



THE PROPHETS

Date: 6.23.24 | Title: Amos | Scripture: Amos

LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING

Middle School Students

The Bible is God's message about Himself and His salvation plan through Jesus.

God deserves respect, obedience, and honor.

God wants us to live for His glory.

God sent Jesus to be the atonement for our sins.

Jesus fulfills Old Testament prophecies and promises.

High School Students

The Bible is God's message about Himself and His salvation plan through Jesus.

God deserves respect, obedience, and honor.

God wants us to live for His glory.

God is a righteous judge.

God sent Jesus to be the atonement for our sins.

Jesus fulfills Old Testament prophecies and promises.

Jesus gave His life for us on the cross and He is the only way for salvation.



MEMORY VERSE

“Long ago, at many times and in many ways,
God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in
these last days he has spoken to us by his Son.”

Hebrews 1:1-2a



THE PROPHETS

BACKGROUND INFO FOR LEADERS

Amos was a minor prophet, from a small village about 10 miles south of Jerusalem. He worked as a sheep breeder (1:1, Kings 3:4) and a tender of sycamore fruit (7:14). Amos, the “burden-bearer”, wrote before the exile, during the long reigns of King Uzziah in Judah and King Jeroboam in Israel. Amos was a prophet called to deliver a message primarily to the northern tribes of Israel (7:15).

In Israel, it was a time of prosperity, peacefulness, and stability under the long and secure reign of Jeroboam. The Israelites took the wealth and success they were experiencing as signs of God’s blessing. They believed that “the day of the Lord” would soon come when God would subdue their enemies and allow the Israelites to rule the world. Amos didn’t waste time letting several nations know they were due for a dose of God’s wrath. Each of them had committed multiple infractions against God. Amos detailed the various reasons why each nation was now subject to God’s judgement, but the common theme was that each of them had, in some way, harmed Israel.

In actuality, the wealth and power Israel experienced was in no way related to the blessing of God, but the exact opposite. The Israelites were under the curse of God because of their broken covenant with Him. It was a time of rampant corruption and moral decay (4:1; 5:10-13; 2 Kings 14:24). The country was turning from God. Much of their wealth had been gained at the expense of the poor, whom the rich and powerful were systemically oppressing. Their worship of God was more like an attempt at magical manipulation, much like the religion of their pagan neighbors. Amos narrowed his message toward the outer ring of Moab, into Ammon, Edom, and ultimately to his audience- northern Israel. Amos delivered his messages at Bethel, where Jeroboam had set up a golden calf for Israel to worship when the kingdom divided.

Amos’ message was consistent with what other prophets had been saying: God was fed up with His people’s willful disobedience and disrespect of His law and His worship. The Jews had special instructions directly from God- a whole set of laws against idolatry, fornication, and injustice. The time to deal with other nations would come later, but first God would deal with His people. The Israelites were expecting a “day of the Lord” when all their enemies would be judged (1:2-2:5), but what they were not prepared for was that the judgement of that day would fall on them as well (2:6-9:10). Amos didn’t just record God’s words against the Gentile nations surrounding Israel; he also delivered God’s judgement against Israel itself. The “day of the Lord” would not be a day where enemies were punished, but a day of darkness for God’s people. Far from enjoying favored status, they would be held more accountable than their neighbors.



THE PROPHETS

BACKGROUND INFO FOR LEADERS

After establishing that God's judgment was coming, Amos preached 5 messages, prophetic sermons, covering the reasons behind judgment in greater detail. All five addressed Israel, God's chosen people, and because of their special relationship to God, it made their sin more painful and even less pardonable, in fact, that's the first reason they were being judged (Amos 3:1-2; Luke 12:48).

Israel was also judged because they had received prophetic revelation. When God did something, He told people His plans through His prophets (Amos 3:7). God told Noah He would flood the world, Abraham that He would destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, Joseph that He would send famine on Egypt, and Moses that He would send plagues on Egypt. Israel couldn't say they hadn't been warned that they had sinned and that it would lead to punishment.

As Amos went through his sermons, God's rationale was overwhelming. Amos addressed Israel's two primary sins: (1) an absence of true worship and (2) a lack of justice. In the midst of their ritualistic performance of worship, they were not pursuing the Lord with their hearts (4:4, 5; 5:4-6), nor following His standard of justice with their neighbors (5:10-13; 6:12). Israel had oppressed the weak and poor of its own community, covering it up with worship, refusing to turn back to God when He sent various diseases, defeats, and droughts (Amos 4). Amos even warned of future captivity (5:27). Israel should have paused and taken the message to heart, letting God's spirit work, but there is little indication they did.

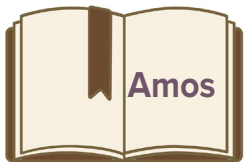
God gave Amos some pretty wild visions to explain both what He was doing and the reasons behind it. Chapter 7 features a three-part vision: a swarm of locusts representing the coming Assyrian invasions, a consuming fire likely foreshadowing a drought, and a plumb line (a tool used to make sure walls were level during construction) measuring Israel against the truth of God's word. Amos begged God to hold off on the first two, citing Israel's inability to withstand those natural disasters, and God amazingly agreed to relent for a time. Amos didn't protest the plumb line; he knew God would hold His people accountable for the way they had failed to respond to His word and ways. Amos's next vision involved a basket of ripe fruit (Amos 8). The ripeness of the fruit indicated that Israel was ripe for harvest' their sin was ready to be plucked from the tree of their disobedience and disrespect for God. The final vision Amos received was two part: one featuring God's inescapable judgement (Amos 9:2), and the other a scene of future blessings and restoration (9:11, 14-15).

Because of His covenant, the Lord does not abandon Israel altogether. This divine message ended with words of hope: a promise of restoration for the faithful remnant of God's people (9:7-15).



THE PROPHETS

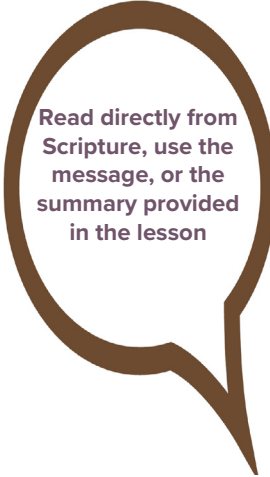
LOCATE THE SCRIPTURE & TELL THE STORY



TELL
THE
STORY



Tell the story: Use the Background Info for Leaders and The Message Bible summary of the book of Amos to tell today's story.



Read directly from Scripture, use the message, or the summary provided in the lesson

Attributes of God: Use the attributes of God list and determine the characteristics of God that we see in today's story. How can knowing these characteristics of God to be true, change the way we live in Christ?

Share the GOSPEL: Amos's name and mission- burden-bearer- foreshadowed Christ's mission and work on the cross. Amos carried the weight of a difficult message- a prophecy of judgement on Israel and her enemies- but that message ended with God's promise to rebuild David's dynasty and restore His people to the land He promised would be theirs (Amos 9:11-15). In a similar way, Jesus came to bear our burdens- the crushing weight of our sin- with the ultimate goal of restoring us to a right relationship with God and giving us the promised land of heaven as our inheritance. A faithful remnant of Israel would be preserved and would someday see glorious restoration and blessing.



Re-Tell
The Bible
Story

Put the events in order, draw a comic strip, build it with blocks or playdough, act it out, etc...

ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

ATTENTIVE - God hears and responds to the needs of his children.

COMPASSIONATE - God cares for his children and acts on their behalf.

CREATOR - God made everything. He is uncreated.

DELIVERER - God rescues and saves his children.

ETERNAL - God is not limited by time. He exists outside of time.

FAITHFUL - God always keeps his promises.

GENEROUS - God gives what is best and beyond what is deserved.

GLORIOUS - God displays His greatness and worth.

GOOD - God is what is best and gives what is best. He is incapable of doing harm.

HOLY - God is perfect, pure, and without sin.

IMMUTABLE/UNCHANGING - God never changes. He is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

INCOMPREHENSIBLE - God is beyond our understanding. We can comprehend Him in part but not in whole.

INFINITE - God has not limits in His person or on His power.

JEALOUS - God will not share his glory with another. all glory rightfully belongs to him.

JUST - god is fair in all his actions and judgements. He cannot over-punish or under-punish.

LOVING - God feels and displays infinite, unconditional affection toward his children. His love for them does not depend on their worth, response, or merit.

MERCIFUL - God does not give his children the punishment they deserve.

OMNIPOTENT/ALMIGHTY - God holds all power. nothing is too hard for God. What He wills He can accomplish.

ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

OMNIPRESENT - God is fully present everywhere.

OMNISCIENT - God knows everything, past, present, and future - all potential and real outcomes, all things micro and macro.

PATIENT/LONG-SUFFERING - God is untiring and bears with His children.

PROVIDER - God meets the needs of his children.

REFUGE - God is a place of safety and protection for his children.

RIGHTEOUS - God is always good and right.

SELF-EXISTENT - God depends on nothing and no one to give him life or existence.

SELF-SUFFICIENT - God is not vulnerable. He has no needs.

SOVEREIGN - God does everything according to His plan and pleasure.

TRANSCENDENT - God is not like humans. He is infinitely higher in being and action.

TRUTHFUL - Whatever God speaks or does is truth and reality.

WISE - God knows what is best and acts accordingly. He cannot choose wrongly.

WORTHY - God deserves all glory and honor and praise.

WRATHFUL - God hates all unrighteousness.

QUESTIONS TO REBUILD THE STORY

“Storying” Questions: As you ask these questions, have your students support their answers with scripture.

1. What is Amos’s background? Where was he from?
2. Who was he called to speak to?
3. When did Amos prophesy?
4. Where did he give his messages?
5. What was the main message from God for Amos to deliver?
6. What did the Israelites think of Amos’ messages early on? How did this change?

Read Luke 12:48. “To whom much is given, much shall be required.” God held the Jews accountable for what He had given them- His Word, the prophets, an inheritance of land. In the same way, we as believers will be held accountable for what we do with what Jesus has given us (Matthew 25:14-30). Israel’s covenant with the Lord did not guarantee special protection for them when they broke the covenant. Rather, it meant that they would be held to a higher standard of obedience and would be subject to more scrutiny in judgement.

7. What is the hardest thing about obedience? Why is it so difficult to be obedient?
8. What sins were the nation of Israel guilty of?
9. What visions did God give Amos about this sin? What were their meanings?
10. What hope did God give the Israelites?



THE PROPHETS

PRAYER PROMPTS

God thank you for constantly pursuing your people! We do not deserve Your relentless love! You are merciful and gracious and never give up on us! Help us to follow You and love You with our thoughts, desires, and actions.

IF TIME ALLOWS:

Help the students in your group practice memorizing the books of the Bible:

- Torah: Genesis-Deuteronomy
- History: Joshua-Esther
- Poetry: Job-Song of Solomon
- Major Prophets: Isaiah-Daniel
- Minor Prophets: Hosea-Malachi
- Gospels: Matthew-John
- Paul's Letters: Romans-Philemon
- General Letters: Hebrews-Revelation


MISSIONS EMPHASIS:

Amos followed God's leading to go and deliver a message of repentance, justice, righteousness, and love for neighbor. We are called to do this same thing in Matthew 28:19-20.

REVIEW UNIT VERSE:

Work on memorizing this weeks verse with the students in your group. You can use the first letter of each word in the verse to help with this. For example, the unit verse would look like this:

LAAMTAIMWGSTOFBTPBITLDHHSTUBHS - Hebrews 1:1-2a



THE PROPHETS



Application Questions

LOOK UPWARD



- How does this story apply to your relationship with God?
- What does it teach you about Him- His will and His heart?
- What aspect of His character is He inviting you to experience and enjoy?
- How will you benefit by applying the truths of this story in your relationship with God?
- What practical steps can you take to live out these truths in your relationship with God?

LOOK INWARD



- How does this story apply to your heart and your own spiritual growth?
- What does it teach you about yourself, your needs, or your goals in life?
- In what aspects of your personal life is God inviting you to grow and mature?
- How will you benefit by applying the truths of this story inwardly?
- How will those around you benefit?
- What practical steps can you take to allow these truths to help you grow spiritually?

LOOK AROUND



- How does this story apply to your relationship with others?
- What does it teach you about how to see others and relate to them?
- What is god inviting you to do differently in your relationships?



Application Questions

LOOK OUTWARD

- How does this story apply to your ministry and mission in life- to your role in God's kingdom, in society, and in the world?
- What does it teach you about God's purposes for the world?
- What part of His mission is He inviting you to participate in?
- How will you benefit by applying the truths of this story in your ministry?
- How will the world benefit?
- What practical steps can you take to live out these truths in the world?

LOOK FORWARD

- How does this story apply to your future, both in this age and in eternity?
- What does it teach you about God's plan for your life, now and forever?
- What aspects of eternity is God inviting you to participate in?
- How will you benefit in the future by applying these truths now?
- How will God's kingdom benefit?
- What practical steps can you take to impact eternity now with these truths?