

# AMOS

**Author: Amos**

**Date: 760 - 750 B.C.**

The book of Amos addresses the excessive pursuit of luxury, self-indulgence, and oppression of the poor which characterized the period of prosperity and success in the northern kingdom of Israel under Jeroboam II. Hypocritical religious practices had replaced true worship, creating a false sense of security and a growing callousness to God's disciplining hand. Amos saw the corruption beneath the attractive surface and announced that the nation was rotten to the core. The book stands as an eloquent witness against those who subordinate human need and dignity to the pursuit of wealth and pleasure.

The name Amos means "burden-bearer." Amos lived up to his name by bearing up under his divinely given burden of declaring judgment to rebellious Israel. From his rustic background at Tekoa, six miles south of Bethlehem in the southern kingdom of Judah, Amos was called by God to go to the northern kingdom to be His spokesman.

Amos was not a professional prophet but a common man whose occupation was herding sheep and tending fruit. His vivid writing style and literary character of the book suggest he was educated. His moral sensibilities were shocked by the perversions of Israel's worship that he observed at Bethel, one of the great national shrines. This farmer-turned-prophet lashed out at sin unflinchingly, trying to visualize the nearness of God's judgment and mobilize the people to repentance.

The book of Amos is basically a message of judgment against seven of Israel's neighbors, including Judah, and upon Israel herself. Each nation is to be punished for specific offenses either against Israel or some other nation. This judgment on the nations teaches that God is a universal monarch and all nations must answer to Him. The preaching of Amos stresses the righteousness and justice of God.

**Theme:** God's imminent judgment on Israel would not be a warning type punishment but an almost total destruction. God is the God of not only Israel, but of all nations, and the other sinful nations would also be judged.

**Key verse:** "But let justice run down like water, and righteousness like a mighty stream" (5:24).

## OUTLINE

- I. Introduction and Eight Judgments (Chapters 1 – 2)
- II. Three Sermons of Judgment: Israel's Present, Past, and Future (3:1 – 6:14)
- III. The Five Visions of Judgment (7:1 – 9:10)
- IV. The Five Promises of the Restoration of Israel (9:11-15)