



# THE BOOK OF AMOS

## *“Why Is Amos Famous?”*

> DATE: 780 – 755 B.C.

> AMOS- “To bear a load”

> THEME: “Judgment on sin!”

> CHAPTER OUTLINES:

CHAPTERS 1 – 2 - Eight Prophecies - Judgment of Israel & surrounding nations.

CHAPTERS 3 – 6 - Three Sermons - Sin of Israel- Past, Present & Future

CHAPTERS 7 – 9 - Five Visions - Pictures of judgment of Israel

CHAPTER 9:11-15 - Five Promises - Restoration of Israel

**Introduction:** Amos did not come from a line of prophets, he was a herdsman and a farmer. He was from the country, a hard working earthy type. He was from the Southern Kingdom, Judah. But his ministry was to the Northern Kingdom, Israel. Amos delivered his message in Beth-el (house of God), because it was the residence of the king of Israel and a center of idolatry. The Northern Kingdom had become prosperous and comfortable, leaving God for greed and injustice, religious hypocrisy was flagrant and idolatry rampant.

Uzziah was the king of Judah (Southern Kingdom) and had fortified Jerusalem and subdued the Philistines, the Ammonites, and the Edomites. In the North, Israel was ruled by king Jeroboam II. With economic and military successes the north became prosperous which the people then become materialistic, immoral and injustice became a norm. During these years, Assyria, Babylonia, Syria, and Egypt were weak and the people of Israel found it hard to believe what Amos predicted regarding the pending judgment. However, it was only 30 years until the downfall of Israel.

Amos was contemporary with Jonah and Hosea who were prophets in the northern kingdom of Israel and with Isaiah and Micah who were prophets in the southern kingdom of Judah.

> KEY VERSES: Amos 3:1-2- *Hear this word that the LORD has spoken against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."*

Amos 8:11-12- *"Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord GOD, "That I will send a famine on the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD. 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."*

> **KEY CHAPTER:** Chapter 9 - *"Prophecies of Israel's future restoration"*

> **NEW TESTAMENT QUOTATIONS FROM AMOS:**

- Amos 4:11—Romans 9:29 – Isaiah and Amos both prophesied; *"Unless the LORD of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we would have become like Sodom, and we would have been made like Gomorrah."*

- Amos 5:25-27—Acts 7:42-43 - *Then God turned and gave them up to worship the host of heaven, as it is written in the book of the Prophets: 'Did you offer Me slaughtered animals and sacrifices during forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel? You also took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, images which you made to worship; and I will carry you away beyond Babylon.'*

- Amos 8:9—Matthew 24:29 - *"Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken."*

- Amos 9:11-12—Acts 15:16-18 - *And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written: 'After this I will return and will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will set it up; so that the rest of mankind may seek the LORD, even all the Gentiles who are called by My name, says the LORD who does all these things.' "Known to God from eternity are all His works."*

### **CHAPTER 1 - JUDGMENT OF CITIES & NATIONS**

(v1-2) Introduction of Amos and insight into his life, calling, and adversity is found in Amos 7:10-15 - *Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, "Amos has conspired against you in the midst of the house of Israel. The land is not able to bear all his words. 11 For thus Amos has said:*

*'Jeroboam shall die by the sword,  
And Israel shall surely be led away captive  
From their own land.'*

*12 Then Amaziah said to Amos:*

*"Go, you seer!  
Flee to the land of Judah.  
There eat bread,  
And there prophesy.*

*13 But never again prophesy at Bethel,  
For it is the king's sanctuary,  
And it is the royal residence."*

*14 Then Amos answered, and said to Amaziah:*

*"I was no prophet,*

*Nor was I a son of a prophet,*

*But I was a sheepbreeder*

*And a tender of sycamore fruit.*

*15 Then the Lord took me as I followed the flock,*

*And the Lord said to me,*

*'Go, prophesy to My people Israel.'*

> **EIGHT JUDGMENTS:**

(v3-5) **Judgment of Damascus** – “**threshed Gilead**” – These threshing instruments were heavy, iron –shod rollers with jagged teeth, which had been used to destroy and mangle human flesh. Gilead, located in the northeastern, Golan Heights region of Israel, was vulnerable to Syria’s cruel attacks (cf. 2 Kin. 13:7; 18:12).

> **Some history on “DAMASCUS”** — the oldest continually-inhabited city in the world and capital of Syria (Isa 7:8), located northeast of the Sea of Galilee and Mount Hermon in northern Palestine. Damascus was situated on the border of the desert at the intersection of some of the most important highways in the ancient Near Eastern world. Three major caravan routes passed through Damascus. Major roads extended from the city to the southwest into Palestine and Egypt, straight south to Edom and the Red Sea, and east to Babylon. Because of its ideal location, the city became a trade center. Its major exports included a patterned cloth called "damask" (Ezek 27:18). Egypt, Arabia, and Mesopotamia, as well as Palestine, were some of the trade neighbors that made Damascus the "heart of Syria."

The founder of Damascus was Uz, grandson of Shem (Gen 5:32; 6:10; 10:23). The Bible first mentions the city when Abraham traveled from Ur to Canaan, passing through Damascus on the way (Gen 11:31; 12:4). Eliezer, Abraham's faithful servant, was from Damascus (Gen 15:2). Early Egyptian texts refer to Egypt's control over Damascus, but this influence did not last long. The establishment of Syria (Aram) as a powerful state with Damascus as its capital (1 Kings 11:23-25) took place shortly after David's rule over the United Kingdom of the Hebrew people. David defeated the Syrians and stationed his own troops in Damascus (2 Sam 8:5-6; 1 Chron 18:5-6). During Solomon's reign, however, God allowed Rezon, Solomon's enemy, to take Syria from Israel's control because of Solomon's sins. Rezon founded a powerful dynasty based in Damascus that lasted more than 200 years. Shortly after Solomon's death, the king of Damascus formed a powerful league with other Aramean states. This alliance resulted in many years of conflict between Israel and Damascus. First, BenHadad of Damascus defeated King Baasha of Israel (1 Kings 15:16-20; 2 Chron 16:1-4). Later, God miraculously delivered King Ahab of Israel and his small army from the superior Syrian forces (1 Kings 20:1-30). Even after this miraculous deliverance, Ahab made a covenant with Ben-Hadad II against God's will (1 Kings 20:31-43). Ahab was killed a few years later in a battle with Syria (1 Kings 22:29-38). In the midst of these wars, the prophet Elijah was instructed by God to anoint Hazael as the new king of Damascus (1 Kings 19:15). King Joram of Israel successfully

opposed Hazael for a time (2 Kings 13:4-5), but the situation was eventually reversed. Hazael severely oppressed both Israel and Judah during later years (2 Kings 13:3,22). Much later, God sent Rezon II, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel, against wicked King Ahaz of Judah (2 Kings 16:1-6). Ahaz called on the Assyrians, who had become a powerful military force, for help (2 Kings 16:7). **The Assyrian King Tiglath-Pileser responded by conquering Syria, overthrowing the Aramean dynasty, killing Rezon II, and destroying Damascus, just as the prophets Amos and Isaiah had prophesied (Isa 17:1; Amos 1:4-5).** This marked the end of Syria as an independent nation. The city of Damascus was also reduced to a fraction of its former glory.

**(v6-8) Judgment of Gaza** (*stronghold*) - One of the five principle cities of the Philistines. The southernmost city of Canaan, Gaza was situated on the great caravan route between Mesopotamia and Egypt, at the junction of the trade route from Arabia. This location made Gaza an ideal rest stop and a commercial center for merchants and travelers. Gaza was originally inhabited by the Avim, a people who were replaced by the Caphtorim (Deut 2:23). Gaza was allotted to the tribe of Judah by Joshua (Josh 15:47); but it was not immediately occupied (Judg 1:18), because the Anakim were still present in the city (Josh 11:22; 13:3). Soon afterwards the Philistines recovered Gaza (Judg 13:1). Here the mighty Samson was humiliated by being forced to grind grain as a blinded prisoner (Judg 16:21). In a final victorious performance, Samson brought down the house of the pagan god Dagon, destroying many Philistines (Judg 16:23-31). Although Solomon ruled over Gaza, not until the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah, was the decisive blow dealt to the Philistines (2 Kings 18:8). Through the prophet Amos, God threatened Gaza with destruction by fire for its sins (Amos 1:6-7). This prophecy was fulfilled by the army of Alexander the Great in 332 B.C., when Gaza was destroyed and her inhabitants massacred (Zeph 2:4; Zech 9:5). In the New Testament the evangelist Philip was directed by God to preach the gospel along the road from Jerusalem to Gaza (Acts 8:26). On this road the Ethiopian eunuch professed faith in Jesus and was baptized. (from Nelson's Bible Dictionary)

**(v9-10) Judgment of Tyre** – Friendly relations existed between the Hebrews and the Tyrians. Hiram was on excellent terms with both David and Solomon, aiding them with materials for the building of David's palace (1 Kings 5:1; 1 Chron 14:1), Solomon's Temple, and other buildings (1 Kings 4:1; 9:10-14; 2 Chron 2:3,11). Hiram and Solomon engaged in joint commercial ventures (1 Kings 9:26-28). The dynasty of Hiram came to an end early in the ninth century B.C. when a priest named Ethbaal revolted and assumed the throne. Still, cordial relations between the Tyrians and Israelites continued. Ethbaal's daughter Jezebel married Ahab of Israel (1 Kings 16:31). From this union Baal worship and other idolatrous practices were introduced into Israel. While the people of Tyre were mostly interested in sea voyages, colonization, manufacturing, and commerce, they were frequently forced into war. Phoenician independence ended with the reign of Ashurnasirpal II (883 B.C. - 859 B.C.) of Assyria. More than a century later Shalmaneser IV laid siege to Tyre and it fell to his successor, Sargon. With the decline of Assyria after the middle of the seventh century B.C. Tyre again prospered.

***Tyre in Prophecy*** - Several prophets of the Old Testament prophesied against Tyre. They condemned the Tyrians for delivering Israelites to the Edomites (Amos 1:9) and for selling them as slaves to the Greeks (Joel 3:5-6). Jeremiah prophesied Tyre's defeat (Jer 27:1-11). But the classic prophecy against Tyre was given by Ezekiel. Ezekiel prophesied the destruction of Tyre (Ezek 26:3-21). The first stage of this prophecy came true when Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, besieged the mainland city of Tyre for 13 years (585 B.C. - 572 B.C.) and apparently destroyed it. However, Nebuchadnezzar had no navy; so he could not flatten the island city. But losing the mainland city was devastating to Tyre. This destroyed Tyre's influence in the world and reduced her commercial activities severely. The second stage of Ezekiel's prophecy was fulfilled in 332 B.C., when Alexander the Great besieged the island city of Tyre for seven months. He finally captured it when he built a causeway from the mainland to the island. Hauling cedars from the mountains of Lebanon, he drove them as piles into the floor of the sea between the mainland and the island. Then he used the debris and timber of the ruined mainland city as solid material for the causeway. Hence, the remarkable prophecy of Ezekiel was completely fulfilled. (from Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary)

**(v11-12) Judgment of Edom** – Judgment was to be by fire upon Teman and shall devour the palaces of Bozrah, Bozrah was the capital of Edom, situated south of the Dead Sea.

**(v13-15) Judgment of Ammon** - Descendants of Ben-Ammi, the son of Lot and his younger daughter (Gen. 19:34–38).

## **CHAPTER 2 - JUDGMENT OF CITIES, NATIONS, JUDAH & ISRAEL**

**(v1-3) Judgment of Moab** – Judgment of nations is finished.

**(v4-5) Judgment of Judah** - Then judgments against Judah.

**(v4) “despised the law of the LORD”** - The nations were judged because they had sinned against the law of God, which was written in the heart and conscience (cf. Rom. 2:24,25). Judah and Israel were judged because they sinned against God’s revealed, written law (Torah).

**(v5) “fire upon Judah”** - The Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar fulfilled this judgment, ca. 605–586 B.C. (cf. 2 Kin. 24,25).

**(v6-16) Judgment of Israel** - Judgment by the Assyrians ca. 722 B.C. (cf. 2 Kin. 17).

**(v6,7a)** Greed, so all-consuming that for insignificant debts they would sell another into slavery (cp. Matt. 18:23–35), was accompanied by uncontained sexual passion. Care for the poor is a prominent OT theme (e.g., Prov. 14:31; 17:5) and sexual purity is mandated repeatedly. Violations of both are an affront to God’s holy name.

**(v7b) “go in to the same girl”** - In the context of oppressing the helpless, the reference was probably to a slave girl (cf. Ex. 21:7–11).

**(v8) “clothes taken in pledge”** - Outer garments used to secure a loan were to be returned before sunset (Ex. 22:25–27; Deut. 24:12,13); instead, they used them to engage in idolatrous acts. 1

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<sup>1</sup> John F. MacArthur, Jr., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, (Dallas: Word Publishing) 1997.

**(v9-11) God's testimony of protection, provision, proclamation;  
(v12-16) Israel's rejection, desolation and destruction.**

**> THREE SERMONS OF JUDGMENT FOR ISRAEL**

**CHAPTER 3- Judgment of Israel's Present (First Sermon)**

**CHAPTER 4- Judgment of Israel's Past (Second Sermon)**

**CHAPTER 5- Judgment of Israel's Future (Third Sermon)**