

Introduction To Amos

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- ◆ Amos was not a priest (as were Jeremiah and Ezekiel) nor formally trained prophet, but a shepherd and tender of sycamore-fig trees (Amos 1:1 + 7:14).
- ◆ Though he was called to prophesy to Israel he was from Tekoa, a town of Judah (about 11 miles south of Jerusalem).
- ◆ Amos prophesied during the reigns of Uzziah, king of Judah (787-735 b.c., 2 Chronicles 26) and Jereboam II, king of Israel (790-749 b.c., 2 Kings 14:23-29) (Amos 1:1).
 - ◆ According to the Jewish historian Josephus, the “earthquake” of Amos 1:1 happened at about the time of Uzziah’s leprosy (2 Chron. 26). It must have been significant for it was cited 200 years after it occurred as an illustration of divine judgment (Zech. 14:5).
 - ◆ Amos was contemporary with *Hosea* and later with Isaiah and Micah.
- ◆ According to Amos 7:10-14, Amos prophesied in Bethel, which was the religious center (seat of idolatry and corruption) of Israel. Bethel was one of the two cities where Jereboam I had 200 years earlier set up a golden calf (1 Kings 12:25-33).
 - ◆ Amaziah, the “priest” at Bethel accused Amos of raising a conspiracy — told him to go back to Judah!
 - ◆ Bethel was about 12 miles north of Jerusalem.
- ◆ Though Amos was sent to Israel (2:6-16), he also pronounced judgment upon:
 - ◆ Aram (1:3-5); Philistia (1:6-8); Tyre (Phoenicia, 1:9-10); Edom (1:11-12); Ammon (1:13-15); Moab (2:1-3) and Judah (2:4-5)

- ◆ The word “captivity” is a key word in the book (1:5, 15; 5:5, 27; 6:7, 9, 17)
- ◆ Amos prophesied during a time of national prosperity in Israel (3:15; Hosea 12:8).
 - ◆ But acquired by unjust means (2:6-8; 5:7-13).
 - ◆ 4:1-3 describes a pampered class of women, whose self-indulgent lifestyle was possible only by the suffering of others.
 - ◆ Indicted for their greed, dishonesty, injustice and cruelty to the weak and poor — as well as their idolatry and paganism.
- ◆ Amos prophesied during a time of religious perversion and corruption (4:4-5; 5:21-27*).
- ◆ The judgments announced by Amos were illustrated by:
 - ◆ Locusts (7:1-3)
 - ◆ Fire (7:4-6)
 - ◆ A Plumb line (7:7-9)
- ◆ Like Hosea, Amos promised hope to Israel, but according to 9:11 (and its fulfillment explained in Acts 15:16-17), this hope would be offered through Christ.