

## Amos – The End is Near

By Lonny R. Bower 26 August, 2009

### Introduction to Amos:

Amos was a contemporary of Jonah; Jonah would carry the word of God into a foreign land – the enemies camp where he would witness (but not rejoice in) perhaps the greatest revival of all time. Amos would have the “luxury” of preaching in his own back yard – Israel; certainly God’s own people would hear and respond. Amos also speaks God’s word to the surrounding nations (Syria, Philistia, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, and Moab), however he never steps foot in them, but speaks from the comfort of home. For the purpose of our study, we will look at his message to Israel and their response.

### Background:

<sup>1</sup>Amos (“burden bearer”) was a herdsman and a cultivator of sycamore trees (Amos 1:1; 7:14) when the Lord called him to be a prophet. He lived in the village of Tekoa, about eleven miles from Jerusalem, during the reigns of Uzziah in Judah (790-740 B.C.) and Jeroboam II in the Northern Kingdom of Israel (793-753). Amos was a “layman,” a humble farmer and shepherd who was not an official member of the Jewish religious or political establishment. Both Judah and Israel were enjoying prosperity and security. Luxury abounded (3:10-15; 6:1-6), and “religion” was popular. Israel flocked to the royal chapel at Bethel (4:4-5), and Judah celebrated the feasts enthusiastically (5:21-22), but the sins of both nations were eroding the religious and moral fiber of the people. Making money was more important than worshiping God (8:5); the rich exploited the poor, the judicial system was corrupt, and injustice flourished (5:11-15, 24; 8:4-6).

Wow! Does this sound familiar? Has the church today become as Israel was in Amos’ day? Little to no shame, an absence of righteousness, ignorance to holiness and almost everything is tolerated. If one is not careful one would think that sin has become right. No society can continue on in such away without the Lord crying out against them and providing opportunity to repent. Through Amos God would call Israel to repent of traditional (or obligated/ritual) religion and to seek the Lord with their whole heart.

<sup>1</sup>In spite of the nations’ peace and prosperity, Amos saw the end coming and warned the people to prepare to meet their God.

### Scripture of Interest – 2 Timothy 3:1-5

<sup>1</sup>But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: <sup>2</sup>For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, <sup>3</sup>unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, <sup>4</sup>traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, <sup>5</sup>having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

These are the last days, we are in perilous times, but we are also in the best of times! The end is near – Jesus is about to return!

Do you feel called to communicate this message to the lost? How about the church? Why or why not? If you don’t tell them, who will?


## I. Unrighteousness Brings Condemnation – Amos 2:6-16

Discussion Verse – 13

The charge – Injustice, immorality and idolatry. One thing is for certain there is nothing hidden from God (**Psalms 69:5**). God will always remind us of His goodness, even in the midst of our rebellion. His desire is that we recognize his goodness and repent. Unrighteousness can only be dealt with through righteousness. God is righteous and His righteousness demands judgment on the unrepentant. Judgment will always start with God’s chosen – the house of God (**1 Peter 4:17**).

➤ **Think about it:**

How is his message relevant to our world today – is anyone exempt?

How is God speaking to the nations today?


➤ **Further Study – Romans 8:1**

## II. The Voice of the Lord – Amos 3:1-15

Discussion Verses – 3-4, 7-8 & 11

Thus says the Lord, is a phrase that should capture our utmost attention. One should not wonder is the Lord speaks today, there is no doubt that He is always speaking even unto us. The question is, are we listening? Perhaps we really don’t want to hear what He has to say (**Psalms 95:7-11**).

*<sup>1</sup>At this point, the people were probably saying, “Who is this rustic farmer that he should preach to us and claim to be God’s prophet? What kind of authority does he think he has?” Amos even dared to preach uninvited at the king’s chapel at Bethel, where King Jeroboam’s chaplain told Amos to go home and preach in Judah (7:10-16). No doubt when D.L. Moody began to preach, some people said, “What can this uneducated shoe salesman say to us?” And when Billy Sunday began to hold evangelistic campaigns, it’s likely that the sophisticated religious crowd asked, “What can this former baseball player teach us?” But God used Moody and Sunday, not in spite of their humble background, but because of it; for He delights to bypass the “wise and prudent” and share His power with “babes” (Luke 10:21).*

➤ **Think about it:**

God has given you a message of warning for the lost – will you deliver it?

How do you think they will respond to His?


➤ **Further Study – Amos 7:10-17**

### III. The Hand of the Lord – Amos 4:1-13

Discussion Verses – 4-5

The hand of the Lord moved against them in order to bring them back (6-11 famine, drought, destruction of crops, plague, sword and catastrophe), but they refused to repent and acknowledge that they were unrighteous. Their sin was great, perhaps the worst of it was that they were simply going through the motions of worship, but God was far from them and they didn't even know it! To put it in terms that we understand, they went to church but remained unchanged.

<sup>1</sup>*Whether we're looking at the broader religious scene or the services in our local church, it takes spiritual discernment to separate the wheat from the chaff. We need to ask, "Where is prayer in this meeting? Is God getting the glory? Is there a brokenness before Him? Does the fruit remain, or is it gone when the meeting is over and the enthusiasm dies down? Are we overwhelmed by the holiness and the glory of God, or are we just applauding religious celebrities?" Whether it's evangelism, education, social action, world missions, or feeding the hungry, everything the church accomplishes for the Lord flows out of worship. If the fountainhead of worship is polluted, the church's entire ministry will be defiled. Like the Jews in Amos' day, we're only going to Bethel and sinning!*

➤ **Think about it:**

Is God pleased with our worship, or is it just noise?

Perhaps the answer is in the way we live outside the church?


➤ **Further Study – Amos 5:21-27; Romans 12:1, 2**

#### Conclusion:

As we learned last week Jonah was called to carry the message of God's judgment to the capital city of Assyria a Gentile (heathen) nation – a nation that would heed God's warning and immediately repent. Amos was called to carry the message of God's judgment to Israel (the Northern Kingdom) – a nation that would reject God's prophet and his message, but not without cost. Just 30 years (720BC) after Amos revealed God's word to Israel, Israel was destroyed and her people carried off into captivity by none other than Assyria. God is no respecter of persons He has come to seek and save the lost, period – Luke 19:10.

#### Further Notes of Interest and References:

<sup>1</sup>*If the Prophet Amos were to come to our world today, he would probably feel very much at home; for he lived at a time such as ours when society was changing radically; Both Israel and Judah were at peace with their neighbors, which meant that their wealth and energy could be used for developing their nations instead of fighting their enemies. Both kingdoms were prosperous; their cities were expanding rapidly; and a new wealthy merchant class was developing in society. The two kingdoms were moving from an agricultural to a commercial society and experiencing both the benefits and problems that come with that change. However, in*

