

## The Book of Amos

### The Title, Author, and Date of Amos

1. Title: “The Words of Amos”
  - a. Hebrew – דְּבַרֵי אָמוֹס
  - b. Greek – Λόγοι Αμώς
2. Author: Amos = “Burden”
3. Date: c. 760 B.C.
  - a. We are helped by the earthquake mentioned in verse one.
  - b. cp. *Zc 14.5* (Josephus links the earthquake to *2 Ch 26.16-20*)

### The Background and Setting of Amos.

1. The Times
  - a. Judah (the two southern tribes) was doing very well.
    - 1) King Uzziah had reigned for 30 years already (and was to reign another 21 years!)
    - 2) His reign produced peace and stability. He subdued the Philistines and Ammonites, producing peace. cp. *1.6; 6.2; 2 Ch 25.1-15*
  - b. Samaria (or, Israel, the ten northern tribes) was at its most powerful.
    - 1) Jeroboam II also ruled a long reign (793-753 B.C.)
    - 2) His reign produced a relative peace, as well. Aram was defeated; Assyria was busy elsewhere (and remember the revival in Nineveh under Jonah!), so Samaria was peaceful. (*6.13; 2 Ki 14.23-29*)
    - 3) He controlled the trade routes, so the nation became wealthy (*3.15; 4.1-3; 5.11; 6.11; 8.5*)
      - a) An upper class arose and became indulgent, and exploited the poor. (cp. *6.1-6*)
      - b) The poor were even enslaved by their brethren. (cp. *2.6-7; 5.7, 10-13; 6.12; 8.4-6*)
    - 4) At the same time, false religion flourished, and spiritual stagnation and moral corruption set in. (*2.7; 4.4-5; 5.5, 14, 18-23; 6.1-3; 8.3 10; 9.10*).
  - c. Prosperity, stability, . . . and attitude: “We are O.K.” – Quiet, peaceful, and . . . *festering!* *4.1; 5.10-13*
2. The Person
  - a. Amos was from Tekoa (10 miles south of Jerusalem). Not a priestly family, nor nobility, nor a prophet.
  - b. Yet, he was influential. Note *1.1; 7.14-15*
    - 1) He was a breeder of sheep and goats – cp. Abraham, and also *2 Ki 3.4!*
    - 2) He was a rancher of livestock – a “herdsman” of larger animals, like cattle
    - 3) He was a farmer of figs – a “nipper of sycamores.”
    - 4) These all add up to wealth and influence.
  - c. He is the only prophet whose past work history is given.
3. His ministry
  - a. No account is given of his calling to be a prophet. The book covers a period of ministry of a year or two.
  - b. He prophesied to the Northern kingdom. He was a contemporary of Isaiah, Joel, and Jonah.

### The Purpose and Message of Amos

1. The **purpose** of the book is to **call God’s people to humility and repentance, and to put their trust in God and worship Him . . . and be blessed.**
  - a. God warns the people of coming judgment for their sins and rebellion, and promises blessing and forgiveness for repentance. n.b. *4.6-13; 5.10-13; 6.4-11; 9.11-15*
2. The **message** of the book of Amos is: **“Repent, and Return to YHWH . . . or be Judged.**
  - a. Note: This is essentially the same message as Jonah took to Nineveh.
  - b. Times may seem peaceful, but God calls for repentance of lack of true worship and justice. Judgment will come unless they repent. However, blessing and restoration will come for those who will return to God.

### The Themes of Amos

1. The primary theme of the book is **coming judgment and exile.** *1.5, 6, 9, 15 4.2-3; 5.5, 27; 6.7; 7.17; 9.9-10*
2. Promise of **Restoration** (Blessing through the Abrahamic covenant) – *3.2; 5.4, 6, 14, 15; 9.7-15*

3. The **Day of the Lord** – 5.18-20
  - a. “*in that day*” – 2.16; 3.14; 8.9; 9.11-15
  - b. “*days are coming*” – 4.2-3; 8.11
  - c. “*day of calamity*” – 6.3
4. God’s **omnipotence** – 2.9-11; 5.8-9; 9.5-7
5. Key Verses: **3.2; 4.12; 5.14; 5.18-20; 5.21-24; 8.11-12; 9.8**

### The Outline of Amos

1. Prophetic Announcements of Judgment – *chapters 1-2*
  - a. Key: “*For three transgressions and for four, I will not revoke its punishment*” 1.3, 6, 9, 11, 13; 2.1, 4, 6
  - b. 1.3-2.4 Prophecies of Judgment on the nations surrounding Israel
  - c. 2.5-16 Prophecies of Judgment on Israel (10 northern tribes)
  - d. n.b. the repeated phrase: “I will send fire upon . . . and it it will consume the citadels . . .”
2. Sermons of Judgment on Israel – *chapters 3-6*
  - a. Key: “*Hear this word . . .*” 3.1; 4.1; 5.1
  - b. 3.1-15 Sermon # 1 – “*I will punish you for all your iniquities.*”
    - 1) They are not living as God’s elect nation should. Elect Israel thinks they are exempt from judgment.
    - 2) “*Therefore I will punish you.*” 3.2
  - c. 4.1-13 Sermon # 2 – “*Prepare to meet your God, O Israel*”
    - 1) This is a judgment on their hard hearts. Israel, though warned, has refused to repent (4.6-11). So . . .
    - 2) “*Prepare to meet your God!*” 4.12
    - 3) Note the repeated phrase: “*yet you have not returned to me*” in vv. 6, 8, 9, 10, 11.
  - d. 5.1-6.14 Sermon # 3 – “*Seek Me that you may live*” (5.4, 6, 14)
    - 1) Israel has *arrogantly* ignored warnings to seek God. So . . .
    - 2) **5.18-20; 6.7-8**
3. Visions of Judgment on Israel – 7.1-9.10
  - a. 7.1-9 Three Visions of God’s Rejection of the Leaders
    - 1) Vision #1 – the Locust Swarm 7.1-3
      - a) Destruction by consumption threatened. v. 1
      - b) God relents when Amos cries out. vv. 2-3
    - 2) Vision #2 – the Wildfire 7.4-6
      - a) Destruction by consumption threatened. v. 4
      - b) God relents when Amos cries out. vv. 5-6
    - 3) Vision #3 – the Plumb Line 7.7-9
      - a) Final destruction threatened after evaluation. vv. 7-9
      - b) God does not relent.
  - b. 7.10-17 A Narrative of Climax
    - 1) Amaziah tries to exile Amos, because Amos is prophesying judgment. vv. 10-13
    - 2) Amos answers: You will be exiled and destroyed. vv. 14-17
  - c. 8.1-9.10 Two Visions of God’s Judgment upon the Nation
    - 1) Vision #4 – the Fruit Basket 8.1-14
      - a) “*The end has come . . . I will spare them no longer.*” 8.2b
      - b) This is the day of the Lord. 8.2, 7, 11. Note also 8.11-12
    - 2) Vision #5 – the Lord Standing beside the Altar 9.1-10
      - a) A final and total judgment promised to come. 9.2 . . . 9.8-10
4. Final Promise of National Restoration (Messianic Blessing) – 9.11-15
  - a. 9.11-12 A Davidic King and Kingdom – Messiah (seed)
  - b. 9.13 Overwhelming Blessing (blessing)
  - c. 9.14-15 Restoration from Captivity back to the Land (land)