

Amos 1 & 2

5-23-02

“From Fig Picker to Big Preacher !”

1. **Intro: (1:1,2)**

1.1. Who was Amos?

- 1.1.1. Name means “burden-bearer” – he definitely was burdened because of the sins of his people.
- 1.1.2. **Sheepbreeder** (1:1, 7:14) – Not just a shepherd, but a specific word which included breeding.
- 1.1.3. **Fig Picker** (7:14,15) – the sycamore was a species of fig of poor quality(*fig-mulberry*). It was punctured to help insure ripening.
 - 1.1.3.1. **Q:** Who climbed this tree in the NT? {Zacchaeus}
 - 1.1.3.2. **Tender** = “one who cut or scraped”.
 - 1.1.3.3. Good illustration in what the Lord must do in our lives to make us sweet!
- 1.1.4. **Yet, “called by God”!** (7:14,15) – here’s what matters!
- 1.1.5. **Layman** (7:14) – No formal training. Didn’t go to the school of the prophets. He was not a *professional* prophet.
 - 1.1.5.1. He was only...“called by God!”
 - 1.1.5.2. Awesome that God can, & desires to use, a “Fig Picking, Sheep breeding, Layman”!
 - 1.1.5.3. **No formal training is required...but training is!** It may simply be “on the job training”!
 - 1.1.5.4. God can use you in something you are **not** skilled in...but we are to do it with all of our ability - **Eccl.9:10 “Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might;”** {NLT - “Whatever you do, do well”}
- 1.1.6. Here we have a southern farm boy called to speak to his rich, prosperous, materialistic, upper-class northern neighbors.
 - 1.1.6.1. Under Jeroboam II, Israel was enjoying a time of **peace & prosperity**; its interest in **religion** was high, but **revival** was shallow, & had very little effect on everyday life!

1.2. When was he writing?

- 1.2.1. **755bc.** - Hosea was a co-worker w/Amos. Isaiah, & Micah were just starting their ministries.
- 1.2.2. **Uzziah**(Judah) – [reigned 790-739bc] He fortified Jerusalem & subdued the *Philistines*, the *Ammonites*, & the *Edomites*.
- 1.2.3. **Jeroboam**(Israel) – [reigned 790-739bc] He capitalized on the lack of aggression from Assyria, Aram, Syria, & Egypt to expand Israel's boundaries & increase trade.

1.3. Why was he writing?

- 1.3.1. “To confront their empty religion, oppression of the poor, & total disregard for God's covenant commands.”
- 1.3.2. This pronouncement of judgment would have made him the “Not-So-Famous Amos!

1.4. What is the layout of this book?

- 1.4.1. [ch.1 & 2] – 8 Accusations!
- 1.4.2. [ch.3 & 6] – 3 Sermons!
- 1.4.3. [ch.7 & 9] – 5 Visions!

1.5. Tonight's outline! (1 & 2)

- 1.5.1. **Show Map** – explain counter clock wise spiral attack.
- 1.5.2. **Dart board analogy** - Israel though the “Apple of God's eye” becomes His...bull's-eye!
- 1.5.3. **Hawk analogy** - Circling his prey! (moving in ever tightening circles...till at last he pounces on Israel)
 - 1.5.3.1. **Q:** I wonder in **which area** of your life is God circling in on?
 - 1.5.3.2. **Q:** What sin lies at **your core** that He's trying to get to?
 - 1.5.3.3. **Q:** Is it time to let God all the way to **the center**?

1.6. (vs.1) – **Earthquake** – This must have been quite the shaker as it was remembered 200 years later by Zechariah & likened unto Judgment day.

- 1.6.1. **Zechariah 14:5** “Then you shall flee through My mountain valley, For the mountain valley shall reach to Azal. Yes, you shall flee As you fled from the **earthquake** In the days of **Uzziah** king of Judah. Thus the LORD my God will come, And all the saints with You.”

1.7. (vs.2) – **The Lord roars** – Amos portrays God as a roaring lion who has begun His attack in nations that have wronged Him.

- 1.7.1. This sets the tone for Amos' message!

2. 8 JUDGMENTS! (1:3-2:16)

- 2.1. He 1st denounces the 6 gentile countries before he hits Judah/Israel.
- 2.1.1. **Note:** he did not give his law to the **gentile** nations, but he still held them accountable for their sins against humanity.
- 2.1.2. **Israel & Judah** sinned against “**God’s Law**(2:4) & **God’s Love**(9-12)!”
- 2.1.3. The **Gentiles** sinned against their “**inner law**”, their conscience.
- 2.1.3.1. they sinned against their fellowman. Amos condemned their brutality, slavery, revenge, murder, & thievery.
- 2.1.4. **Israel & Judah** had greater responsibility before the Lord.
- 2.1.4.1. **Privilege** always brings about responsibility!
- 2.1.4.2. As with us believers also. “**For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more!**”
- 2.2. **Note:** As we read these, know that history substantiates all of these prophecies came true within 50 years!
- 2.3. **SYRIA!** (1:3-5)
- 2.4. **Amos’ formula** is repeated **8 times**(1:3,6,9,11,13; 2:1,4,6): “**For three transgressions of Damascus, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment,...**”
- 2.4.1. This is as if to say, “**3 would have been enough to warrant judgment; 4 makes it beyond question.**”¹
- 2.4.2. **4** is like the “last straw!” – **4** conveys “fullness”!
- 2.5. **Damascus/Syria’s capitol**
- 2.5.1. Sometimes called “Eden”(5) because it was so beautiful...thus “beth-eden”(house of eden).
- 2.6. **Why the judgment? – Brutality!**
- 2.6.1. “**Because they have threshed Gilead with implements of iron**”.
- 2.6.2. These sleds had iron teeth under them like cleats on football shoes.
- 2.6.2.1. **Explain** threshing sled for grain.
- 2.6.3. These were brutally used by Syria to **drag them over their war victims**.
- 2.6.4. The theme all through this book is **God’s displeasure with mistreatment of others**. [It is the disgust we feel when they find the remains of a Chandra Levy,...]

¹ J. A. Motyer, in The New Bible Commentary, pg.730

- 2.7. **PHILISTIA!** (1:6-8)
- 2.8. Names 4 out of 5 cities of Philistia's Pentapolis {**Gath** not mentioned here}.
- 2.8.1. **Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, & Ekron** – which all fell to Assyrian kings as prophesied.
- 2.8.1.1. **Gaza**(fell to Tiglath-Pileser/734bc); **Ashdod**(fell to Sargon/711bc);
Ashkelon & Ekron(fell to Sennacherib/701bc)
- 2.9. **Why the judgment? – Slavery!**
- 2.9.1. "Because they took **captives** the whole captivity to **deliver them up to Edom.**"
- 2.9.1.1. They obviously sold Hebrew slaves to the Edomites!
- 2.10. **PHOENICIA!** (1:9-10)
- 2.10.1. **Tyre & Sidon** were principle cities in Phoenicia.
- 2.11. **Why the judgment? – Slavery & Treaty Breaking!**
- 2.11.1. "Because they delivered up the whole **captivity** to Edom, And did not remember the **covenant** of brotherhood."
- 2.12. **EDOM!** (1:11,12)
- 2.13. As **Israel** came via **Jacob**; so **Edom** came about via **Esau**.
- 2.13.1. Edom is where the Rock city of Petra is...i.e. Jordan today.
- 2.14. **Why the judgment? – For its Revengeful spirit!**
- 2.14.1. "Because he **pursued** his brother with the sword, And **cast off all pity**; His **anger** tore perpetually, And he **kept his wrath forever.**"
- 2.15. **AMMON!** (1:13-15)
- 2.16. Lot's children via incest w/his daughters were **Ammon & Moab**.
- 2.17. **Why the judgment? – Atrocities!**
- 2.17.1. "Because they ripped open the women with child in Gilead, That they might enlarge their territory."
- 2.17.2. J.A.Motyer said, "The Ammonite war against Gilead is not otherwise known, but the record was kept in heaven."
- 2.17.2.1. **Q:** How many of your hidden sins were stored in heaven's vaults before your salvation?
- 2.18. **MOAB!** (2:1-3)
- 2.19. **Why the judgment? – For Injustice!**
- 2.19.1. "Because he **burned the bones of the king of Edom to lime.**"
- 2.19.2. The Scriptures are also silent regarding these atrocities also.

2.20. **JUDAH!** (2:4,5)

2.21. **Q:** How do you think Judah & Israel felt regarding their “enemies” judgment?

2.22. Now Amos hits “*the green*” of the bulls-eye bringing it to his own homeland!

2.22.1. Donald Grey Barnhouse, “The common assumption...of his day [was] that his people had a patent & a copyright on God.”

2.23. **Why the judgment? – For Perverting the Law!**

2.23.1. “Because they have despised the law of the LORD, And have not kept His commandments. Their lies lead them astray, Lies which their fathers followed.”

2.23.2. The Lord Judges people according to the light he has given them.

2.23.2.1. **Q:** How much light has been shown your way? [Lets’ say you get 1 point for everyone of these]

2.23.2.2. {Do you have a **bible**(or a few)? Are you w/in driving distance of a **church(s)**? Can you tune into a Christian **radio** program? How many channels of Christian **TV** do you have? Do you have access to Bible teaching **tapes**? Are you free from **persecution** for your faith? Do you have any other **Bible study aide** beside your bible? Do you have **computer access** to any bible study material?}

2.24. **ISRAEL!** (2:6-16)

2.25. Israel might say(looking & listening to Amos) “He **speaks** like a shepherd, he **looks** like a shepherd, He **smells** like a shepherd, but he sure doesn’t sound like one!

2.26. Amos’ coil of condemnation has finally reached the center!

2.26.1. **Opposite of a cinnamon roll**(best being the center!)

2.26.2. Maze w/a mouse trap in the center.

2.27. **Explain** when the kingdom divided what Jeroboam had done regarding “worship”! {**See** 1 Kings 12:26-31}

2.27.1. Calf-worship was its religion. I saw the other sight up north in Dan.

2.28. **Why the judgment? – Social Injustice & Sexual Immorality!**

2.28.1. “Because they sell the righteous for silver, And the poor for a pair of sandals...”

- 2.28.2. I.e. They sell the rights of the poor, which were carefully protected in the OT Law.
- 2.28.3. (7) The father & son partake in the same immorality w/the temple prostitutes.
- 2.28.4. (8) The garments weren't returned before nightfall. Instead, the wealthy used them at the alters for resting places.
- 2.29. **Nazarites** – were living reminders to Israel of being set apart for God!
- 2.29.1. Oh, for more present day Nazarites!
- 2.30. **End:** In 722bc...that judgment came via Assyria.
- 2.30.1. I said in the beginning that Israel was “enjoying a time of **peace & prosperity**; its interest in “**religion**” was high, but **revival** was shallow, & had very little effect on everyday life!”
- 2.30.2. **Q: How does that relate to our country today?**
- 2.30.2.1. We too have been blessed w/**prosperity, peace, & power**.
So the question is **HOW are we using these blessings to honor God?**
- 2.30.2.2. Or, are we using them to satisfy our own passions at others' expense?
- 2.30.2.3. **Statistic:** “1 out of 18 people in the world live in the U.S. That 1/18th of the world's population, it so happens, gathers 35% of the world's income. 20% of humanity(*basically Europe & America*) controls 80% of the worlds resources, which leaves 80% of the world's population to divide the remaining fraction of the world's resources” {Arthur Simon, author of breaking Bread w/the hungry}
- 2.30.3. **Rich Christians in an age of hunger...how can we help feed?**
Rich Christians in an age of persecution...how can we help encourage?
Rich Christians in an age of injustices...how can we deal more fairly with others?