

Through the Bible Book by Book

Old Testament

by Myer Pearlman

Copyright @ 1935

edited for 3BSB by Baptist Bible Believer

~ out-of-print and in the public domain ~

Amos

Theme: The message of Amos is that of judgment to come and restoration to follow. It will be noted that there is a certain sameness in the themes of many of the prophets. This is explained by the fact that there was one predominating cause that brought forth their message, namely, national sin; therefore their message was in most cases one of condemnation. But while they had a message of rebuke for the nation at large, they had also a message of consolation and restoration for a faithful remnant.

Amos views the sin of Israel in relation to the great privileges granted them, and shows that because of the great privileges that were theirs and because of their failure to walk worthy of the favors the Lord had bestowed upon them, their punishment will be greater than that of the heathen who have not had the same advantages as they (3:2).

Theme: The theme of Amos may be stated as follows: The setting forth of the sins of a privileged people, whose privileges brought them great responsibility and whose failure under that responsibility brought them a judgment according to the light they had received.

Author: Amos was a native of Tekoa, about six miles south of Bethlehem, inhabited chiefly by shepherds, to which class he belonged, being also a gatherer of sycamore fruit. He had not been officially ordained as a prophet, neither had he attended the school of the prophets; his only reason for preaching was a divine call (7:14, 15).

His ministry was primarily to the Ten Tribes, although he had also a message for Judah and the surrounding countries. He prophesied during the reigns of Uzziah, king of Judah (II Chronicles, Ch. 26) and of Jeroboam II, king of Israel (II Kings 14:23-29), from 60 to 80 years before the captivity of the Ten Tribes.

Bethel was the principal scene of his preaching, perhaps the only one. When he had delivered several addresses there Amaziah, the chief priest of the royal sanctuary, sent a message to the king, who seems not to have been present, accusing the preacher of treason, and at the same time ordered the latter to quit the realm. Evidently there was some reason to fear that the oppressed poor might be stirred up to revolt against their lords and masters. The threats of coming judgment would disturb many hearers.

The denunciations of cruelty and injustice would awaken many echoes. Yet the priest's language evinces all the contempt which a highly placed official feels towards an interfering nobody, a fellow who thinks he gains a precarious livelihood by prophesying (7:10-17).

On reaching home Amos doubtless put into writing the substance of his speeches. - J. Taylor.

CONTENTS:

I. Judgment on the Nations (Chs. 1, 2).

II. Judgment on Israel (Chs.3 to 9:6).

III. The Restoration of Israel (9:7-15).

I. Judgment on the Nations (Chaps. 1, 2)

Israel and Judah are included in this denunciatory message against the nations, for the Lord is seen as the Judge of all nations administering impartial judgment. Notice how each of these messages begins: "For three, . . . yea, for four." This is a figurative way of declaring that GOD does not act immediately in judgment; but that He waits in order to give every nation the chance of repentance."

Dr. Campbell Morgan sums up briefly the sin of each nation as follows.

1. The sin of Syria: cruelty (1:3-5).
2. The sin of Philistia: slave trade (1:6-8).
3. The sin of Phoenicia: slave agents in spite of covenant (1:9, 10).
4. The sin of Edom: determined and revengeful unforgiveness (1:11, 12).
5. The sin of Ammon: cruelty based on cupidity (1:13, 15).
6. The sin of Moab: violent an vindictive hatred (2:1-3).
7. The sin of Judah: the Lord's laws despised (2:4, 5)
8. Israel: corruption and oppression (2:5-16)

II. Judgment on Israel (Chaps. 3 to 9:6). The judgments are set forth in three discourses (3:1 to 6:14) and by five visions (7:1 to 9:6)

1. The three discourses, each beginning with the words "**hear this word**":

(a) The theme of the first discourse (Ch. 3), is as follows:

Israel's ingratitude for GOD's love and favor and their failure under responsibility calls for punishment (3:1-3); which the prophets announced, not at random, but by GOD's commission which they cannot but fulfill (vv. 4-8). From this judgment only a remnant (v. 12) will escape (vv. 9-15).

(b) The theme of the second discourse (Ch. 4).

Because of the oppression of the nobles (4:13) and the general idolatry of the nation (vv. 4, 5) they have been chastised (vv. 6-11). Because these chastisements have been unheeded Israel is to prepare to meet their GOD in the last and worst judgment of all (vv. 12, 13).

(c) The theme of the third discourse (5:1 to 6:14).

Impending judgment may be averted by seeking the Lord (5:1-15). For those who scornfully wish to see the day of the Lord, it will come in all its awfulness and terror (5:16-20); because of the nation's deserting of GOD's true service in imitation of their fathers in the wilderness they will be led into captivity (vv. 21-27); woe to those who live in carnal security as though that captivity were not impending (Ch. 6).

2. The five visions of judgment.

(a) The locusts (7:1-3).

These were typical of the Assyrians who were constantly ravaging Israel. At the intercession of the prophet, the Lord promises that all Israel shall not be utterly destroyed.

(b) The burning up of the deep (7:4-6).

This probably refers to the drying up of the waters and a consequent drought.

(c) The plumbline (7:7-9).

As a sign that judgment is about to be meted out according to righteousness. This last message brought persecution upon the prophet from Israel's high priest (7:10-17).

(d) The basket of summer fruit (8:1-3).

This was symbolical of Israel's ripeness for judgment! Then follows a message (8:4-14) the Theme of which is as follows:
because Israel has despised the Word of GOD, GOD will bring on a famine of that same Word.

(e) The Lord standing upon the altar (9:1-6).

The Lord is seen commanding to smite and slay, showing that the order is being given for the Judgment to begin.

III. The Restoration of Israel (Ch. 9:7-15)

1. The dispersion of Israel is for their sifting and purification (vv. 7-10).
2. After that is accomplished the Davidic kingdom will be re-established (v. 11).
3. Then the whole nation Israel will be the head of the nations (v. 12).
4. The land of Palestine will prosper (vv. 13, 14).
5. And Israel will inherit it forever (v. 15).

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>
