:28-29; 23:17-18). Perhaps what's described here is a form of incest, which was, of course, strictly forbidden by Moses (Lev. 18:7-8, 15; 20:11-12). Regardless of what the act of disobedience was, it was rebellion against God and defiled His holy name.

**The third sin was open idolatry (Amos 2:8).**

Wealthy men took their debtors' garments as pledges but did not return them at sundown as the law commanded (Ex. 22:26-27; Deut. 24:10-13, 17). Instead, these rich sinners visited pagan altars, where they got drunk on wine purchased with the fines they exacted from the poor. Then, in their drunken stupor, they slept by the altars on other people's garments, defiling the garments and disobeying the law. The officials were getting rich by exploiting the people, and then were using their unjust gain for committing sin.

**After describing their sinful present, Amos reminded them of their glorious past (Amos 2:9-12).**

God had led His people out of Egypt (v. 10a), cared for them in the wilderness (v. 10b), and destroyed other nations so the Jews could claim their inheritance in Canaan (vv. 9, 10c). He gave them His Word through chosen prophets (v. 11a), and He raised up dedicated people like the Nazirites (Num. 6) to be examples of devotion to God. What a glorious past they had! But instead of being humbled by these blessings, the people rebelled against the Lord by rejecting the messages of the prophets and forcing

the Nazirites to break their holy vows. The Jews wanted neither the Word of God nor examples of godly living.

**Amos closed his message with the announcement of their terrible future (Amos 2:13-16).**

Israel would be crushed by their own sins just as a loaded cart crushes whatever it rolls over. Judgment is coming, and nobody will be able to escape. The swift won't be able to run away; the strong won't be able to defend themselves; the armed will be as if unarmed; and even the horsemen will be unable to flee. The bravest soldiers will run away while shedding their equipment and clothing so they can run faster. Yes, Assyria would invade Israel (720 B.C.) and the nation would be no more.

Amos has looked around with eyes gifted with prophetic insight, and he has seen and announced what God would do to six Gentile nations and to the kingdoms of Judah and Israel. The lion has roared! Next, the prophet will look within and expose the corruption in the hearts of the Jewish people by explaining four divine calls.

But before we examine these four calls, we need to pause and ask ourselves whether we truly fear God and seek to obey His will.

Just because we enjoy a measure of peace and prosperity, it doesn't mean God is pleased with us. For that matter, the goodness of God ought to lead us to repentance, as it did the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:17; Rom. 2:4).

"Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The Lord will judge His people." It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:30-31).

However, we can still claim the promises of 2 Chronicles 7:14 and 1 John 1:9 and experience the forgiveness of the Lord.

**Listen to What God Says  
Amos 3:1-15**

Now that Amos had the attention of the people, he proceeded to deliver three messages, each of which begins with "Hear this word" (3:1; 4:1; 5:1).

By using this phrase, he reminded them that they weren't listening to a mere man making a speech; they were listening to a prophet declaring the living Word of God.

It's indeed a great privilege to have God speak to us, but it's also a great responsibility. If we don't open our hearts to hear His Word and obey Him, we're in grave danger of hardening our hearts and incurring the wrath of God. "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts" (Heb. 3:7-8; see Ps. 95:7-11).

**The first message (Amos 3:1-15) was one of explanation**, in which Amos clarified four divine calls and announced that Israel's judgment was certain.

**His second message (4:1-13) focused on accusation** in which the prophet denounced Israel's sins.

**The final message (5:1-6:14) was a lamentation** as the prophet felt the anguish of his nation's certain doom.

### **The First Message – An Explanation for the Coming Judgment**

Amos explains the significance of four divine calls.

**God's Call to Israel** (Amos 3:1-2)

**God's Call to Amos** (Amos 3:2-8)

**God's Call to Egypt and Philistines** to Witness (Amos 3:9&10)

#### **Amos 3:10**

*"My people have forgotten how to do right," says the LORD.*

*"Their fortresses are filled with wealth taken by theft and violence.*

#### **God's Call for Judgment on Israel (Amos 3:11-15)**

Like Israel of old, nations today measure themselves by their wealth; and the gross national product becomes the indicator of security and success. The rich get richer and the poor get poorer as people worship the golden calf of money and greedily exploit one another. But it doesn't take long for God to wipe out the idols that people worship and the unnecessary luxuries that control their lives. He hears the cries of the poor and eventually judges the guilty (see Pss. 10:14; 69:33; 82:3).

### **The Second Message – An Accusation**

The Prophet Amos named three particular sins that were grieving the Lord and ruining the kingdom of Israel:

#### **Luxury (4:1-3)**

They had the wrong values

#### **Hypocrisy (vv. 4-5)**

Their religious "revival" was a sham

#### **Obstinacy (vv. 6-13)**

They had refused to listen to the warnings God had given them  
God sent:

Famine vs. 4:6

Drought vs. 4:7-8

Destruction of crops vs. 4:9

Sickness vs. 4:10a

Defeat in war vs. 4:10b

Catastrophe vs. 4:11

Ultimate Judgment vs. 4:12-13

*"Yet you did not return to me" (Vss. 6,8,9,10,11)*

#### **Amos 4:11-12**

*"I overthrew some of you, As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, And you were like a firebrand plucked from the burning; Yet you have not returned to Me," Says the LORD.*

*"Therefore thus will I do to you, O Israel; Because I will do this to you, Prepare to meet your God, O Israel!"*

Amos ended his message with a doxology of praise to the Lord (Amos 5:8-9; 9:5-6).

#### **Amos 4:13**

*For behold, He who forms mountains, And creates the wind, Who declares to man what his thought is, And makes the morning darkness, Who treads the high places of the earth-- The LORD God of hosts is His name.*

When a servant of God praises the Lord in the face of impending calamity, it shows he's a person of great faith (see Hab. 3:16-19). In this doxology, he reminds us that our God is the Creator who can do anything, including making the earth out of nothing. He can turn dawn into darkness; He can tread upon the mountains,

and nobody can hinder Him. He is also the omniscient God who knows what we are thinking. Thus there's nothing we can hide from Him (Ps. 139:1-6). He is the Lord of Hosts, the God of the armies of heaven and earth!

### **The Third Message – A Lamentation**

#### **Amos 5:1**

*Hear this word that I take up over you in lamentation, O house of Israel:*

Amos weaves into his lamentation **three pleas** to the people, urging them to return to the Lord.

#### **Hear God's Word**

"Hear this Word"

"For thus says the Lord God"

The first step toward revival and returning to the Lord is to hear what God has to say to us from His Word.

#### **Psalms 85:6-8**

*"Will You not revive us again, that Your people may rejoice in You? Show us Your mercy, O Lord, and grant us Your salvation. I will hear what God the Lord will speak, for He will speak peace to His people and to His saints; but let them not turn back to folly"*

#### **Seek the Lord**

Vs. 4 "...Seek me and live"

Vs. 6 "Seek the LORD and live"

#### **Isaiah 55:6-7**

*"Seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon"*

#### **Three Reasons**

To Have Life Vs. 4

To Have Spiritual Blessings Vs. 5

To Avoid Coming Judgment Vs. 6

For Israel to repent and return to God was a reasonable thing to do. It would bring them life; it would produce spiritual reality; and it

would save them from impending judgment. Those are good reasons for God's people to repent today.

#### **Seek the Good**

##### **Amos 5:14-17**

*Seek good, and not evil, that you may live; and so the LORD, the God of hosts, will be with you, as you have said.*

Amos brought the challenge down to practical, everyday life. He spoke about justice, righteousness, and the importance of telling the truth.

He named the sins the people needed to forsake:

- accepting bribes
- charging the poor exorbitant rents
- living in luxury while the poor starved
- sustaining a crooked legal system

True repentance begins with naming sins and dealing with them one by one.

##### **Amos 5:15**

*"Hate evil, and love good, and establish justice in the gate; It may be that the Lord God of hosts will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph"*

How can we claim to love the good when we do not hate evil!

Is there any hope for such a wicked society? Yes, as long as the grace of God is at work.

Disaster was coming to Israel, but who knows what God would do if only a godly remnant turned to Him and sought His mercy?

If only a remnant will repent and turn to God, there is hope that He will send the revival that we desperately need.

"Hear God's Word!" Are we listening?

"Seek the Lord!" Are we praying?

"Seek the good!" Do we hate that which is evil?

There is no other way.

## **Amos then gives a series of Woes Amos 5:18 – 16:14**

### **Woe to the Ignorant**

#### **Amos 5:18**

*Woe to you who desire the day of the LORD! Why would you have the day of the LORD? It is darkness, and not light,*

### **Woe to the Indifferent**

#### **Amos 6:1**

*“Woe to those who are at ease in Zion, and to those who feel secure on the mountain of Samaria, the notable men of the first of the nations, to whom the house of Israel comes!*

Both Israel and Judah were indifferent to God’s Word and coming judgment.

### **Woe to the Indulgent**

#### **Amos 6:4**

*“Woe to those who lie on beds of ivory and stretch themselves out on their couches, and eat lambs from the flock and calves from the midst of the stall,*

Amos described their indulgent way of life—a way of life that left no place for the disciplines of the spiritual life. They were living for pleasure not for the glory of God. The common people usually slept on mats placed on the ground, but the wealthy enjoyed the luxury of beds of ivory and luxurious couches.

### **"Woe to the impudent!"**

#### **Amos 6:8-14**

#### **Amos 6:8**

*The Lord GOD has sworn by himself, declares the LORD, the God of hosts: “I abhor the pride of Jacob and hate his strongholds, and I will deliver up the city and all that is in it.”*

The Prophet Amos has finished preaching his three messages to the proud and complacent kingdom of Israel. He has looked within their hearts and exposed the corruption there.

Now the Lord will give His servant six visions—five visions of judgment and one of the glorious kingdom that will be established

after the Day of the Lord. With the record of these visions, Amos will close his book.

### **Amos Looks Ahead (Amos 7-9)**

In the closing part of his message, Amos beholds five visions, and from these visions he discovers what God will do to the nation.

#### **(1) Vision of Locusts (7:1-3)**

The locusts are about to destroy the crop, but Amos intercedes and the Lord stops them.

#### **(2) Vision of Fire (7:4-6)**

An awful drought overtakes the land; the prophet prays, and God delivers the land.

#### **(3) Vision of the Plumb line (7:7-9)**

The Lord stands beside (not "upon") the wall and tests it to see if it is straight. God is measuring Israel, and she does not conform to His Word; therefore, judgment is coming.

At this point in the message, the "state priest" Amaziah could take no more, and he interrupted, "You are not patriotic! Take your soapbox and go back to the hills to preach." Amos was not afraid. He told the false priest, "God called me to preach, and I must obey. As for you, Amaziah, you will pay for your compromise and sins, because your wife will become a harlot and your family will die by the sword."

#### **(4) Vision of the Summer Fruit (8:1-14)**

We must take a brief lesson in Hebrew to understand this vision. The Hebrew word for "summer fruit" is hayitz, and the word for "end" in v. 2 is hatz. These words look and sound alike, and Amos used one to lead to the other. "The end is come! Israel, like summer fruit, has ripened for judgment." Again in vv. 4-14 the prophet names the sins of the people: robbing the poor of their homes (8:4); complaining about holy days interfering with business (8:5); setting excessive prices that hurt the poor (8:6). God warns that He will send His wrath upon the people, not only in natural calamities, but in a famine for the Word of God. They would not listen to the Word when they had the opportunity;

therefore, He will take His Word away from them. In that day their idols at Dan and Beersheba will do them no good (8:14).

### **(5) Vision at the Altar (9:1-10)**

Now Amos sees the Lord Himself, and not some symbol. Why is God at the altar? Because judgment begins at the house of the Lord (1 Peter 4:17). The people had been outwardly religious, but they were not sincere from the heart. God orders the doorposts to be broken—and the roof caves in.

Verses 8-9 summarize what God plans to do. He compares the coming judgment to the sifting of grain (see Luke 22:31-34). The good seed (true believers, the believing remnant) will be saved, but the chaff will be burned up.

Amos closes on a note of victory, for in 9:11-15 we have the promise of future restoration.

Verses 11-12 are quoted in Acts 15:14-18 at the first church conference.

### **Acts 15:15-18**

*And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written, “After this I will return, and I will rebuild the tent of David that has fallen; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will restore it, that the remnant of mankind may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who are called by my name, says the Lord, who makes these things known from of old.”*

Today God is calling out of the nations a people for His name, the church; but when the church is completed, then He will return and restore the tabernacle (house) of David and establish the Jewish kingdom. The land will become fruitful again, and the people will be blessed forever.

### **“The Lion Has Roared”**

Today the Church is to Proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord!!!! We remind the devil that Jesus has defeated him and all Authority has been given to Jesus and His followers.

### **Matthew 28:18**

*And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.*

### **A Suggested Outline of the Book**

- I. Amos Looks Around – Judgment on Surrounding Nations (1:1 - 2:3)
  - A. Judgment against Syria for **Cruelty** (1:3-5)
  - B. Judgment against Philistia for making **Slaves** (1:6-8)
  - C. Judgment against Phoenicia for breaking **Treaty** (1:9-10)
  - D. Judgment against Edom for Revengeful **Spirit** (1:11-12)
  - E. Judgment against Ammon for Violent **Crimes** (1:13-15)
  - F. Judgment against Moab for **Injustice** (2:1-3)
  - G. Judgment against Judah for Rejecting the **Law** of God (2:4-5)
  - H. Judgment against Israel for Numerous **Sins** and rejecting God’s revelation (2:6-16)
- II. Amos Looks Within – Three Sermons Prefaced by “Hear this **word**” (3-6)
  - A. A Message of **Explanation** (3:1-15)  
Where there is privilege, there must also be responsibility
  - B. A Message of **Accusation** (4:1-13)  
Israel punished in **Past** for Iniquity
  - C. A Message of **Lamentation** (5:1 – 6:14)  
Israel will be punished in **Future** for Iniquity (5)  
Israel Admonished in **Present** to depart from Iniquity (6) “Seek”
- III. Amos Looks Ahead – Visions of the Future (7-9)
  - A. Vision of **Locust** (7:1-3)
  - B. Vision of **Fire** (7:4-6)

- C. Vision of **Plumb Line** (7:7-9)  
    Historical Interlude (7:10-17) – Personal  
    experience of the prophet.
- D. Vision of Basket of Summer **Fruit** (8)
- E. Vision of the Lord at the **Altar** (9)