

Amos 1

Introduction

-A favorite book of lovers of the Old Testament, and certainly the most favorite of the Minor Prophets for many people (due to the great humility, honesty, and forthrightness of Amos)

What do we know about Amos?

-He lived during the reigns of Uzziah (Southern Kingdom) and Jeroboam II (Northern Kingdom) – *Amos 1.1*

-Date: around 755 BC (34 years before the fall of the Northern Kingdom to the Assyrians in 721 BC)

-He was from the town of Tekoa

-see *Zondervan Bible Encyclopedia*, V, 613 for picture of the ruins of Tekoa

-It was located 6 miles south of Bethlehem, 12 miles south of Jerusalem

-Very desolate and dry, full of rocky canyons, near the location of the Dead Sea Scrolls

-2700 feet above sea level (the Dead Sea can be seen from the site of Tekoa)

Many people believe that growing up there gave Amos a broad view of God

-He was definitely not a "city boy"

His profession? Herdsman (raised sheep for wool); rest of year: tended sycamore trees – fruit had to be pierced at a certain time each year

-A very sparse country – he had to hold down 2 jobs just to survive

His character? One of great courage

-He didn't change his message just because people did not like him

-He was not a professional preacher or priest (not a hireling)

-But some of the sternest warnings in the Bible are found in the words of Amos

Read Amos 4.12, 6.1 – very famous – no uncertainty – no indecision on his part

Location of his preaching? In the Northern Kingdom (the northern 10 tribes of Israel)

-The Northern Kingdom should have listened to the preaching of Amos (just as to Hosea)

-There was still time to repent

-But they not listen, so God destroyed the Northern Kingdom in 721 BC

Amos 1.1-2

V1 – **How did Amos identify himself?** One of the shepherders (certainly not a big landowner; in other words, he was a "cowboy," not a "rancher")

-The kings reigning during this book? Uzziah in Southern Kingdom; Jeroboam II in the Northern Kingdom

-This was a time of great prosperity for both kingdoms – they could not believe the disaster that was coming on them 34 years later

-How else did Amos date his book? 2 years before the earthquake

-We have no other reference to this earthquake

-The book must have been written after the earthquake about sermons preached before the earthquake

V2 – This is a quote from *Joel 3.16*

-The prophets quoted from each other (just as preachers do today)

- Explain message:** God was mad at the Israelites
- The land would mourn and dry up, because of God's anger

Amos 1.3-5

- V3** – **What country did Amos begin prophesying against?** Damascus (Syria)
- Why?** His listeners would love to hear their enemy criticized, but then Amos would get to the Israelites (as when Nathan went to David about his sin with Bathsheba)
 - How many times had Damascus sinned against God?** 4 times (3 = perfect, complete number/4 = beyond that)
 - What had they done?** Run over people with rollers that had iron spikes sticking out of them
 - This mangled human bodies
 - 2 *Kings* 10.32-33 – Syria's attack on Gilead
- V4** – Hazael – the founder of the dynasty in Syria (family rule)
- Ben-hadad – the specific ruler at this time
- V5** – Valley of Aven and cities of Beth-eden and Aram– cities in Syria
- Conclusion about Damascus?** They would be punished by God for their sins
 - The people were probably cheering Amos by now – "Let'em have it, preacher!"

Amos 1.6-8

- V6-7** – **Next group preached against?** Gaza (Philistines)
- Gaza was the leading city of the Philistines
 - What had the Philistines done?** They had attacked the Israelites, captured some, and sent them to Edom as slaves
 - Edomites (descendants of Esau) were the arch-enemies of Israel (see the book of *Obadiah*)
 - Their punishment?** Their country would be burned by fire
- V8** – The capital cities of the Philistines: Ashdod, Ashkelon, Ekron
- What would be the ultimate punishment against the Philistines?** Total annihilation
 - Are there any Philistines in the world today?** No (not part of U.N., no nation, no territory, etc.)
 - The Bible could have easily made a mistake here, but didn't! (We still of Egypt, Lebanon, Israel, etc.)
 - The listeners to Amos were probably wild with excitement by now over the preaching of Amos

Amos 1.9-12

- V9** – **The next country to be punished?** Tyre (modern day Lebanon)
- What had Tyre done?** Betrayed its alliance and delivered the Israelites to Edom
 - 1 *Kings* 5.1, 12 – Hiram and Solomon had an agreement to be allies

V 10 – **Punishment against Tyre?** Its wall was to be burned with fire

V 11 – More punishment for Edom (in Petra)

-**Sins of Edom?** No love or compassion

-Bozrah – capital city of Edom (Teman – an important city)

V 12 – **How were they to be destroyed?** By fire

Amos 1.13-15

V 13 – **Next area?** Ammon (east of Jordan River)

-The Ammonites were continually attacking Israel

-**What kind of soldiers did they have?** Brutal – cut open pregnant women, etc.

V 14-15 – **Punishment for Ammon?** To be destroyed by fire, and their government leaders would go into exile (as slaves)

Amos 1:

-Amos is still setting the stage for his message to the Northern Kingdom

-We all love it when the preacher is talking about the other guy

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