

Amos

1) Introduction to Amos: (1:1 – 1:2)

Amos 1:1-2: The words of Amos, who was among the shepherders from Tekoa, which he envisioned in visions concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam son of Joash, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake. 2 He said, "The LORD roars from Zion and from Jerusalem He utters His voice; and the shepherds' pasture grounds mourn, and the summit of Carmel dries up."

Amos identifies himself as a farmer; he raised sheep and grew fruit; he did not consider himself a prophet in the sense of Isaiah, Micah or Zachariah; he gives us the time ("two years before the earthquake" - mentioned 200 years later by Zechariah) and location of the call of God on his life, which his contemporaries could validate (Hosea in Israel and Isaiah and Micah in Judah). His calling and message are confirmed by the phrase, "*he envisioned in visions*" or the vision he saw, using the same word, *hazah*, Isaiah uses in declaring the origin of his message. **Amos 7:14; Hosea 1:1; Isaiah 1:1; Micah 1:1; Zechariah 14:5**

Hosea 1:1: The Word of the LORD which came to Hosea the son of Beeri, during the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and during the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel.

Jeremiah 26:18: "Micah of Moresheth prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah; and he spoke to all the people of Judah, saying, "Thus the LORD of hosts has said, "Zion will be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem will become ruins, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest."

Micah 1:1: The word of the LORD which came to Micah of Moresheth in the days of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.

Amos' message is not his, rather it is the Lord's, to the rebellious nation Israel, as well as the surrounding Nations, including Judah. "*The LORD will roar from Zion*" speaks of the immanent and certain judgment of God upon the nations – as the roar of a lion as it pounces upon its prey; the shepherd knows that when he hears the roar of the lion, the attack has already occurred and it is too late to save the sheep. **Joel 2:11, 3:16; Isaiah 42:13; Jeremiah 25:30-31**

Joel 2:11: The LORD utters His voice before His army; surely His camp is very great, for strong is he who carries out His word. The day of the LORD is indeed great and very awesome, and who can endure it?

Amos

Joel 3:16: The LORD roars from Zion and utters His voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth tremble. But the LORD is a refuge for His people and a stronghold to the sons of Israel.

Isaiah 42:13: The LORD will go forth like a warrior, He will arouse His zeal like a man of war. He will utter a shout, yes, He will raise a war cry. He will prevail against His enemies.

Jeremiah 25:30: "Therefore you shall prophesy against them all these words, and you shall say to them, 'The LORD will roar from on high and utter His voice from His holy habitation; He will roar mightily against His fold. He will shout like those who tread the grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth.

Amos declares “*from Jerusalem He utters His voice,*” denotes that the true worshippers of God were to worship God in Jerusalem, and be obedient to the Law of God; this was true for the Nation Israel as well as the surrounding Nations. The surrounding Nations, by the witness of Israel, as imperfect as it was, were responsible and their continued sinfulness was a consequence of the rebellion against God, not of ignorance or hatred or failings of the Nation of Israel. ***Exodus 19:5-6; John 4:20-22***

Exodus 19:5-6: "Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; 6 and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel."

John 4:20-22: "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." 21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. 22 "You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.

2) Eight Judgments of Surrounding Nations (1:3 – 2:3)

Judgment against Syria for cruelty:

Amos 1:3-5: Thus says the LORD, "For three transgressions of Damascus and for four I will not revoke its punishment, because they threshed Gilead with implements of sharp iron. 4 "So I will send fire upon the house of Hazael and it will consume the citadels of Ben-hadad. 5 "I will also break the gate bar of Damascus, and cut off the inhabitant from the valley of Aven, and him who holds the scepter, from Beth-eden; so the people of Aram will go exiled to Kir," Says the LORD.

Starting with verse 3 of chapter 1 and continuing through chapter 2, verse 3, Amos pronounces judgments on the nations surrounding Israel, beginning in the North and proceeding westward until he returns to Israel. The manner in which God has Amos deliver his message makes it clear that since the surrounding nations are condemned and destined for punishment, Israel could not expect to escape the fury of the Lord. Israel's guilt before God was greater than that of the surrounding nations. Their rebellion was more intentional, as they had the clear, revealed word of God, both from the Law of Moses and the numerous prophets whom the Lord sent to warn the people and call them back to Him. In contrast, the surrounding nations did not have the same access to the truth, privileges, or opportunities.

Amos's message opens with a pronouncement against Damascus, which was and is the capital of Syria, for their *transgressions*; the word translated *transgressions* actually means rebellions – they were without excuse as they willfully sinned (violated God's commandments), as do all men. ***Jeremiah 17:9-10; Romans 1:18-20, 3:23***

Jeremiah 17:9-10: "The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it? 10 "I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, even to give to each man according to his ways, according to the results of his deeds.

Romans 1:18-20: For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

Romans 3:23: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Amos

Damascus was and is the capital of Syria and Hazael was a very cruel king of Syria, who murdered his predecessor, Ben-hadad. The phrase “*three transgressions of Damascus and for four,*” speaks of God’s patience and the ending of His patience – the cruelty of the Syrian required judgment and could no longer go unpunished.

When God brought Israel into the land, one of his warnings was that if they failed to obey Him, He would use the surrounding Nation’s to punish them for their disobedience. At times, God allowed Syria to vanquish Israel for their rebellion; the charge against Syria, though used of God, they acted out of hatred and arrogance and were excessively cruel. Kir was in Moab – to the South of Syria (East of the Dead Sea). *2 Kings 8:7-15; 10:32-33; 16:9; Proverbs 24:17-18; Isaiah 10:5-7*

2 Kings 8:7-8: Then Elisha came to Damascus. Now Ben-hadad king of Aram was sick, and it was told him, saying, "The man of God has come here." 8 The king said to Hazael, "Take a gift in your hand and go to meet the man of God, and inquire of the LORD by him, saying, "Will I recover from this sickness?"

2 Kings 10:31-33: But Jehu was not careful to walk in the law of the LORD, the God of Israel, with all his heart; he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam, which he made Israel sin. 32 In those days the LORD began to cut off portions from Israel; and Hazael defeated them throughout the territory of Israel: 33 from the Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites and the Reubenites and the Manassites, from Aroer, which is by the valley of the Arnon, even Gilead and Bashan.

2 Kings 16:8-9: Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the house of the LORD and in the treasuries of the king's house, and sent a present to the king of Assyria. 9 So the king of Assyria listened to him; and the king of Assyria went up against Damascus and captured it, and carried the people of it away into exile to Kir, and put Rezin to death.

Proverbs 24:17-18: Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles; 18 Or the LORD will see it and be displeased, and turn His anger away from him.

Isaiah 10:5-7: Woe to Assyria, the rod of My anger and the staff in whose hands is My indignation, 6 I send it against a godless nation and commission it against the people of My fury to capture booty and to seize plunder, and to trample them down like mud in the streets. 7 Yet it does not so intend, nor does it plan so in its heart, but rather it is its purpose to destroy and to cut off many nations.

Amos

Judgment against Philistia for making slaves

Amos 1:6-8: Thus says the LORD, "For three transgressions of Gaza and for four I will not revoke its punishment, because they deported an entire population to deliver it up to Edom. 7 "So I will send fire upon the wall of Gaza And it will consume her citadels. 8 "I will also cut off the inhabitant from Ashdod, and him who holds the scepter, from Ashkelon; I will even unleash My power upon Ekron, and the remnant of the Philistines will perish," Says the Lord GOD.

Philistia is to be judged because defeating their foes and making/selling them as slaves to Edom (and Phoenicia). All the cities listed, Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon and Ekron, were cities of Philistia. *Deuteronomy 23:15; 2 Kings 18:8; 1 Samuel 6:17-18; Isaiah 14:29-31; Ezekiel 25:15-17; Zephaniah 2:4-7*

Deuteronomy 23:15: You shall not hand over to his master a slave who has escaped from his master to you.

2 Kings 18:7-12: And the LORD was with him; wherever he went he prospered. And he rebelled against the king of Assyria and did not serve him. 8 He defeated the Philistines as far as Gaza and its territory, from watchtower to fortified city. 9 Now in the fourth year of King Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria and besieged it. 10 At the end of three years they captured it; in the sixth year of Hezekiah, which was the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was captured. 11 Then the king of Assyria carried Israel away into exile to Assyria, and put them in Halah and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes, 12 because they did not obey the voice of the LORD their God, but transgressed His covenant, even all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded; they would neither listen nor do it.

1 Samuel 6:17-18: These are the golden tumors which the Philistines returned for a guilt offering to the LORD: one for Ashdod, one for Gaza, one for Ashkelon, one for Gath, one for Ekron; 18 and the golden mice, according to the number of all the cities of the Philistines belonging to the five lords, both of fortified cities and of country villages. The large stone on which they set the ark of the LORD is a witness to this day in the field of Joshua the Beth-shemite.

Isaiah 14:29-31: "Do not rejoice, O Philistia, all of you, because the rod that struck you is broken; for from the serpent's root a viper will come out, and its fruit will be a flying serpent. 30 "Those who are most helpless will eat, and the needy will lie down in security; I will destroy your root with famine, and it will kill off your survivors. 31 "Wail, O gate; cry, O city; melt away, O Philistia, all of you; for smoke comes from the north, and there is no straggler in his ranks.

Amos

Ezekiel 25:15-17: "Thus says the Lord GOD, "Because the Philistines have acted in revenge and have taken vengeance with scorn of soul to destroy with everlasting enmity," 16 therefore thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I will stretch out My hand against the Philistines, even cut off the Cherethites and destroy the remnant of the seacoast. 17 "I will execute great vengeance on them with wrathful rebukes; and they will know that I am the LORD when I lay My vengeance on them.""

Zephaniah 2:4-7: For Gaza will be abandoned and Ashkelon a desolation; Ashdod will be driven out at noon and Ekron will be uprooted. 5 Woe to the inhabitants of the seacoast, the nation of the Cherethites! The word of the LORD is against you, O Canaan, land of the Philistines; and I will destroy you so that there will be no inhabitant. 6 So the seacoast will be pastures, with caves for shepherds and folds for flocks. 7 And the coast will be for the remnant of the house of Judah, they will pasture on it. In the houses of Ashkelon they will lie down at evening; for the LORD their God will care for them and restore their fortune.