

# Amos



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NOTES & OUTLINES WITH

*J. Vernon McGee*

MINOR PROPHETS



# Amos

**WRITER:** Amos was not a graduate of the school of the prophets but was a layman. He was a herdsman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit (Amos 1:1; 7:14, 15). He was a native of Tekoa (Amos 1:1), a village about 12 miles south of Jerusalem. Although born in Judea, his messages were to the northern kingdom of Israel primarily, and to the world in general, as the text indicates.

**TIME:** His ministry was during the reign of Jeroboam II, king of Israel, and Uzziah, king of Judah. He was a contemporary of Hosea in Israel and of Isaiah and Micah in Judah. The exact time was “two years before the earthquake” (Amos 1:1). This earthquake was of such proportions that Zechariah mentioned it 200 years later (Zechariah 14:5) and identified it as having come during the reign of Uzziah.

**THEME:** Amos presented God as the ruler of the world and declared that all nations were responsible to Him. The measure of responsibility is created by the light that a nation has. The final test for any nation (or individual) is found in Amos 3:3: “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” In a day of prosperity, he pronounced punishment. Judgment of God awaited nations living in luxury and lolling in immorality.

## OUTLINE:

### I. Judgment on surrounding nations, Chapters 1:1–2:3

- A. Introduction, Chapter 1:1, 2
- B. Judgment against Syria for cruelty, Chapter 1:3-5
- C. Judgment against Philistia for making slaves, Chapter 1:6-8
- D. Judgment against Phoenicia for breaking treaty (selling slaves), Chapter 1:9, 10
- E. Judgment against Edom for revengeful spirit, Chapter 1:11, 12
- F. Judgment against Ammon for violent crimes, Chapter 1:13-15
- G. Judgment against Moab for injustice, Chapter 2:1-3

### II. Judgment on Judah and Israel, Chapters 2:4–6:14

- A. Judgment against Judah for despising the Law, Chapter 2:4, 5
- B. Judgment against Israel for immorality and blasphemy, Chapter 2:6-16
- C. God's charge against whole house of Israel (12 tribes), Chapter 3  
*(Privilege creates responsibility; the higher the blessing, the greater the punishment.)*
- D. Israel punished in past for iniquity, Chapter 4
- E. Israel will be punished in future for iniquity, Chapter 5
- F. Israel admonished in present to depart from iniquity, Chapter 6

### III. Visions of the future, Chapters 7–9

- A. Vision of grasshoppers, Chapter 7:1-3
- B. Vision of fire, Chapter 7:4-6
- C. Vision of plumbline, Chapter 7:7-9
- D. Historic interlude, Chapter 7:10-17  
*(Personal experience of prophet)*
- E. Vision of basket of summer fruit, Chapter 8
- F. Vision of worldwide dispersion, Chapter 9:1-10
- G. Vision of worldwide regathering and restoration of kingdom, 9:11-15

## COMMENT:

### I. Judgment on surrounding nations, Chapters 1:1–2:3

#### A. Introduction, Chapter 1:1, 2

V. 1—Amos does not identify himself as a prophet, but as a herdsman (see Amos 7:14).

V. 2—“The LORD will roar from Zion” (also Joel 3:16) suggests the roar of a lion as it pounces upon its prey. This speaks of the near judgment of God upon the nations.

#### B. Judgment against Syria for cruelty, Chapter 1:3-5

V. 3—“Three transgressions” means ungodliness in its worst form, according to Luther.

Damascus was and is the capital of Syria (see 2 Kings 10:32, 33 for the fulfillment).

V. 5—Kir was in Moab.

#### C. Judgment against Philistia for making slaves, Chapter 1:6-8

V. 6—Gaza is a city of Philistia.

V. 7—See fulfillment (2 Kings 18:8).

V. 8—All these were cities of Philistia.

#### D. Judgment against Phoenicia for breaking treaty (selling slaves), Chapter 1:9, 10

V. 9—Tyre was the chief city of Phoenicia. Her commercial merchants did business with all nations.

V. 10—This was fulfilled by both Nebuchadnezzar and Alexander the Great.

#### E. Judgment against Edom for revengeful spirit, Chapter 1:11, 12

V. 11—“For three transgressions” (see vv. 3, 6). Edom came from Esau, the brother of Jacob.

#### F. Judgment against Ammon for violent crimes, Chapter 1:13-15

See 2 Kings 8:12, 13 for the crimes of Ammon.

### G. Judgment against Moab for injustice, Chapter 2:1-3

V. 1–The incident is not recorded, but it reveals the spirit of injustice that goes beyond death.

W. 2, 3–This proud nation was brought to extinction by Nebuchadnezzar.

## II. Judgment on Judah and Israel, Chapters 2:4–6:14

### A. Judgment against Judah for despising the Law, Chapter 2:4, 5

Judah had the Law of God and despised it. God judged them according to the Law. The other nations did not have God's Law and were therefore not judged according to it.

### B. Judgment against Israel for immorality and blasphemy, Chapter 2:6-16

Israel (ten tribes) likewise had the Law, but they were committing the same sins as the Amorites. God had put the Amorites out of the land. Israel will go into captivity before Judah.

### C. God's charge against whole house of Israel (12 tribes), Chapter 3

*(Privilege creates responsibility; the higher the blessing, the greater the punishment.)*

W. 1, 2–The nation Israel occupied a unique relationship to God; she was chosen for a definite purpose. This privilege created a greater responsibility than any other nation had.

V. 3–This is a great principle by which God must judge all nations and individuals. Israel knew God's way. They disagreed with it and departed from it. By this they will be judged.

W. 4-15–Judgment upon the entire nation will be severe. The northern kingdom will be judged first (vv. 14, 15).

### D. Israel punished in past for iniquity, Chapter 4

V. 1-3–Amos directs his scathing judgment against the northern kingdom.

W. 4, 5–With biting sarcasm he invited the people to transgress. They called it worship of the golden calf.

W. 6-13–They had been judged by scant harvests, plagues of insects, pestilences, war, and destruction. None of these had deterred them from sin.

### E. Israel will be punished in future for iniquity, Chapter 5

W. 1-15—God pleads with them to seek Him so that judgment could be averted (see vv. 4-6, 8, 14, 15).

W. 16-20—Warning of approaching judgment—“the day of the LORD.” The day of the LORD opens with the Great Tribulation (not light, but darkness—vv. 18, 20).

W. 21-26—The people were going through the forms of religion. They also worshiped other gods—idols.

V. 27—They must go into captivity (Assyrian).

### F. Israel admonished in present to depart from iniquity, Chapter 6

V. 1—Israel was taking it easy, sitting in the lap of luxury in a day of affluence.

V. 3—There were three national sins:

V. 4—Gluttony

V. 5—Heathen music

*They were engaging in all of this apart from God.*

V. 6—Drunkenness

V. 8—God hated all of this. They had become a godless nation.

V. 14—This is another warning of the coming captivity for both nations.

## III. Visions of the future, Chapters 7–9

### A. Vision of grasshoppers, Chapter 7:1-3

W. 1, 2—Grasshoppers were a judgment from God.

V. 3—God withdrew this judgment because of His tender mercy.

### B. Vision of fire, Chapter 7:4-6

V. 4—Fire was a judgment from God.

W. 5, 6—God put out the fire because of His tender mercy.

### C. Vision of plumbline, Chapter 7:7-9

W. 7, 8—When God begins to measure with a plumbline, action is imminent (Isaiah 28:17; Jeremiah 31:38, 39; Zechariah 2:1, 2).

V. 9—Jeroboam is marked out for judgment.

**D. Historic interlude, Chapter 7:10-17**

*(Personal experience of prophet)*

V. 10—Amaziah, priest of Baal at Bethel, goes to King Jeroboam with a charge against Amos.

V. 11—This is the charge.

V. 12—Now Amaziah has the king on his side, and he goes to Amos to order him to leave. He is sarcastic. He says in effect, “Get lost. You are a country preacher; go back to the country.”

V. 13—He continues his sarcastic tirade, reminding Amos that Bethel is where the king worships and that Amos is no longer welcome there. Amos is not a preacherette with sweet talk; he is not a mealy-mouth giving out saccharine sweetness in little meaningless verbiage.

V. 14—Amos’ answer is reasonable. He confesses he is a herdsman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit (wild figs).

V. 15—But he was called of God.

W. 16, 17—Amos turns on Amaziah with a fearful prophecy. Apparently Amos did not leave town.

**E. Vision of basket of summer fruit, Chapter 8**

The goodness of Israel was like the summer fruit. It was perishable and soon deteriorated. God must judge them now.

V. 10—Dark days would come.

V. 11—God would withdraw His Word from them.

V. 12—They would become “the wandering Jew.”

**F. Vision of worldwide dispersion, Chapter 9:1-10**

V. 8—Israel would not be utterly destroyed.

V. 9—Israel would be dispersed throughout the world.

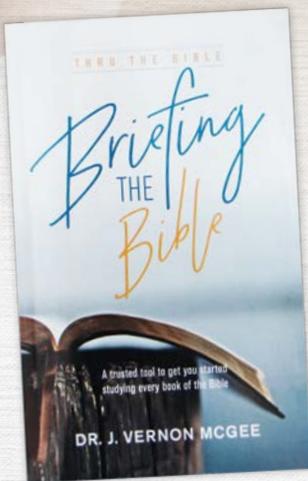
V. 10—The wicked would be judged by the sword at that time. This has been and is being literally fulfilled.

**G. Vision of worldwide regathering and restoration of kingdom, 9:11-15**

V. 11—This was quoted by James at the council of Jerusalem (Acts 15:16, 17). This is yet to be fulfilled.

W. 12-15—This is the setting up of the millennial kingdom.

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