

Amos: 760 B.C.

- Location: Northern Centers of Bethel and Samaria
- Theme: God will destroy Israel because of its sinfulness.
- Also, “Obedience is better than sacrifice” is a theme to pay attention to in this book of prophecy.

Contents

- Nine Full Chapters of Homiletic Style, Poetry, Literary Devices, and impassioned Judgment upon Israel.
- Contemporary of Hosea and Isaiah, (8th Century B.C.E)

About the Prophet

- Shepherd from hills of Tekoa, in Judah.
- Not from the prophetic guild, which lends credibility to his message, since he says he would still be tending to his flocks had God not sent him with a message to Israel. This was perplexing to other prophetic guilds because he was just a “shepherd” or did he have a more extensive education background and training?
- His messages were written and delivered as sermons; thus, they were preserved and studied later by other prophetic guilds who saw the fulfillment of his prophecy take place in the destruction of Samaria in 722 B.C.E. (roughly 40 yrs. later)

Message and Theology (Newsome, THP, Ch. 2)

- Israel had made a mockery of justice, lived in opulence while overlooking the true needs of the poor, and continued living with religious blinders on their faces.
- 1. Yahweh, Israel's God, is sovereign over the world (4:13; p. 23).
- 2. Yahweh has a special relationship with Israel
- 3. Because Israel has broken this relationship, God will destroy the nation.

Key Text: Amos 5:21-24 KJV

- ²¹ I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies.
- ²² Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts.
- ²³ Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols.
- ²⁴ But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.

Meaning of Religious Worship

- God loves sacrifices and offerings from the people of Israel. See Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, and other OT references.
- These were forms of worship that the Israelites mastered and loved to perform, as demonstrations of liturgy (work of ministry and worship).
- He calls music “noise”. Says he plugs His ears. Says he hates it all because He knows their hearts are not in the right place.

Contemporary Prophetic Reference - 1963

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. often quoted the OT prophet Amos. See Amos 5:24, as in his speeches and writings civil rights and social justice were his demands.

The phrase, "Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream," was a keynote scripture in his famous "I Have a Dream" speech and his 1955 Montgomery speech.

“I Have a Dream”

- <https://youtu.be/vP4iY1TtS3s>



Meaning for Us as The Church

- Religiosity means nothing if not demonstrated by sincere and meaningful acts of righteous living, which is established through a relationship with Jesus (The Logos, The Vine, Jn 15).
- Not even your worship, not our good deeds, nor our giving is acceptable to God, if our faith is empty of true substance.
- God calls the Church to do what is right, no matter what.

Question to Consider...

- How can we know what is the right way to live?
- What does Amos's message really mean to say about our religious practices?
- What is one thing you can address today, in your life, to make Amos's message relevant to you?