

Goals of the lesson:

1. Determine the condition of Israel and the surrounding nations.
2. Find the relevance between the condition of Israel and the condition of ourselves today.
3. Recognize that we need to be ready for judgment just as much as the nation of Israel needed to be prepared for judgment.

Introduction: The date of Amos' prophecy is almost unanimously placed by scholars between 760-750 B.C. Amos prophesies while Jeroboam II is king of Israel, and Uzziah is king of Judah. Thus, Israel is only a few decades away from being attacked and conquered by the Assyrian Empire (721 B.C.).

The name "Amos" means "burden-bearer." Amos lived up to his name, as the Lord instructed him to declare doom and destruction upon the inhabitants of Israel. In Amos 1:1 we learn that Amos is from Tekoa, a village twelve miles south of Jerusalem, in the nation of Judah. The surrounding terrain of Tekoa was rugged and desolate. In Amos 7:14-15 we discover that Amos is a shepherd and a gatherer of sycamore fruit. This background of Amos puts him in stark contrast to the people he will preach to. This was the golden age of Israel with much prosperity and luxurious living. Irving Jensen describes the times as "a spirit of self-sufficiency and smug complacency thrived on material prosperity." The rich were getting richer and the poor were getting poorer. Though thriving materially, the nation of Israel was void of spirituality. Idolatry, hypocrisy, moral corruption, and social injustices were everywhere. So God calls this poor, lowly shepherd to preach to the luxurious inhabitants of Israel.

1. Why do think God would have a poor shepherd from Judah go preach doom to the wealthy nation of Israel?

The Survey Chart:

Take your Bible and skim through the book of Amos, looking at the subheadings of each paragraph in each chapter. Record a few main events from each chapter on the diagonal lines of the survey chart.

2. As you fill out your survey chart, what is the main theme that you noticed?

1:1-2:16 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

3. Notice 1:2. What is implied by, "The Lord roars from Zion?"

4. Using a Bible dictionary, identify the following:

Hazael & Benhadad (1:4):

Teman & Bozrah (1:12):

Rabbah (1:14):

Kerioth (2:2):

Point of interest: Notice the repetition of the phrase, “for three transgressions and for four.” This phrase serves to show the multiplicity of sins being committed.

5. Write down the transgressions and judgments upon each of the following cities and nations:

Damascus (1:3-5):

Gaza (1:6-8):

Tyre (1:9-10):

Edom (1:11-12):

Ammon (1:13-15):

Moab (2:1-3):

Judah (2:4-5)

Israel (2:6-16):

6. What similarities between the cities and nations can you find in question 5?

Life Application:

7. Noticing the transgressions listed in question 5, are there any of these transgressions that we or our country commit today? What does this mean for us?

8. What is the main point that Amos is trying to get across to Israel by listing the sins and judgments of all the nations surrounding Israel and then condemning Israel last?

9. Explain the picture given in 2:6b-7a.

10. Explain the picture given in 2:13.

Life Application:

11. Notice Amos 2:14-16 closely. With reference to this passage, what application can you make to yourself and/or to the United States about when judgment comes?

MAIN POINTS TO REMEMBER FROM THIS LESSON:

1. Amos was a poor shepherd from Judah, called by God to preach to the rich inhabitants of Israel.
2. Amos preached between 760-750 B.C., approximately 35 years before the fall of Israel.
3. Judgment is coming because of the many transgressions.

Goals of the lesson:

1. Recognize our need to proclaim God's message.
2. Recognize that God is actively loving and correcting us.

3:1-15 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

1. Notice 3:3-8. What is the point that Amos is making to the nation of Israel?

Life Application:

2. Read 3:8 again. Amos says that the Lord has spoken and he cannot help but to prophesy. What application can we make to ourselves?

3. Explain the scene in 3:9-10.

4. Notice 3:12. Explain the picture that Amos paints in this verse. How does this picture apply to Israel?

4:1-13 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

5. Specifically who is being condemned in 4:1-3?

6. Explain the images of destruction in 4:2-3.

7. Notice 4:4-5. What is the tone of God's command in these verses? What was happening at Bethel and Gilgal?

8. Notice carefully 4:6-11.
 - a. List the things the Lord had done to try to make the people return to Him.

Life Application:

- b. Does the Lord do these things today to make us return to Him? Do I realize that God may be trying to tell me something?

9. Since the people "did not return to Me," what were the consequences going to be in 4:12?

10. How is 4:13 the climatic point of this chapter?

MAIN POINTS TO REMEMBER FROM THIS LESSON:

1. The Lord gave Israel continual warnings about their condition.
2. Because Israel did not listen to the warnings, severe destruction is coming.

Goals of the lesson:

1. Recognize that it is never too late to stop sinning and turn back to the Lord.
2. Recognize that the Lord despises meaningless worship.
3. Recognize that though we are rich, we may not be right with God.

5:1-15 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

1. Notice 5:2. In what sense is Israel referred to as a virgin? (Hint: It is not because she is considered pure.)

Life Application:

2. Notice what the Lord says in 5:4-6. How can we apply this to ourselves when we sin?

3. What does "wormwood" mean in 5:7?

5:16-27 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

4. What picture is Amos presenting in 5:16-20?

5. Notice the pictures presented in 5:19. What is Amos implying here?

6. Notice 5:21-27. Can the Lord despise our prayers, singing, and observance of the Lord's Supper in the same way that He despised Israel's religious feasts and assemblies? If so, how?

6:1-14 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting and questions you have. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

7. What is the sin in 6:1-6? Is verse 6 condemning David for "inventing instruments of music?"

8. In 6:8-10, why will one person tell another not to make mention of the name of the Lord?

MAIN POINTS TO REMEMBER FROM THIS LESSON:

1. Amos' call to repentance.
2. The Lord despised the sacrifices and worship of Israel.
3. Israel was physically rich, but spiritually poor.

Goals of the lesson:

1. Our need to stand for God even when we are alone or outnumbered.
2. Even though God desires to save us, we can still fall.
3. Recognize the prophesy and glory of the coming Church.

7:1-17 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting and questions you have. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

1. The three visions of 7:1-9 are related. The main point is finally revealed in the vision of the plumb line. What is the message?
2. What is Amaziah implying about Amos in 7:12 when he says, "there eat bread and there prophesy?"

Life Application:

3. Notice again 7:14-17. What applications can we make from the response of Amos?

8:1-14 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting and questions you have. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

4. What is the main point of the vision of the summer fruit?

Life Application:

5. What lesson can we learn from the condemnation in 8:4-6?

6. What is the Lord saying about Israel in the figure given in 8:9?

7. Notice 8:11-12. What type of famine will Israel receive? What does this mean?

9:1-10 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting and questions you have. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

Life Application:

8 Notice 9:7. Compare Romans 11:17-22. What application can we make to ourselves as God's chosen people?

9:11-15 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting and questions you have. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

9. Notice 9:11-15. What is being foretold?

10. Define the figures of 9:11-15 by comparing Acts 15 where this passage is quoted.

MAIN POINTS TO REMEMBER FROM THIS LESSON:

1. The pictures of Israel's destruction.
2. Even God's chosen people can fall.
3. The coming of the new tabernacle, the Church.