

Tapes For Growing Christians

Study Guide for
AMOS

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lesson 1

Amos' Prophecies of Judgment Against the Nations of Syria and Philistia. Introduction to the Book

Amos 1:1-8

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God will judge acts of atrocity.
2. God will judge the deportation of people.

practical application

1. God may call you to be an Amos.

questions

1. When did Amos live and prophesy?
2. How can we date Amos' ministry?
3. Describe the political structure of the kingdoms at this time.
4. Where did Amos live?
5. Why is Amos considered a foreign missionary?
6. What was Amos' message?
7. Read Amos 1:2. What is the significance of the Lord being portrayed like an aroused roaring lion? How far was His message heard?
8. What was Amos' strategy in prophesying?
9. What do we call the prophecies that were against the nations surrounding Israel?

answers

1. In the eighth century B.C., around the years 762-763 B.C.
2. In Amos 1:1, we note the names of the kings and the earthquake. King Uzziah was reigning over the Southern Kingdom of Judah and King Jeroboam was reigning over the Northern Kingdom of Israel. The earthquake is also mentioned by the Jewish historian Josephus, and has been shown by archaeological studies to have occurred about 760 B.C. This same earthquake is mentioned later by the prophet Zechariah (Zechariah 14:5).
3. The United Kingdom which existed under Saul, David and Solomon had split into the Northern Kingdom of Israel and into the Southern Kingdom of Judah.
4. Tekoa, a village in the Southern Kingdom of Judah, not too far from Bethlehem.
5. Amos' ministry was not where he lived, God called him to prophecy to the Northern Kingdom of Israel.
6. Amos preached against the social injustices that were going on in the Northern Kingdom of Israel. There was material prosperity in Israel at this time, but the people were morally and spiritually bankrupt. The wealthy and prosperous were taking advantage of the poor and disadvantaged. For this reason, Amos is known as the prophet of social justice.
7. The Lord was angry and His judgment was about to fall on Israel. Like a lion ready to pounce, the Lord was ready to move out in judgment from His dwelling place in Jerusalem. God's roar of warning was heard all the way from the shepherds' fields in the south to the top of Mt. Carmel in the north.
8. Rather than zero in immediately on the sins of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, Amos first prophesied against the sins of the foreign nations surrounding Israel.
9. Amos' Circle of Fire. If you plot these nations and their capitols on a map, you will find that God is circling in on Israel with these prophecies, getting closer to home with each surrounding nation.

discuss / consider

1. Read Amos 1:3-8 and review notes on the Doctrinal / Teaching Points. Amos preached out against the social injustices that were going on in the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Name the particular sins and how God punished them.
2. What does God, through Amos, have to say to us today? Are we guilty of these sins – the sins of atrocity and deportation?

challenge

1. Amos was called from among the shepherders of Tekoa, straight out of "secular employment" to speak out against the social injustices of his day. Is it possible that God is calling you to be an Amos? How would you respond to such a call?

memorize

"The words of Amos, who was among the sheepbreeders of Tekoa...concerning Israel." Amos 1:1

"The Lord roars from Zion..." Amos 1:2

"For the transgressions of Damascus...I will punish..." Amos 1:3

"For the transgressions of Gaza...I will punish..." Amos 1:6

lesson 2

**Three More Prophecies of Judgment Against
the Foreign Nations Surrounding Israel**

Amos 1:9-15

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God will judge the breaking of covenants.
2. God will judge the hatred of Jews.
3. God will judge expansion by extermination.

practical application

1. Examine your heart for jealousy.

questions

1. What is meant by a “minor” prophet?
2. List the major prophets.
3. What do the following phrases mean? Name the major and minor prophets during each period.
 - a. Pre-exilic
 - b. Exilic
 - c. Post-exilic
4. Where did Amos live? Where did Amos prophesy?
5. Outline the book of Amos.
6. What was Amos’ strategy in prophesying?

Answers

1. A minor prophet gets his title from the size of his writing. A minor prophet wrote a book small enough that before the printing press it could be hand-copied on a single scroll.

2. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel.

3.

a. Pre-exilic was the time before the Jews were exiled to Babylon from their seventy year captivity, in the sixth century B.C.

Pre-exilic prophets were Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah.

b. Exilic was the time during the captivity. Ezekiel and Daniel were exilic prophets.

c. Post-exilic was the time after the Babylonian captivity. Prophets writing during this time were Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.

4. Amos lived in the Southern Kingdom of Judah, but he prophesied to the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

5.

Chapters 1-2: 8 prophecies

Chapters 3-6 3 sermons

Chapters 7-9 6 visions

6. He prophesied against the sins of the foreign nations surrounding Israel, then he zeroed in on the sins of the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

discuss / consider

1. Amos prophesied judgment against Tyre and Phoenicia. Their outstanding sin was that they not only sold prisoners of war as slaves to Edom, but in doing so they broke the covenant of brotherhood. (See 1 Kings 5:12.) The breaking of covenants is wrong, whether it be international treaties or marriage covenants. Discuss some of the broken covenants that have occurred today. Do you believe that God will judge the breakers of covenants?

2. Edom was denounced for pursuing his brother with a sword and showing no pity, and for continual anger and fury against the Jews. Do you see the deep hatred of the Jews in Amos 1:11? God said that He would bless those who bless the Jews and curse those who curse them. Consider the history of nations who have persecuted the Jews. God judges nations that are anti-Semitic. What is your heart toward the Jews?

3. God judged Ammon because in its ruthless pursuit to enlarge its territory they exterminated women with children. Does this say something about the unborn child of today? What rights does he have in the womb?

challenge

1. Examine your heart for jealousy. Are you jealous of someone right now? Be careful! You could be out of control and not even realize it. Take a lesson from the Edom's sin against the Jewish people. What have you done to show love for the Jewish people?

memorize

"For the transgressions of Tyre...I will punish..." Amos 1:9-10

"For the transgressions of Edom...I will punish..." Amos 1:11-12

"For the transgressions of the people of Ammon,...I will punish ..." Amos 1:13-15

**Amos' Prophecies of Judgment Against the Nation of Moab,
The Southern Kingdom of Judah and the Northern Kingdom of Israel**

Amos 2:1-16

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God will judge the spirit of revenge.
2. God will judge religious apostasy.
3. God will judge social injustice.

questions

1. In the first two chapters of Amos, there are eight prophecies of judgment against Israel, Judah, and the foreign nations surrounding them. Prophecies six, seven and eight are in chapter two. Which nations does Amos prophecy against in chapter two?
2. Why were these nations left for last?
3. Where was Amos' ministry centered?
4. What was this center noted for at the time of Amos?
5. Briefly tell the history of the golden calf shrine.

answers

1. Amos prophesies against Moab, Judah, and Israel.
2. Amos was circling in on the nations of Judah and Israel. This was the center of the Circle of Fire.
3. In Bethel.
4. There was an idolatrous shrine located at Bethel.
5. This golden calf shrine had been set up by King Jeroboam I about 170 years before the ministry of Amos. At the time of Amos, King Jeroboam II was in power, but the shrine was still there.

discuss / consider

1. The sixth prophecy was against the nation of Moab because Moab took cruel revenge on Edom by desecrating the King of Edom's grave. It was unrestrained wrath, way beyond defending the nation in a just war. It was a spirit of revenge, which would be judged because God holds all nations accountable for how they treat one another. Think of some nations in this category in more recent times. Also, recognize that not only nations, but individuals will be held accountable for how they treat one another. Have you ever been caught up in unrestrained wrath and the spirit of revenge? All will be judged by God.
2. Judah despised the law of the Lord and failed to keep His commandments. Even though they were God's people, they would not escape judgment. Judah had not only disobeyed God's law, but they despised and rejected it. This was religious apostasy. Apostasy is deliberately turning away from the revealed truth of God, which was once embraced. Apostasy is a serious sin. Consider some of the organizations in our own country that are now apostate.
3. Down through the years there were no good kings in the Northern Kingdom of Israel, and no revivals. The nation was ripe for judgment. The sin for which they were finally denounced was the sin of social injustice. Review Amos 2: 6-16. Consider some of the social injustices in our country today. They will be judged by God.

challenge

1. The Nazirites of the Northern Kingdom of Israel were being stumbled, and either tricked, forced, or persuaded to break their vow before the Lord. Is it possible to stumble a Nazirite today? Is it possible to stumble a committed Christian today? Beware of being stumbled and beware of stumbling another. Be sensitive to God's will, both for yourself and for others.

memorize

"For three transgressions of Moab, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment..." Amos 2:1

"For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment..." Amos 2:4

"For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment..." Amos 2:6

"Behold, I am weighed down by you...says the Lord." Amos 2:13

The First of the Three Sermons of Judgment that Amos Delivered to the Northern Kingdom of Israel

Amos 3

background notes

1.

2.

3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God's judgment is not without reason.
2. God's judgment is not without warning.
3. God's judgment is not without mercy.

practical application

1. Have you heeded God's clear warning?

questions

1. When did Amos prophesy?
2. Give a brief sketch of Israel's history up to this point.
3. What was Amos' profession?
4. Why was Amos considered a foreign missionary?
5. The Northern Kingdom was doing well militarily and materially, but...

answers

1. The eighth century B.C. (around 760 B.C.)

2. The Exodus and Conquest of the land of Canaan

The period of the Judges

The United Kingdom of Israel established under Kings Saul, David, and Solomon

The United Kingdom split into the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah

3. Amos was a shepherd or sheepbreeder, not just a shepherd.

4. He lived in the southern Kingdom of Judah, but he prophesied to the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

5.....they were morally and spiritually corrupt, and they were characterized by social injustice.

discuss / consider

1. God chose Israel to be His people, but that did not exempt them from punishment for their sins. The Bible teaches that privilege increases responsibility. To whom much is given, much will be required (Luke 12:48). How does this apply to the Church today?

2. Review the series of seven questions in Amos 3:3-6 to see how Amos teaches that God's judgment is not without reason. For every effect there is a cause.

3. God sends warning of impending judgment for sins. Consider Noah as he was warned about the flood to come. Now Amos warns Israel while the surrounding foreign nations are invited to see the social sins of the nation. In other words, even the world condemns God's people for wrongdoing. Have you seen examples of this today?

challenge

1. Have you heeded God's warnings in your life, whether it be for salvation or for righteous living as a believer?

memorize

"Hear the word that the Lord has spoken against you, O children..." Amos 3:1

"I will punish you for all your iniquities." Amos 3:2

"Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?" Amos 3:3

"Surely the Lord does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants." Amos 3:7

The Second Sermon of Judgment that Amos Preached to the Northern Kingdom of Israel

Amos 4

background notes

1.

2.

3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God expects men and women to be informed and concerned about the poor and needy.
2. God expects the backslider to return as a result of hard times.

practical application

1. Are you prepared to meet your God?

questions

1. Who was the first king of the Northern Kingdom of Israel?
2. Was he a good king?
3. How is Jeroboam I remembered?
4. Where did Jeroboam I set up his shrines?
5. How had idolatry already begun in Israel?
6. Are there ten lost tribes of Israel?

answers

1. Jeroboam I

2. No. In fact, there were no good kings in the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

3. As the king who made Israel to sin because he set up a new system of worship. He did this in order to keep the people from going south to worship at the temple in Jerusalem, Judah.

4. At Dan and at Bethel, each shrine having a golden calf as the focus of worship.

5. It began with Solomon because he had married many foreign wives, who brought their gods into the country with them.

6. No, because at the time of Jeroboam I, many of the godly in the northern ten tribes of Israel had migrated south to worship the true Lord at His temple in Jerusalem. That's why there is representation for all twelve tribes in the Jews today.

discuss / consider

1. Amos prophesied against the wealthy, pleasure-loving women of Samaria. The sin was not that they were wealthy, but that their wealth was obtained by oppressing the poor and crushing the needy, and they didn't care. What does this say to our culture today? Even among Christians? God holds us accountable and we will be judged concerning our care and treatment of the poor and needy. What are you doing for the poor and needy?

2. Throughout the existence of the Northern Kingdom, God had sent hard times – famines, droughts, natural disasters, plagues and military defeats. Only by God's mercy were they spared and not consumed. What was God's purpose? He expected the backslider to return as a result of hard times. But because they would not return, they would meet God's judgment. Relate this to today, both to our nation and to your personal life.

challenge

1. Are you prepared to meet your God? Each one of us will stand before our Maker someday. Read Hebrews 9:27. If you are not a believer, you must acknowledge your sin and receive Christ as your Savior in order to meet God. If you are a Christian, remember that your life will be reviewed before the Judgment Seat of Christ. Read Romans 14:12. Are you ready to meet God and give account?

memorize

"Hear this word...you who oppress the poor and crush the needy." Amos 4:1

"...you have not returned to Me, says the Lord." Amos 4:6, 8, 9, 10, 11

"Prepare to meet your God..." Amos 4:12

The Beginning of the Third Sermon Amos Preached to the Northern Kingdom of Israel

Amos 5:1-17

background notes

1.

2.

3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Idolatry will not go unjudged.

2. Injustice will not go unjudged.

practical application

1. Don't forget that you're dealing with the God of the universe.

questions

1. Why was Amos considered a foreign missionary?

2. Where was the idolatrous shrine of the golden calf located where Amos began his third sermon of judgment?

3. Was Amos a seminary student when God called him to missionary service?

4. King Jeroboam had two residences. Where were they located?

5. What do Bethel, Gilgal, and Beersheba have in common?

answers

1. He crossed over an international boundary, leaving his home country of Judah in the Southern Kingdom to go to prophesy and preach to the Northern Kingdom of Israel.
2. In Bethel.
3. No. He was a sheepbreeder and a tender of sycamore fruit.
4. He had a residence in Samaria, the capitol of Israel, and in Bethel.
5. They had all become places of idolatrous shrines.

discuss / consider

1. Jews from the Northern Kingdom of Israel were crossing the border, going right past the true temple in Jerusalem in order to make pilgrimages to the idolatrous shrine in Beersheba. Bethel was the royal shrine of the Northern Kingdom, which had also become idolatrous, and it was here that Amos pronounced God's judgment. In Amos 5:6, an invitation was given to any individual in the Northern Kingdom to escape the judgment by turning to the Lord. A number of godly Hebrews did escape judgment by migrating south to the Kingdom of Judah to worship the Lord at His true temple. As predicted by Amos, the Northern Kingdom of Israel was conquered because idolatry will not go unjudged. Idolatry will not go unjudged. What is the application for us today?
2. The Northern Kingdom of Israel was not only guilty of idolatry, but also of injustice. The people were rebuked, but they abhorred the one who spoke uprightly. Does this sound familiar in our own nation today? How do people respond to one who speaks righteousness? An appeal was made for people to turn from their wicked ways, but there was very little response to God's gracious offer because the people were so far away from the Lord. How does this relate to us today?

challenge

1. Don't forget that you're dealing with the God of the universe. See Amos 5:8-9.

Ultimately, righteousness will reign. God not only has the right to judge, but He has the power to do so. Take heed, for God sees all, knows all, and is everywhere present. Stand in awe.

memorize

"Hear the word which I take up against you, a lamentation..." Amos 5:1

"Seek Me and live...Seek the Lord and live..." Amos 5:5, 6

"He made the Pleiades and Orion...the Lord is His name." Amos 5:8

"They hate the one who rebukes in the gate, and they abhor the one who speaks uprightly." Amos 5:10

"It is an evil time. Seek good and not evil, that you may live...establish justice in the gate." Amos 5:13-15

**The Continuation of the Third Sermon of Amos
Amos Denounces the Religious Hypocrisy in the Northern Kingdom of Israel**

Amos 5:18-27

background notes

1.

2.

3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The day of the Lord is darkness for those involved in religious hypocrisy.
2. The response of the Lord is rejection for those involved in religious hypocrisy.

practical application

1. Are you a religious hypocrite?

questions

1. How does Amos begin each of his sermons?
2. Where were these three sermons given?
3. What does Amos denounce in this third sermon?
4. What is the point of Amos 5:25-26?

answers

1. *"Hear this word..."* See Amos 3:1; 4:1; 5:1.
2. At Bethel in the Northern Kingdom of Israel.
3. He openly denounces the religious hypocrisy of Israel.
4. Even though the people brought some sacrifices to the Lord during the wilderness wanderings, they were also practicing idolatry.

discuss / consider

1. The religious hypocrites of Amos' day thought they would be blessed in the Day of the Lord. But it would be a day of darkness and judgment for unfaithful Israel. Could religious hypocrites of our day think they will see blessing and not judgment? See Matthew 7:21-23.
2. The people of Amos' day were going through religious motions, but they were rejected by the Lord because it was not true worship. Worship must begin with a right heart. The people from the Northern Kingdom were worshiping pagan deities at the same time, and they were not worshiping the Lord at His temple in Jerusalem. They were also involved in social injustices, taking advantage of the poor and widows and aliens – all evidence that they did not have true faith. Social justice would be evidence of a true and right heart. True faith should work itself out into everyday righteousness. Otherwise, could be religious hypocrisy and just going through the motions, which is false worship, unacceptable and rejected by the Lord.

Where do you see false worship today? Religious hypocrisy is unacceptable and rejected by the Lord.

challenge

1. Is it possible that you are just going through the motions of worship? Are you hiding behind a religious mask? Or, are you truly born again and worshiping the Lord from a true and right heart? Faith will manifest itself in acceptable worship, justice, and everyday righteousness. See Amos 5:24. Examine your heart lest you be a religious hypocrite.

memorize

"Woe to you who desire the day of the Lord...it will be darkness, and not light." Amos 5:18

"Let justice run down like water, and righteousness like a mighty stream." Amos 5:24

**The Conclusion of the Third Sermon of Amos
Amos Denounces the Luxurious and Proud Life-Style of the Northern Kingdom of Israel**

Amos 6

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God holds accountable those living in the lap of luxury.
2. God brings down those boasting in the arm of strength.

practical application

1. How stupid can you be?

questions

1. Amos preached at Bethel, the “house of God”. Was it really a house of God?
2. Was Amos preaching to a receptive audience?
3. Was Amos timid and afraid to speak out against the sins of the nation and to pronounce the judgment of God on the Northern Kingdom of Israel?
4. What was the capitol of the Northern Kingdom?
5. Who was king of the Northern Kingdom during Amos’ time?
6. Describe the state of the Northern Kingdom during Amos’ time.
7. Was there idolatry in the Southern Kingdom as well as in the Northern Kingdom at this time?

answers

1. No. During Amos' time, Bethel had become a center of idolatry.
2. No. He risked his life to preach against the sins of the Northern Kingdom, especially at Bethel where the leaders of the nation would come to worship their pagan deities.
3. No. See Amos 6:1.
4. Samaria.
5. Jeroboam II.
6. Israel, the Northern Kingdom was quite prosperous, both economically and materially. It was referred to as the chief nation of the whole house of Israel, which included even the people of Jerusalem and the Southern Kingdom. Everyone in the house of Israel looked to the Northern Kingdom as a tower of strength, and they looked to the leaders of the north for guidance. But the Northern Kingdom was morally and spiritually corrupt.
7. Yes. See Amos 6:2. The three cities mentioned here were in the Southern Kingdom.

discuss / consider

1. Read Amos 6:4-6. God was not condemning the wealthy because of their wealth, but because they were not concerned about the poor. They were wrongly using their money for their selfish lifestyles. Meanwhile, the poor and oppressed cried out all around them and they did not care. For this they would be judged.

God still holds those accountable who are well off financially. It is not wrong to be rich, but it is wrong not to care and share with those who are hurting. Do you know people who use their money selfishly? Are you in this category, even if you have limited means? How could you show concern in a tangible way for the poor and oppressed? Read 1 Timothy 6:17-18.

2. The Northern Kingdom of Israel thought itself strong and secure, and they boasted in their own arm of strength. God brought them down for this prideful boasting. Whenever man boasts in his own arm of strength, beware! Have you ever been tempted to take the glory for a victory? God alone deserves the glory.

challenge

1. Israel turned justice into gall and the fruit of righteousness into wormwood (Amos 6:12). They were not only hurting themselves and making life bitter, but they were destroying themselves and their own nation. How about America? We have taken God out of the classroom, making moral standards relative, and we have glorified man over God. We are hurting ourselves and destroying our nation. What can you do in your corner of service to counteract this situation? The judgments of Amos 6:14 are God's challenge to nations today.

memorize

"Woe to you who are at ease in Zion...who lie on beds of ivory..." Amos 6:1, 4

"The Lord God of hosts says: 'I abhor the pride...and will deliver it up...'" Amos 6:8

"You have turned justice into gall, and the fruit of righteousness into wormwood." Amos 6:12

"We have done this by our own strength..." Amos 6:13

The First of Three Visions of Amos

Amos 7:1-9

background notes

1.

2.

3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God answers the prayers of His people according to His sovereignty.
2. God measures the uprightness of His people according to His scriptures.

practical application

1. How straight is your wall in God's eyes?

questions

1. Where did Amos live?
2. Where did Amos preach and prophesy?
3. What did Amos see in his first vision?
4. When the harvest was reaped, where did the reapings go?
5. What did Amos see in the second vision?

answers

1. In Tekoa, not far from Bethlehem in the Southern Kingdom of Judah.
2. In the Northern Kingdom of Israel.
3. A devastating locust plague, which came at the time of the second harvest.
4. The first reaping went to the king as a tribute or tax; the second reaping went to the people.
5. He saw a consuming fire that ravaged the land and dried up the water sources.

discuss / consider

1. In the first vision of Amos, he saw that the land would be devastated and the people would have nothing. Many would die of starvation. In his second vision, the fire meant devastation and death. After each vision, Amos prayed on behalf of the nation and God withheld both the locust plague and the fire. Amos was a righteous man and God answered his prayers and withheld judgment. Read James 5:16. Do you pray for God's mercy on behalf of others?
2. The third vision of Amos concerned a plumb line. A plumb line is used by builders and masons to determine how straight a wall is. God measured His people Israel and they were not upright. God's plumb line is His word, and He uses it for measuring spiritual and moral uprightness. How well do you measure up to God's plumb line?

challenge

1. How straight is your wall in God's eyes? If God were to picture your life as a stone wall, what would it look like? Would it be strong and straight and true, or would it be crooked and broken down? Does every area of your life line up with scripture? The more we know scripture, the stronger our wall.

memorize

"Thus the Lord God showed me...and so it was..." Amos 7:1-2, 4, 7

"O Lord God, forgive, I pray!" Amos 7:2, 5

The Historical Account of a False Priest named Amaziah from the Northern Kingdom of Israel, telling Amos to Stop Prophesying, to Stop Preaching, and to Go Back Home to the Southern Kingdom of Judah

Amos 7:10-17

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Unbelievers will attempt to slander and silence those who speak God's word.
2. Believers must share the good news and the bad news with those who doubt God's word.

practical application

1. Go when you're sure God's calling you.

questions

1. Name the three visions of Amos recorded in Amos Chapter 7.
2. Who tried to silence Amos and send him back to Bethel?
3. Was there still an idolatrous shrine at Bethel?
4. Was God's sanctuary at Bethel?
5. Which other prophet was beginning his ministry in the Northern Kingdom at the same time as Amos?
6. Did Amos preach throughout the Northern Kingdom?

answers

1. The vision of the locusts, the vision of the fire, and the vision of the plumb line.
2. Amaziah, a false priest of Bethel.
3. Yes.
4. No, it was not God's sanctuary but the king's sanctuary.
5. Hosea.
6. No. He preached only at Bethel.

discuss / consider

1. The false priest went to King Jeroboam II and falsely accused Amos of being a part of a conspiracy to get rid of the king. Amos, however, knew that he had been called by God, so he continued with God's message to the people. When slandered, the Bible teaches us to deny the false charge as briefly and as concisely as we can, then get on with the job. Read Nehemiah 6. Has someone falsely accused you when you have presented God's word?
2. Amaziah, the apostate priest, doubted God's word. Amos personalized the word to Amaziah. This meant sharing both the good news and the bad news of God's word. Do you share the whole gospel? Do you hesitate to personalize the gospel?

challenge

1. Amos left a successful business when God called him to prophesy. Go when you're sure God's calling you.

memorize

"The land is not able to bear all of his (Amos') words" Amos 7:10

"The Lord took me...and the Lord said to me, 'Go, prophesy'...now therefore, hear the word of the Lord." Amos 7:15-16

The Fourth Vision of Amos: the Vision of the Basket of Summer Fruit

Amos 8

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. A nation that corrupts justice is ripe for judgment.
2. A nation that practices idolatry is ripe for judgment.

practical application

1. Do you want the Lord to forget your sins?

questions

1. In a brief outline of Amos, there are

_____ prophecies

_____ sermons

_____ visions

2. What happened during the historical interlude in Chapter 7?
3. Where did Amos give his prophecies, sermons, and visions?
4. Bethel has historical significance. What did Abraham do at there? What did Jacob do?
5. What was Bethel like during the time of Amos?
6. What did King Jeroboam I do at Dan and at Bethel?
7. Did King Jeroboam II get rid of the idols?
8. Amos was not the first prophet that God sent from Judah to the idolatrous shrine at Bethel to pronounce judgment. Who was the other prophet?
9. What is the meaning of the vision of the summer fruit?

answers

1. 8 prophecies, 3 sermons, 6 visions
2. Amaziah, the false priest of Bethel tried to silence Amos and send him back to Judah.
3. At Bethel, in the Northern Kingdom of Israel.
4. Abraham built an altar and worshiped God there. Jacob had his dream at Bethel, and later returned there.
5. During Amos' time Bethel held an idolatrous shrine.
6. He set up two golden calf idol shrines in Israel – one at Dan and one at Bethel.
7. No, he continued the idolatrous ways of the kings of the north.
8. He is an unnamed prophet mentioned in 1 Kings 13:1-2.
9. The nation of Israel was ripe for judgment. The idea in the summer fruit is that it is overripe. It is rotten fruit representing the nation that is ripe for judgment.

discuss / consider

1. Read Amos 8:4-8. Notice the tricks that the people would use to cheat in business. Are these practices unknown in America today? For their corruption of justice Israel would be judged. What does this say about the corruption of justice in our nation today? It will not go unjudged. What is true for a nation is true for individuals within that nation. If God were to picture your life as a basket of fruit, what kind of fruit would be in that basket?
2. Idolatry was and will be judged in Israel. All idolatry in all nations will be judged, and all idolatry in an individual's life will be judged. Is there any idolatry in your life right now? Is something taking the place of God in your life? Are you hungering and thirsting for nourishment from the word of God?
See Amos 8:11-12.

challenge

1. There is no contradiction between the verses in Amos 8:7 and Jeremiah 31:34. Jeremiah refers to believers, but Amos 8 refers to unbelievers who would not repent. God will forgive and forget your sins when you receive Jesus Christ as your Savior.

memorize

“The Lord showed me a basket of summer fruit.” Amos 8:1

“The Lord says, ‘Surely I will never forget any of their works. Shall the land not tremble for this?’”

Amos 8:7-8

“Behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord God, “That I will send a famine on the land...a famine of hearing the words of the Lord” Amos 8:11

“They shall wander from sea to sea, and from north to east; They shall run to and fro, seeking the word of the Lord, but shall not find it.” Amos 8:12

**The Fifth Vision of Amos:
A Vision of the Lord Judging Israel for Their Sins of Disobedience and Idolatry**

Amos 9:1-10

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. No one can escape the judgment of God.
2. Everything is under the control of God.

practical application

1. Praise the Lord for His sovereign grace.

questions

1. Describe the fifth vision of Amos.
2. Was the altar mentioned in Amos 9:1 the true temple of the Lord in Jerusalem?
3. When did the Northern Kingdom of Israel come to an end?
4. What means did the Lord use to bring about His judgment on the Northern Kingdom of Israel?
5. Did the people who were left in the land after the fall of the kingdom turn to the Lord?
6. Was the shrine at Bethel eventually destroyed?

answers

1. Amos saw the Lord standing beside the altar at Bethel ready to judge the Northern Kingdom of Israel for their sins and for their refusal to return to the Lord for forgiveness.
2. No. It was a false altar at the shrine of the golden calf at Bethel.
3. About forty years after Amos related this vision of judgment.
4. Assyria conquered the capitol city of Samaria in 722 B.C.
5. No. They continued their idolatry at Bethel.
6. Yes. In 621 B.C., the great revival under King Josiah of Judah swept north, and whatever remained of the shrine at Bethel was demolished.

discuss / consider

1. In the vision, Amos saw people trying to escape God's judgment and trying to get away with their sins, but no one escaped. People can go as high or as low as they try, but they cannot escape from God. Why? Because God is omnipresent – God is in all places at all times. See Psalm 139:7-8. Think of the consequences of trying to escape God's judgment today.
2. Amos 9:5-10 emphasizes the omnipotence of God. He is all-powerful and in control of everything. He is sovereign over nature and over nations. God works all things according to the counsel of His will. See Ephesians 1:11.
3. No one can hide and escape from God's judgment, because He is omnipresent. You may hide your sins from others, but not from God.

challenge

1. In God's sovereign control, He would graciously preserve a remnant from the Northern Kingdom of Israel. What's true for the remnant of Israel is true for every believer: we are saved not by our works or because we chose God. God in His grace and mercy chose us. Appreciate the truth that salvation is all of God.

memorize

"I saw the Lord standing by the altar..." Amos 9:1

"Wherever they try to flee...I will search and take them." Amos 9:2-3

"Behold, the eyes of the Lord God are on the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it." Amos 9:8

**A Vision of Blessing for Israel
A Fitting Conclusion for the Book of Amos**

Amos 9:11-15

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. In the future, the throne of David will be re-established.
2. In the future, the land of Israel will be replenished.
3. In the future, the people of Israel will be restored.

practical application

1. Don't confuse figurative language and the spiritualization of scripture.

questions

1. Is the sixth vision of Amos a vision of judgment?
2. Which prophecies, sermons, and visions of Amos were of judgment?
3. Will the tabernacle of David be repaired and rebuilt?
4. When was the dynasty of David damaged?
5. What does it mean that the dynasty will be repaired and rebuilt, as in the days of old?
6. When will this take place?

answers

1. No. It is a vision of blessing.
2. All of them except this last one.
3. Yes, in the future.
4. When the United Kingdom split after the reign of Solomon.
5. Judah and Israel will be together again under a king in the line of David.
6. When the Lord returns to this earth and sets up His millennial kingdom.

discuss / consider

1. Read Revelation 20:4-6. The kingdom of Christ will be centered in the New Jerusalem, but its scope will reach out to the Gentile nations around the world. See Amos 9:12. Aren't you thankful that the Lord reached out to you?
2. The land of Israel today is quite productive, but when the Lord returns to earth to set up His kingdom the land of Israel will be so replenished that the people will literally begin planting a new crop as soon as the old crop is harvested. This will be the time when the desert will blossom as a rose. See Isaiah 35. God promised the replenishment of the land in Leviticus 26:3-6 and in Joel 3:18. Consider the promises of God!
3. We see a foretaste of the restoration of the people of Israel, for the Jews are returning and the nation is a reality. But hard times are ahead for Israel. During that time, the Jews will not only return to the land, but many will return to the Lord. When the Lord returns to set up His kingdom here on earth, there will be peace, prosperity, and security for this restored remnant. See Romans 11:26

challenge

1. Don't confuse figurative language and the spiritualization of scripture. There is a legitimate spiritualization of scripture, such as types in the Old Testament and parables in the New Testament, but be careful of overspiritualizing predictive prophesy like this portion of Amos.

memorize

"On that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David...and rebuild it as in the days of old." Amos 9:11

"That they may possess the remnant...and all the Gentiles who are called by My name." Amos 9:12

"Behold, the days are coming when I will bring back the captives of My people Israel...I will plant them in their land, and no longer shall they be pulled up from the land I have given them,' says the Lord your God." Amos 9:13-15