

## Amos 1 - 6

### The Lord's Judgment Upon Israel

#### Lesson 2

“Amos prophesied during the reigns of Uzziah over Judah (792-740 BC) and Jeroboam II over Israel (793-753). The main part of his ministry was probably carried out c. 760-750. Both kingdoms were enjoying great prosperity and had reached new political and military heights (2 Kings 14:23-15:7; 2 Chronicles 26). It was also a time of idolatry, extravagant indulgence in luxurious living, immorality, corruption of judicial procedures and oppression of the poor. As a consequence, God would soon bring about the Assyrian captivity of the northern kingdom (722).

“Israel at the time was politically secure and spiritually smug. About 40 years earlier, at the end of his ministry, Elisha had prophesied the resurgence of Israel's power (2 Kings 13:17-19), and more recently Jonah had prophesied her restoration to a glory not known since the days of Solomon (2 Kings 14:25). The nation felt sure, therefore, that she was in God's good graces. But prosperity increased Israel's religious and moral corruption. God's past punishments for unfaithfulness were forgotten, and his patience was at an end - which he sent Amos to announce.

“With Amos, the messages of the prophets began to be preserved in permanent form, being brought together in books that would accompany Israel through the coming debacle and beyond.”  
NIV Study Bible (Zondervan, 1985) page 1345

“Amos's message of doom seemed incongruent with the elaborate wealth of the day, but through divine insight, he saw the corruption beneath the shining exterior and announced that the nation was rotten to the core.

“The name “Amos” is derived from the Hebrew terms meaning, “lift a burden.” Thus, the name means “Burden” or “Burden-bearer.” Amos lived up to the meaning of his name by bearing up under his divinely given burden of declaring judgment to rebellious Israel.”

Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps & Charts (Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1982) pg. 248

#### **Introduction To Amos**

1. In the book of Amos, Chapter 1 Verse 1, what information is given about:

- Amos' occupation?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- The historical event mentioned?

2. Amos began his message to Israel with a word picture of God. How does he describe Him? (1:2a)
3. What could they anticipate happening? (1:2b)

### **The Coming Judgment**

4. Amos is speaking whose words? (1:3a)

Each judgment begins with the words, *"For three sins ..., even for four, I will not turn back my wrath."* (NIV) This expression was used to emphasize the weight and importance of the next words. The Lord has been gracious and allowed several sins to pass unpunished, but they have now reached "the last straw" and God's judgment will be carried out.

5. Amos declared the Lord's judgment on seven kingdoms and gave His reason for including each nation. From the verses listed below, fill in the chart.

Verses	City and/or Nation	Their Sin	God's Judgment
1:3-5			
1:6-8			
1:9, 10			
1:11, 12			
1:13-15			
2:1-3			
2:4, 5			

6. Amos, speaking to his audience in Israel, was quite possibly being cheered at this point. He had pronounced judgment upon all their neighbors and enemies. But he wasn't finished with God's judgment. One last time he proclaims, *"This is what the Lord says: 'For three sins of ISRAEL, even for four I will not turn back my wrath.'"* Using verses 7 and 8, summarize the sins of Israel that Amos gave as "the last straw."

7. Following the sins, a quick history lesson on the faithfulness of the Lord was given. He destroyed the Amorites, brought Israel out of Egypt, led them in the wilderness for 40 years then gave them the Amorites' land as their own. He also sent them prophets and Nazirites to deliver His words. How does the Lord say Israel received His servants? (2:12 – refer also to Numbers 6:1-21)
  
8. What would the Lord's judgment be? (2:13-16)

### **Three Messages – Chapters 3-6**

At this point, Amos has clearly made God's point that Israel and Judah along with the other nations are about to experience His judgment. Speaking directly to the northern kingdom of Israel, Amos delivers three short messages clearly presenting the causes and the consequences.

#### **Message #1 – Israel Present**

9. What is the opening statement in this first message? (3:1)
  
10. Now that he has their attention, what does he remind them? (3:2a)
  
11. He continues on with the word "therefore." The old saying is that whenever you see the word "therefore," you are to stop and see what it is there for. In this case, "therefore" relates to the consequences. What is the "therefore" in 3:2b?
  
12. Next he presents a series of seven questions. What do you think he was showing Israel through these questions? (3:3-6)
  
13. He finally gets to the point in verse 7; what does he say?
  
14. Challenging them to go to three different locations (to the Philistine coast, to Egypt in the south or even stand in their own mountains) and look at themselves from these perspectives, what did he say they would see? (3:9, 10)



24. He concludes his second message with the words, "Prepare to meet your God, O Israel!" What attributes of Israel's God does he mention? (4:13)

**Message #3 - Israel Future**

25. Amos begins his third and final message with the familiar words, "Hear this word." He addressed the "house of Israel." Who do you think that included? (5:1)
26. He calls this message "the lament." Using a dictionary define the word "lament."
27. Amos pleads with the "house of Joseph" (poetic for Israel). What does he urge them to do? (5:4-6)
28. Make a list of Israel's sins that are given in verses 7 - 12.
29. Verse 13 begins with "therefore." Therefore what is the result?
30. Amos urgently gives one last appeal. What is his yearning? (5:14, 15)
31. But no one listened to his appeal. Therefore, what did the Lord, the Lord God Almighty say? (5:16, 17)
32. Amos' third message concludes with a series of woes. The word "woe" means extreme grief, a lament a hundred times over. Amos asks why they are longing for the "day of the Lord." He describes what that day will be like. Describe it in one sentence. (5:18-20)
33. The Lord, speaking through Amos, tells Israel exactly how He feels about their worship. What words does he use after "I"? 5:21-26
34. Complete verse 27, "Therefore I..."

35. Chapter 6 continues with the "woes." Who is the target of these next woes? (6:1)
  
36. What do you think Amos was implying in his questions to them? (6:2, 3)
  
37. Amos then attacks their lifestyle. How were they living? (6:4-6)
  
38. Fill in the "therefore" from 6:7.
  
39. Amos concludes his message with the Lord's final warning. What one word does he use to sum up all He hates or abhors about Jacob (poetic form of Israel)? (6:8)
  
40. A description of the utter ruin they could now expect to experience is given along with his final reasons: *"You have turned justice into poison and the fruit of righteousness into bitterness."* The heart of the matter is at the end of verse 13: *"Did we not take Karnaim (do all this) by our own strength?"* What was the Lord's final declaration? (6:14)