
SURVEY OF THE BOOK OF AMOS

Adeoye, Emmanuel (Evang.)

The prophecy of Amos is characterized by great boldness coupled with great tact. The prophecy gains the audience by pronouncing judgement on Israel's enemies before delivering the main burden of judgement against Israel herself. In the delivery of his prophecy he is very courageous while being unusually stern and severe

The purpose of Amos prophecy is to awaken Israel and its surrounding nation to the fact that the nation is both responsible and accountable for its sins. **HIS THEME THEN IS NATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY FOR NATIONAL SINS.**

AUTHORSHIP

The Author of the prophecy is identified as **Amos a shepherd of Tekoa. His name "burden" or "burden bearer"**, and provide a key to the leading message of the book. The prophecy is Amos great burden from the lord concerning **the national sin in God's chosen** people, as well as the judgement that must fall upon them unless they repent. **No better testimony could be given concerning Amos than his own "I was no prophet**

neither was I a prophet son (AMOS 7:14-15).

But I was a herd man and a gatherer of sycamore fruit: and the lord took me as I follow the flock and the Lord said unto me, go prophesy unto my people Israel" from his testimony we learn that Amos was not a graduate of the school of the prophet, nor he had any formal religious training or academic preparation for the mission for which God called him. Rather, he was a simple shepherd who also gathered sycamore fruit, and who in obedience to God was used mightily to deliver God's message of judgement against Israel, the northern kingdom

We see from 7:10 that Amos's prophesy was issued primarily at **Bethel, the seat of Idolatry in the Northern Kingdom.** He attacks Satan's stronghold, Bethel, and when he is opposed by the idolatrous priest, Amaziah, becomes even more bolder in his preaching.

Throughout, the prophecy is filled with references to rural life, indicating

Amos' background as a shepherd. The prophet never put on pretenses.

He was what he was God's messenger for his hour to call the nation Israel to awaken to her responsibility and accountability for the national sins she had committed against God.

He was what he was God's messenger for his hour to call the nation Israel to awaken to her responsibility and accountability for the national sins she had committed against God. In the process he shows himself to be an oratorical giant, in spite of the fact that he had no formal training.

Amos provided the historical key for his ministry: **"the day of Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel, two years before the earthquake"(1:1).** Uzziah independent reign took place in 767-740B.C, and the sole reign of Jeroboam 2nd in about 782-753B.C. Amos was a contemporary of Hosea, Isaiah and Jonah.

The Book of Amos contains prophecies of judgment against various nations, including Israel's neighbors and Israel itself, due to their sins and injustices. These prophecies, while historical in context, offer enduring lessons about God's justice and the consequences of societal wrongdoing. While the specific nations mentioned are no longer in existence in their ancient forms, the themes of social injustice, oppression, and the need for righteousness remain relevant in the world today.

AMOS'S PROPHECIES AND THE NATIONS - AMOS 1-2: Focuses on God's judgment against neighboring nations (Damascus, Gaza, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, Moab) for their violent and oppressive actions, including enslaving people for profit.

ISRAEL (NORTHERN KINGDOM):

Amos specifically targets Israel for its social injustices, including the exploitation of the poor, oppression of the needy, and abuse of women. He highlights how Israel, despite being God's chosen people, had become corrupt and unjust.

JUDAH: While the focus is on Israel, Amos also condemns Judah for its sins.

CORE MESSAGE: Amos emphasizes that God's justice applies to all nations and that privilege comes with responsibility. Relevance to Today.

SOCIAL JUSTICE: The themes of social justice, economic inequality, and the mistreatment of the poor are timeless issues.

RESPONSIBILITY OF POWER: Amos's message challenges those in positions of power to use their influence responsibly and justly.

CONSEQUENCES OF SIN:

The book of Amos reminds us that God holds nations accountable for their actions and that sin has consequences.

GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY: The prophecies highlight God's sovereignty over all

nations and his judgment upon those who violate his standards of righteousness.

NEED FOR REPENTANCE:

While the book focuses on judgment, it also offers a message of hope through repentance and a return to God's ways.

LESSONS FROM THE BOOK

THE BOOK OF AMOS OFFERS SEVERAL KEY LESSONS, including the importance of social justice, God's judgment on sin, the consequences of disobedience, and the call to repentance. It also highlights God's sovereignty, the need for true worship, and the dangers of complacency. Amos emphasizes God's concern for the poor and oppressed, and the importance of seeking good and walking with God.

HERE ARE TEN LESSONS FROM THE BOOK OF AMOS:

1. **SOCIAL JUSTICE:** Amos strongly condemns injustice and oppression, particularly against the poor and vulnerable. He calls for fair treatment and equitable practices in all aspects of life.
2. **JUDGMENT ON SIN:** The book details God's impending judgment on Israel for their sins, including idolatry, immorality, and oppression.
3. **CONSEQUENCES OF DISOBEDIENCE:** Amos illustrates that disobedience to God leads to negative consequences, including national judgment and suffering.
4. **CALL TO REPENTANCE:** Despite the pronouncements of judgment, Amos also calls for repentance and a return to God, offering hope for restoration.
5. **GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY:** The book emphasizes God's ultimate authority and control over all nations, even those who oppose Him.
6. **TRUE WORSHIP:** Amos contrasts outward religious practices with true, heartfelt worship that leads to justice and righteousness.
7. **GOD'S CONCERN FOR THE POOR:** Amos highlights God's special concern for the poor and marginalized, calling for compassion and care for those in need.
8. **DANGERS OF COMPLACENCY:** The book warns against complacency and indifference to sin and suffering, urging believers to be actively involved in addressing injustice.
9. **SEEKING GOOD:** Amos calls for a deliberate choice to seek what is good and righteous, aligning oneself with God's will.
10. **WALKING WITH GOD:** Ultimately, Amos calls for a life lived in accordance with God's will, characterized by justice, righteousness, and love for others.

The book of Amos features a series of visions that depict God's judgment upon Israel due to their sin and injustice. These visions, particularly in Amos 7-9, serve as a warning and an

indictment of the nation's moral decay. While the first two visions of locusts and fire prompt Amos to plead for mercy, resulting in God's temporary reprieve, the subsequent visions of the plumb line and summer fruit reveal a judgment that will not be averted. Ultimately, these visions emphasize God's justice, holiness, and the consequences of persistent disobedience.

THE VISIONS IN AMOS

THE NATURE OF THE VISIONS: Amos experiences five visions, each portraying a different facet of God's impending judgment on Israel. These visions are not random dreams but divinely revealed messages intended to expose the nation's sins and call them to repentance.

VISION 1 & 2: LOCUSTS AND FIRE:

The first two visions, of locusts devouring vegetation and a fire consuming the land, lead Amos to intercede for Israel. God, moved by Amos's prayer, relents from these specific judgments. This highlights God's merciful nature and willingness to hear the prayers of His prophet.

VISION 3: THE PLUMB LINE: The third vision introduces a plumb line, a tool used to assess verticality and straightness in construction. This vision signifies God measuring Israel against His standard of righteousness. The plumb line reveals that Israel is not aligned with God's will, indicating their crookedness and deserving of

judgment. This vision marks a turning point, where Amos no longer pleads for mercy, recognizing the severity of Israel's sin.

VISION 4: SUMMER FRUIT: The fourth vision, a basket of summer fruit, signifies that Israel's time is "ripe" for judgment. Just as summer fruit is perishable, Israel's time of prosperity and security is coming to an end.

VISION 5: THE LORD AT THE ALTAR:

The final vision shows the Lord standing beside the altar, indicating that judgment is not arbitrary but is overseen by God Himself. This reinforces the idea that God is actively involved in the consequences of Israel's actions.

THE MESSAGE OF JUDGMENT: The visions emphasize that God's justice is not merely an abstract concept but a reality that will manifest in consequences for sin. The destruction of the northern kingdom of Israel is prophesied, with the people scattered among the nations.

HOPE FOR RESTORATION: While the visions primarily focus on judgment, there is a glimpse of restoration in the final verses, promising a future ingathering of Israel. This suggests that even in judgment, God's ultimate purpose is redemption and restoration.

RELEVANCE TODAY: The book of Amos, including the visions, continues to resonate with contemporary readers

because it addresses themes of social justice, oppression, and the consequences of moral decay. It challenges us to examine our own lives and communities, ensuring that we are living in accordance with God's standards of righteousness and justice.

AMENDING RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD - AMOS 3:3

Explores the concept of agreement as a prerequisite for fellowship and shared purpose. The verse, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" uses a rhetorical question to emphasize that genuine partnership or connection requires a shared understanding, direction, and intention. In the context of Amos, this verse highlights the Israelites' need to align with God's will and purpose.

RHETORICAL QUESTION: The verse is a rhetorical question, implying a negative answer. It's not a literal question asking for a yes or no answer, but rather a statement asserting that agreement is necessary for walking together.

"WALKING TOGETHER": This phrase represents a relationship, partnership, or shared journey. In the context of Amos, it refers to the Israelites' relationship with God.

"AGREED": This signifies a shared understanding, purpose, and direction. It implies a need for harmony and alignment in values and goals.

CONTEXTUAL MEANING: In Amos, the Israelites were called to be a holy nation, but they had turned away from God's commands, engaging in idolatry and injustice. The verse challenges them to consider their lack of agreement with God's ways and the consequences of their actions.

BROADER APPLICATION: The principle of agreement extends beyond the specific context of Amos. It applies to any relationship where shared goals and values are essential, whether in personal relationships, business partnerships, or spiritual journeys.

CONSEQUENCES OF DISAGREEMENT: Just as two people cannot walk together harmoniously if they are going in opposite directions, a lack of agreement with God leads to disharmony and ultimately, judgment.

CALL TO ALIGNMENT: Amos 3:3 serves as a call to the Israelites to re-evaluate their relationship with God and to align their lives with His will. Bible commentaries note that this involves repentance and reformation.

PURITY WORSHIP TO GOD

Amos 5:23, within the larger context of Amos 5:18-24, critiques Israel's worship practices, declaring that God rejects their noisy, self-centered rituals when juxtaposed with their unjust actions. The verse emphasizes that external religious observances are meaningless without genuine justice and righteousness.

"Take away from me the noise of your songs": This phrase highlights God's rejection of the loud, celebratory music and singing that the Israelites offered in their worship services.

"I WILL NOT LISTEN TO THE MELODY OF YOUR HARPS": God explicitly states that He will not even listen to the sounds of the musical instruments they use, even though they might be considered beautiful or impressive.

CONTEXT OF SOCIAL INJUSTICE: This rejection of worship is not isolated but is placed within the context of Israel's oppression of the poor and marginalized, their disregard for justice, and their pursuit of self-interest.

TRUE WORSHIP VERSUS EMPTY RITUAL: The passage emphasizes that true worship is not merely about outward displays of religious activity, but about embodying justice,

righteousness, and compassion in one's actions towards others.

JUSTICE AS A FLOWING RIVER: The verse is paired with **Amos 5:24**, which calls for justice to "roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream". This imagery emphasizes the need for justice to be a constant and pervasive force in their lives, not a superficial or occasional practice.

GOD'S JUDGMENT: The message of **Amos 5:23** is a strong warning that God will not tolerate religious hypocrisy. Their worship is an abomination to Him when it is not accompanied by genuine justice and righteousness. In essence, **Amos 5:23** serves as a prophetic critique of religious formalism, highlighting the importance of aligning one's actions with one's faith. It underscores that true worship involves a commitment to justice and righteousness, not merely empty rituals or noise.

CONCLUSION:

Amos's prophecies serve as a powerful reminder that God is concerned with justice and righteousness, both within individual lives and among nations. The specific nations mentioned in Amos are no longer in existence, but the lessons about social

HYMN 690
CARELESS SOUL