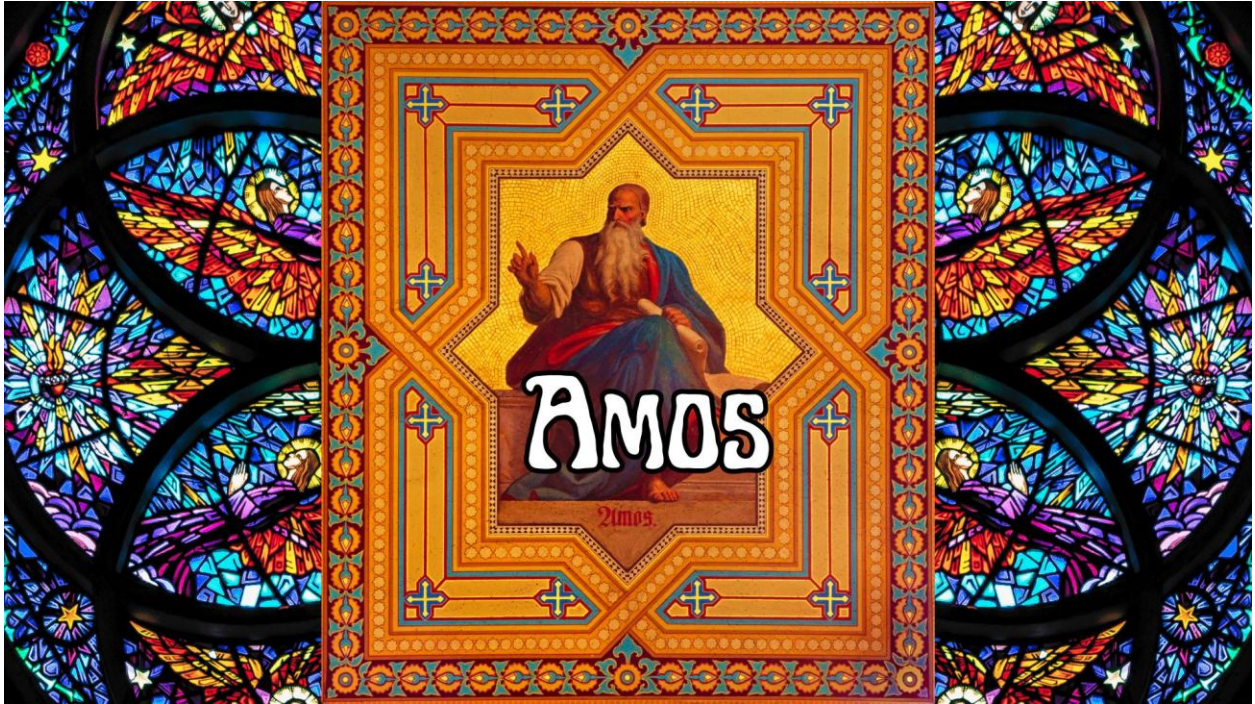


## Small Group Guide: The Book of Amos - Chapter 1-4

### "Prepare to Meet Your God"



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#### Opening Prayer

Begin your time together by asking God to open your hearts to His Word and help you hear what He wants to speak to you through the book of Amos.

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#### Ice Breaker Question

**What's one time you received a warning that you wish you had listened to? What happened?**

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#### Key Themes & Takeaways

##### 1. God's Faithfulness in Fulfilled Prophecy

- Amos prophesied around 760-750 BC, about 30 years before Assyria conquered Israel in 722 BC

- God's precise fulfillment of past prophecies gives us confidence in prophecies yet to be fulfilled
- **Key Verse:** "Surely the Lord God does nothing unless he reveals his secret to his servants, the prophets." (Amos 3:7)

## 2. The Danger of Material Prosperity

- Israel was experiencing military expansion, successful trade, and prosperity under Jeroboam II
- They mistook material blessing as God's approval while engaging in idolatry and injustice
- Success can become a spiritual blindness that prevents us from hearing God's warnings

## 3. Ritual Without Relationship

- Israel performed sacrifices, brought tithes, and followed religious rituals
- Yet they also worshiped false gods and oppressed the poor
- **Key Verse:** "Come to Bethel and transgress...For this you love, you children of Israel" (Amos 4:4-5)

## 4. God's Patient Warnings

- God sent prophets, famine, drought, plagues, military defeats—all to get their attention
- The repeated phrase: "Yet you have not returned to me, says the Lord"
- God's judgment comes only after persistent rejection of His mercy

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## Discussion Questions

### Understanding the Text

1. **Why do you think Amos started his prophecy by pronouncing judgment on surrounding nations (Syria, Philistia, Tyre, Edom, etc.) before addressing Israel?** What effect would this have had on his audience?
2. **Read Amos 2:6-8.** What specific sins does God call out in Israel? How do these compare to issues we might see in our culture today?

3. **In Amos 3:3-6, God asks a series of rhetorical questions.** What point is He making? How does this relate to the judgment He's about to bring?

### Personal Reflection

4. **Israel mistook prosperity for God's approval despite their spiritual unfaithfulness.** In what ways might we fall into the same trap today? How can success or comfort blind us to areas where we need to repent?
5. **God repeatedly says, "Yet you have not returned to me" (Amos 4:6, 8, 9, 10, 11).** Have there been times when God was trying to get your attention through circumstances, but you didn't recognize it? What helps you discern when God is speaking?
6. **The sermon mentioned the difference between performing religious rituals versus having a genuine relationship with God.** How can we guard against going through the motions in our faith? What does authentic relationship with God look like practically?

### Application

7. **Amos 4:12 says, "Prepare to meet your God, O Israel."** For the Israelites, this was a warning of judgment. For believers in Christ, how should we "prepare to meet our God" with hope and expectation rather than fear?
8. **The pastor used the parable of the ten virgins (Matthew 25) as an illustration.** What does it mean to be spiritually prepared for Christ's return? What are practical ways we can "keep our lamps filled with oil"?
9. **Amos was called to speak an unpopular message to a successful, self-satisfied people.** When have you felt called to speak truth that others might not want to hear? How do we balance speaking truth with speaking in love?

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### Practical Applications

#### This Week's Challenge

Choose one of the following to put into practice:

#### Option 1: Spiritual Inventory

- Set aside 30 minutes this week for honest self-examination

- Ask God: "Are there areas where I'm performing religious activities but my heart is far from You?"
- Journal about what He reveals and what needs to change

### **Option 2: Study Fulfilled Prophecy**

- Research one Old Testament prophecy about Jesus that was fulfilled in the New Testament
- Reflect on how God's faithfulness in past prophecies strengthens your confidence in future promises
- Share what you learned with someone this week

### **Option 3: Return to God**

- Identify one area where you sense God has been trying to get your attention
- Take a specific step of obedience or repentance in that area
- Share with an accountability partner what you're committing to change

### **Option 4: Prepare Your Heart**

- Spend time each day this week meditating on Christ's return
- Read Revelation 19:6-9 (the wedding supper of the Lamb)
- Ask yourself: "Am I falling more in love with Jesus? Am I excited about eternity with Him?"

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### **Key Verses to Memorize**

**Amos 3:7-8** *"Surely the Lord God does nothing unless he reveals his secret to his servants, the prophets. A lion has roared! Who will not fear? The Lord God has spoken! Who can but prophesy?"*

**Amos 4:12** *"Therefore thus will I do to you, O Israel; because I will do this to you, prepare to meet your God, O Israel."*

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## Closing Reflection

The pastor noted: *"God is telling his people, people who are willing to listen, to pay attention, to care about what he said, and to live accordingly."*

**Closing Question:** What is one specific thing God is asking you to listen to and act on from tonight's study?

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## Closing Prayer Points

- Pray for soft hearts that are quick to hear God's voice
  - Ask God to reveal any areas where we're trusting in our own success rather than His grace
  - Pray for genuine love for Jesus that goes beyond religious performance
  - Ask for wisdom to discern God's warnings and promptings in our lives
  - Pray for readiness and excitement for Christ's return
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## Looking Ahead

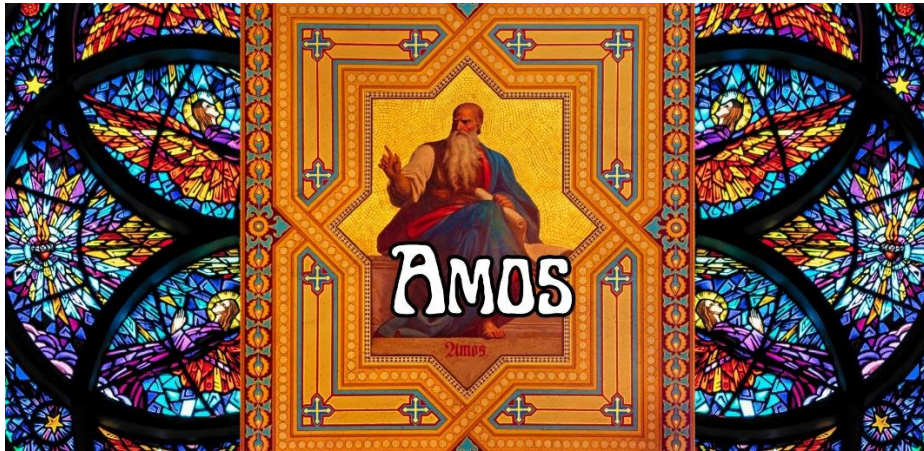
Next week we'll continue in Amos, chapters 5-9, where we'll finally see the hope that comes in the last chapter. Come prepared to discuss how God's judgment and mercy work together in His plan for His people.

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## Additional Resources

- Read the entire book of Amos (only 9 chapters) before next week
- Consider reading Hosea alongside Amos—both prophesied to the northern kingdom around the same time
- Research the historical context of Jeroboam II and the prosperity of 8th century BC Israel

## 5-Day Devotional: Preparing to Meet Your God



### Day 1: The God Who Warns

**Reading:** Amos 1:1-2; 2 Peter 3:8-9

**Devotional:** God's warnings are expressions of His love. Throughout Amos, we see a patient God sending prophet after prophet, giving chance after chance for His people to return. Like Israel, we can become comfortable in our prosperity, mistaking material success for spiritual health. God's discipline—whether through hardship, conviction, or circumstances—is His merciful attempt to redirect us before judgment comes. The same God who roared from Zion still speaks today through His Word and Spirit. Are you listening? God's warnings aren't meant to frighten us into submission but to lovingly draw us back into relationship. His patience is not indifference; it's an invitation to repentance before it's too late.

### Day 2: The Danger of Empty Rituals

**Reading:** Amos 4:4-5; Matthew 15:7-9

**Devotional:** The Israelites performed all the right religious activities—sacrifices, tithes, offerings—yet their hearts remained far from God. They loved the ritual more than the relationship. This remains a sobering warning for modern believers. We can attend church, serve in ministries, read our Bibles, and pray, yet still worship false gods of success, comfort, or self-righteousness. God desires hearts fully devoted to Him, not just hands going through motions. Jesus later condemned the Pharisees for this same hypocrisy. Examine your spiritual life today: Are you performing Christianity or experiencing Christ? The difference is eternal. God sees beyond our religious performance into the depths of our hearts.

### **Day 3: Remembering What God Has Done**

**Reading:** Amos 2:9-11; Deuteronomy 8:10-18

**Devotional:** God reminded Israel of their history: deliverance from Egypt, provision in the wilderness, conquest of the Promised Land. Yet they forgot. Spiritual amnesia is dangerous. When we forget God's faithfulness in our past, we lose perspective in our present and hope for our future. Israel's prosperity became their stumbling block because they attributed their success to their own strength rather than God's provision. Take time today to remember your spiritual journey. How has God delivered you? Provided for you? Changed you? Write down these testimonies. Share them with others. Let gratitude replace entitlement. When we remember God's faithfulness, we're less likely to pursue false securities and more likely to trust Him completely.

### **Day 4: The Remnant That Remains**

**Reading:** Amos 3:12; Romans 11:1-5

**Devotional:** Even in judgment, God preserves a remnant—like scraps rescued from a lion's mouth. This theme runs throughout Scripture: Noah and his family, Lot escaping Sodom, the faithful Jews returning from exile, and ultimately the Church as God's chosen people. God's judgment is always purposeful, never vindictive. Even when consequences must come for sin, His redemptive plan continues. You may feel like a remnant today—small, insignificant, barely surviving. Take heart: God specializes in using remnants to accomplish His purposes. He doesn't need massive numbers; He needs faithful hearts. Whether you're part of a thriving community or standing alone in faith, God sees you and will preserve His purposes through you.

### **Day 5: Prepare to Meet Your God**

**Reading:** Amos 4:12-13; Hebrews 9:27; Revelation 19:6-9

**Devotional:** "Prepare to meet your God" can sound terrifying or thrilling, depending on your relationship with Him. For those rejecting God, it's a sobering warning of coming judgment. For those loving Jesus, it's the hopeful anticipation of the wedding supper of the Lamb. We are the bride of Christ, preparing for eternity with our Bridegroom. Are you ready? Not just performing religious duties, but genuinely in love with Jesus? The five wise virgins in Matthew 25 were prepared with extra oil—they anticipated the bridegroom's coming with

joy. Live today with eternity in mind. Deepen your love for Christ. Pursue holiness not from fear but from desire to please Him. One day—perhaps soon—you will meet your God. Let that meeting be your greatest joy.