

OWNit365 Bible Reading Tips

To assist you in making the most of your Bible reading, we offer the following:

- Background and overview information about the book
 - Thoughts and questions for your personal reflection and observation
 - Questions that you can use in a small group setting
 - Something to look for in each chapter
-

Amos

Book Background and History

The book of Amos records the messages of a shepherd called to preach in the reign of King Jereboam II while Uzziah ruled Judah [2Kings 14:23-29]. During Amos' day, the people of the Northern Kingdom felt secure economically, politically, and religiously. Their good times had led to social corruption, violence, idolatry, and injustice.

Author Background and History

Amos = burden bearer

Amos was a fig farmer and sheep herdsman of Tekoa, a small town of Judea, a few miles south of Bethlehem. It 's about 15 miles from the Dead Sea. This is also the area where David tended his sheep about 300 years earlier.

Amos was not trained as a prophet [Amos 7:14-15]. He was someone that God called [Amos 7:1, Amos 8:1].

Amos was humble, not hiding his simple station in life.

Amos was clever in presenting his warnings by first rallying support as he pointed out the way God would judge Israel's enemies. Who of us doesn't enjoy hearing that God will punish our enemies? Just when Amos had them cheering him on (today we might be yelling "Amen brother"), he quickly followed with an unpleasant message that Israel was subject to God's judgment as well.

Amos was brave in telling the unpopular truth boldly.

Key Verse and Key Word

Amos 5:24 But let justice run down like water, And righteousness like a mighty stream.

key word = injustice

Book Highlights

Although Amos prophesied against the nations surrounding Israel, his main message was against Israel. The message was to repent of their injustice or go into exile. He warned Israel that they were relying on false securities. He explained that everything was the opposite of what it seemed.

God called Amos to prophesy to the northern kingdom. This would be similar to a mid-western farmer going to New York City to preach the gospel. Amos uses the colorful language of a herdsman which must have sounded coarse to the upper-class people to whom he spoke.

Amos 4:1 Hear this word, you cows of Bashan, who are on the mountain of Samaria, Who oppress the poor, Who crush the needy, Who say to your husbands, "Bring wine, let us drink!" (NKJV)

Themes are:

- social justice
- true religion
- "the day of the Lord."

Book Outline

<p>Amos 1-2</p> <p>"for three transgressions and for four" to convey more than a full measure</p>	<p>burdens on the nations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Damascus, Syria 2. Gaza, Philistia 3. Tyre, Phoenicia 4. Edom 5. Ammon 6. Moab 7. Judah 8. Israel
<p>Amos 3-6</p> <p>"hear this word"</p>	<p>sermons to Israel:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. judgment for present failure to keep covenant (Amos 3) 2. judgment for past rejection of Divine warnings (Amos 4) 3. judgment for false religion and injustice (Amos 5-6)
<p>Amos 7-9</p> <p>divine retribution</p> <p>then restoration</p>	<p>visions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. grasshoppers-judgment averted (Amos 7) 2. fire-judgment restrained (Amos 7) 3. plumb line-judgment determined (Amos 7) 4. summer fruit-judgment imminent (Amos 8) 5. God over the altar-judgment executed (Amos 9:1-10) <p>final promise to Israel (Amos 9:11-15)</p>

Personal Reflection and Application

Amos is a role model for Christians who have no formal academic training. God calls more than those who have graduated from Bible college. Pray, asking God to make it clear how He wants you to serve Him.

Small Group Conversation Guide

Discuss how social injustice is an indicator of a break in covenant with God ([Amos 4:1](#)). In what ways does a culture of injustice make it a challenge for those who desire to please God?

When we cheer God for punishing others, we may want to take a close look at our own frailties. Discuss some of the less obvious ways that we fail to keep God's commandments as we let the world lead us astray ([Amos 2:4](#)).

Something to Find in Each Chapter

As you read through the book, it may help to have something to look for in each chapter.

What to Look for:

01. Why God planned to judge the people of Edom	02. Why the southern kingdom of Judah faced judgment
03. What must happen for two to walk together	04. What God did to prompt Israel to return to Him
05. Why God rejected Israel's religious ritual and worship	06. How God viewed those who did not fear judgment
07. What Amaziah the priest told Amos not to do	08. What kind of famine God said would affect Israel
09. Where people can hide from God	