

Amos

Amos
SERVING
TOOKS
VISIONS
A SHEPHERD & FIG-TREE
FARMER (see 7:14)
SOUTHERN
JUDAH
TEKOA

BETH EL
JEROBAM II
KING OF ISRAEL
A MAN WHO TENDERS A GENERATED IDOLATRY
- ALLOWED IDOLATRY & INJUSTICE

NORTHERN ISRAEL

TRUE WORSHIP of GOD
Let Amos always be heard for
JUSTICE, RIGHTNESS, & LOVING OUR NEIGHBOR

1-2 MESSAGE TO THE NATIONS & ISRAEL

1:2b ACCUSATIONS AGAINST THE NATIONS

2:6 ACCUSATIONS AGAINST ISRAEL

THE PARTY'S OVER!

...and SCILL THEM INTO DEBT SLAVERY

...and DENY THEM LEGAL REPRISAL

the WEALTHY IGNORE...

DAMASCUS
TYRE
AMMON
MOAB
EDOM
JUDAH
GAZA

3-6 MESSAGE TO ISRAEL & ITS LEADERS

3:1 "I CHOOSE YOU, ISRAEL, FROM AMONG ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH AND THIS IS WHY I WILL PUNISH YOU FOR ALL YOUR SIN."

4:1-2 GREAT CALLING + GREAT RESPONSIBILITY = GREAT CONSEQUENCES

5:1-2 ACCUSATIONS OF IDOLATRY

6:1-6 ANNOUNCING THE DAY OF THE LORD

40 YEARS LATER (see 7:17)

ARMIES OF ASSYRIA

IT'S ALL A SHAM!

LET JUSTICE FLOW LIKE A RIVER, AND A RIVER, AND LIKE AN UNFALLING STREAM. (5:24)

HEBREIZ: MISHPAT
ACTIONS THEN TO CONQUEST INJUSTICE

HEBREIZ: TSEMOAH
WHAT RELATIONSHIP? EQUITY INJUSTICE SOCIAL INEQUITY

EXPOSURE OF RELIGIOUS HYPOCRISY

ALUSION to GENESIS 12
ISRAEL SHOULD BE A BLESSING TO ALL NATIONS.

WORSHIP OF THESE GODS LEADS TO INJUSTICE...

...BUT NOT THE GOD OF ISRAEL

"SEEK GOOD, NOT EVIL, THAT YOU MAY LIVE." (5:14)

"SEEK EYE, THAT YOU MAY LIVE." (5:14)

EXPLORE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOD'S JUSTICE & MERCY

HE MUST CONFRONT EVIL AMONG ISRAEL & THE NATIONS

HIS LONG-TERM PURPOSES ARE FOR RESTORATION & A NEW FAMILY

7-9 AMOS' VISIONS

SYMBOLIC DEPICTIONS OF THE DAY OF THE LORD

SCORCHING FIRE

LOCUST SWARM

OVERFIRE FRUIT

GOPE

A GLIMMER OF HOPE

HOUSE OF DAVID

FUTURE MESSIANIC KINGDOM

GOD'S KINGDOM OVER ALL NATIONS

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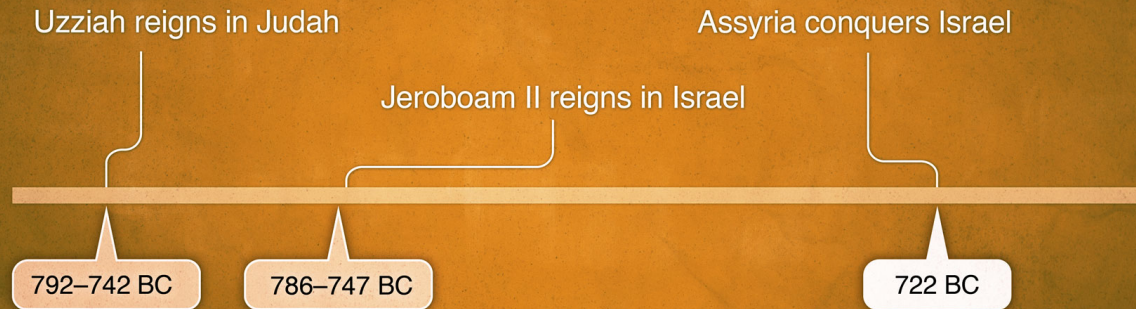
WEEK 4

ANCIENT ISRAEL & JUDAH



TIMELINE

AMOS



*All dates are approximate

- Chronologically, Amos stands first among the minor prophets and is an older contemporary of Hosea and Micah.
- Amos was a shepherd and a sycamore farmer from Tekoa.
 - Tekoa was a village ten miles south of Jerusalem.
- He was not affiliated with the religious establishment of a royal court or the Temple.
- His prophetic ministry took place in Bethel (Israel), though he was from Judah.
- He specifically mentions Uzziah (Judah) and Jeroboam II (Israel), which suggests that his prophetic ministry fell within the period of their reigns (767-753BC).

AMOS: PRE-EXILIC PROPHET TO ISRAEL





- Religious apostasy, moral and social collapse, and political corruption of the northern kingdom prompted God to send Amos from Judah across the border into Bethel of Israel.
- His basic message was *"The End has Come for My People"* (8:2).
- Amos also famously condemned the false priest Amaziah. His condemnation was basically a condensed version of the prophet's word of judgment to the entire nation.
- Therefore, thus says the LORD:
 - *"Your wife shall be a prostitute in the city,
and your sons and your daughters shall fall by the sword,
and your land shall be divided up with a measuring line;
you yourself shall die in an unclean land,
and Israel shall surely go into exile away from its land."* (7:17)

AMOS: PURPOSE AND MESSAGE

- 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. (1:1)
- The earthquake may have been the event that prompted Amos to write down his experience because the prophet viewed it as a partial fulfillment of his prophecy to Israel and as a confirmation of his divine commission
- "I saw the Lord standing beside the altar, and he said: Strike the capitals until the thresholds shake, and shatter them on the heads of all the people; and those who are left of them I will kill with the sword; not one of them shall flee away; not one of them shall escape." (9:1)
- And you shall flee to the valley of my mountains, for the valley of the mountains shall reach to Azal. And you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all the holy ones with him. (Zechariah 14:5)
- While archeological evidence doesn't help us specifically date the book, it seems that the earthquake was long remembered in Israel

THE WRITING OF AMOS



THE WRITING OF AMOS

- The book has traditionally been assigned to the middle to latter years of the reign of Jeroboam II (760BC)
- Amos dates the words "he saw" concerning Israel to Jeroboam II (Israel) and Uzziah (Judah).
- **The Biblical accounts of these reigns are found in 2 Kings 14:17-15:7 and 2 Chronicles 26.**
 - During this time, both of the kingdoms were experiencing stability and prosperity. Territorial boundaries were expanded through military efforts.
 - Israel and Judah even existed peacefully.
 - Commercial enterprise and agricultural production increased.

- The prophets of God looked past the so-called golden age to see the real issues of social and moral decay.
- Both Isaiah (south) and Amos (north) saw that the nations were still loaded with guilt. Hosea also emphasizes this reality with his harlot wife a few decades later.
- The writing style is largely appreciated for its literary skill.
- The bold style of writing shows Amos as a man of conviction and integrity.
- The visionary aspects of the book help account for the vivid language used as Amos "saw the words" that God revealed to him.
- Many of his illustrations, metaphors, and rhetorical questions demonstrated the prophet's pastoral roots
 - *"Thus says the LORD: 'As the shepherd rescues from the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear, so shall the people of Israel who dwell in Samaria be rescued, with the corner of a couch and part of a bed.'" (3:12)*

THE WRITING OF AMOS

- The hymns and doxologies show that Amos had some poetic and musical abilities.
- **Amos uses various prophetic speech forms and literary constructions:**
 - Proclamation "Hear"
 - Revelation "The LORD showed me"
 - Oath formulas "the LORD has sworn"
- **He also used repeated words and phrases to emphasize his point:**
 - "Seek... and live"
 - "Yet you have not returned to me"
- **Several types of prophetic oracles are also used:**
 - Judgement: 2:6-8
 - Instruction or admonition: 5:4-5
 - Repentance: 5:4-10
 - Woe or indictment oracle: 5:18

THE WRITING OF AMOS

- The oracles against the nations in 1:3-2:16 set the tone for the book, emphasizing destruction and exile. His main concern, however, was his own people of Judah and, even more so, Israel.
- **Damascus** would be judged for their behavior against Gilead in the days of Jehu. Their prophesied deportation came in 732 when Assyria captured Damascus.
- The **Philistines** are judged because they collaborated with Edom against God's people in Judah (see Obadiah). The Philistines fell in 712/711 due to Assyria.
- **Tyre** had also delivered an Israelite prisoner to Edom (like the Philistines). This was a violation of the covenant between Israel and Tyre, dating back to David's time, also destroyed by Assyria.
- **Edom** is condemned for their general hostility against Israel and Judah. Amos and Obadiah both predict the day that they will fall which they do under Assyria.
- Ammon
- Moab

AMOS: HIS MESSAGE



- **2:6-16: FIRST MESSAGE**
 - Amos denounced Israel's sin and predicted national disaster.
 - Seeks to remind people of the consequences of covenant disobedience.
- **3:1-6:15 SECOND MESSAGE**
 - Amos condemns specific acts of social injustice and religious hypocrisy.
 - Calls some to repentance of personal sin.
 - Calls for a return to the standards of behavior consistent with Yahweh's covenant stipulations.
 - In contrast to the notion that the "Day of the Lord" was a day of national blessing only.
- **7:1-9:4: THIRD MESSAGE**
 - Amos relates 5 visions he experienced.
 - All the visions deal with God's wrath and judgment on Israel.
 - These served to reinforce the oracles against the nations in 1:3-2:16.
 - Emphasizes the certainty of Israel's destruction and exile.
 - Introduces the remnant theme.
- **9:5-15: FOURTH MESSAGE**
 - Prophet concludes his ministry to Israel with the promise of messianic restoration and blessing.
 - The purpose was to encourage the remnant that God's judgment is not final. He will remember the covenant with Israel and renew his steadfast love.

AMOS: HIS MESSAGE

Take away from me the noise of your songs;
to the melody of your harps I will not listen.

But let
justice roll
down
like waters,

AMOS 5:23-24

and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

- Amos condemned Israel for their inability to "do right" (3:10).
- He has a reputation as God's spokesman for social justice. Isaiah also focuses on this in Judah.
- The covenant wasn't just about doing the external rituals. It was also about the internal aspects of the covenant relationship with God, including loving God with a whole heart and obeying his statutes.
- *"I hate, I despise your feasts,
and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.
Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings,
I will not accept them;
and the peace offerings of your fattened animals,
I will not look upon them. (5:21-22)*
- He also understood the ethical implications of the covenant relationship with Yahweh for individual and corporate behavior.
- He pleaded for the people to help the socially disadvantaged.
 - The poor, needy, and afflicted.
- He also denounced the affluent oppressors.
 - Rich women, dishonest merchants, corrupt rulers, opportunistic lawyers and judges, and false priests.
 - They sold the needy into slavery. (2:6)

AMOS' FOCUS ON SOCIAL JUSTICE

- Also consider the book of James: "pure religion" is discipline in speech, aiding orphans and widows in distress, and avoiding pollution from the world.
- For Amos, without a life committed to the transformation of one's character, worship services and religious meetings were repulsive to God. The focus is not just on worshipping Yahweh but also on his people being transformed by a basic knowledge of his person and will.
- The call for righteousness and justice was basic to Israelite identity.
- When God summoned Abraham, he called him and his offspring to a particular way of life marked by the characteristics of "righteousness and justice"
 - Their frequent use together suggests that they are a **hendiadys**.
 - The definition of hendiadys is when two words express one idea.
- Righteousness means "order, structure, or rightness" in God's world. It indicated uniformity with Yahweh's standards or definition of right order.
- Justice has to do with the maintenance of this order. When the standard is violated, justice must be served through a particular act to restore order.
- The words have to do with upholding and maintaining the law for all people, without discrimination.

AMOS' FOCUS ON SOCIAL JUSTICE

SOCIAL SERVICE	SOCIAL ACTION
Relieve human need (5:12)	Remove the cause of human need (8:4-6)
Philanthropic activity (4:5; 6:4-7)	Political and economic activity (5:10-11, 15)
Ministering to individuals and families (4:1; 5:6-7)	Transforming the structures of society (4:4-5; 7:7-9)
Works of mercy (4:1; 6:4-7)	Quest for justice (2:6-8,; 5:7, 24; 6:12)

- A **doctrine of God** as creator and sustainer of creation, deliverer of his people. He is a merciful God who loves people and loves justice because he is concerned for the whole of mankind.
- *Hate evil, and love good,
and establish justice in the gate;
it may be that the LORD, the God of hosts,
will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph. (5:15)*
- A **doctrine of humanity** that understands that all people are God's creatures and the reality of the consequences of sin on the human experience. As we learn to see people as made in the image of God, our desire to serve them should increase.
- A **doctrine of Jesus as the Messiah**, the "Son of Man," that understands the renewal and restoration associated with true redemption.
- A **doctrine of salvation** that admits human fallenness and sin, but looks beyond to God for the solutions to sin and evil in the world. We then truly "do justice" because God's salvation is for the whole person, not just the "soul".
- A **doctrine of the church** as a covenant community that sees its responsibility to be an agent of reconciliation and restoration in our fallen world. The church is distinct from the world "as salt and light," but also called to penetrate the world for Christ.

BIBLICAL DOCTRINE AND SOCIAL CONCERN