

## **“The Book of Amos” Judgment on Nations for Rejecting God as King**

### **Part 1: Basics of Bible Interpretation**

Two keys to remember when studying the Bible: 1) All Scripture is God-breathed and authoritative (2 Timothy 3:16)

2) The Scripture reveals to us that our sin nature will attempt to make ourselves the authority by twisting the meaning of Scripture to fit our own desires. (Gen. 3:4-6) **Remember: The correct meaning of the Scripture is the Scripture.**

1. What did the passage mean to the original audience?
  - Interpret the passage in the literal sense of normal communication, according to the rules of grammar for the original language, in the historical context of the original audience.
2. What is the transcendent truth conveyed in the passage?
  - What does the passage tell us about God, man, Christ, and salvation?
3. How does this transcendent truth apply to us today?

### **Part 2: Author, Date, Setting, Themes**

1. Amos is the first of the “Minor Prophets” and is known as the first of the ‘writing prophets.’
2. Amos was a sheep breeder and fig farmer from Tekoa, a small village 10 miles South of Jerusalem in the Southern Kingdom of Judah, but called by God to prophesy judgment against the Northern Kingdom of Israel after a series of 13 evil kings had ruled.
3. Amos wrote at the same time as Hosea, Jonah, and Isaiah during the reign of King Uzziah in Judah and Jeroboam II in Israel (circa 760 B.C.) It was a time of economic and military expansion.
4. Amos addresses Israel’s two greatest sins: 1) Idolatry and 2) Disregard for God’s Law, especially justice for the poor. In other words, not loving God or their neighbor.

### **Part 3: Interpreting Amos by Understanding Hebrew Poetry and Prophecy**

- 1) One-third of the Old Testament is poetry. 10 of the 12 “minor prophets” used poetry to prophesy.
- 2) Though the same truth can be conveyed with prose, God has designed us in such a way that poetry and song capture our attention.
- 3) Hebrew poetry is different from English poetry, which depends on rhyme

and meter. Hebrew poetry uses mostly parallelism, chiasm, and word play.

- 4) Examples of parallelism 2:6 and 3:3-6
- 5) Example of chiasm 5:1-12
- 6) Example of word play 7:7-8 and 8:1-2
- 7) Prophecy often has a near and far application. Example: Amos 9:11-15 is quoted in Acts 15:16-18. Always consider the near fulfillment of the prophecy before you consider the far, otherwise you run the risk of allegorizing or spiritualizing the Scripture, which often changes the meaning of Scripture.

**Part 4: What are the transcendent truths from the book of Amos (by chapter)**

1. God judges the nations. All people are without excuse for rejecting Yahweh as King.
2. God holds His covenant people to a higher standard of judgment.
3. When God commands us to speak truth, we must speak even if the culture doesn't want to hear it.
4. God disciplines his children, but they often will not repent.
5. The Day of the Lord is coming. Be careful not to wrongly assume you will escape judgment.
6. Prosperity often leads to presumption of God's blessing and oppression of the poor.
7. Judgment will come, starting with those who silence God's Word and lead people astray.
8. When people harden their hearts to God's Word, God eventually judges them by going silent.
9. Israel will be restored, and together with Gentiles, will finally enjoy the reign of the Righteous King.