

# INTRODUCTORY MESSAGE TO THE BOOK OF AMOS

**TEXT: AMOS 1:1; 7:10-17**

## **Introduction:**

1. Amos' name means, "Burden." He is considered the first of the writing prophets, a herdsman of Tekoa (1:1). Tekoa was a rugged, rural area in Judah, about six miles south of Bethlehem, and about twelve miles southeast of Jerusalem.
2. Although he was from Tekoa in Judah, the LORD sent him to prophesy in the northern kingdom of Israel.
3. Amos "exercised his ministry during the reign of Jeroboam II, an able but idolatrous king who brought his kingdom to the zenith of its power. Nothing could seem more improbable than the fulfillment of Amos' warnings; yet within fifty years the kingdom was utterly destroyed. The vision of Amos is, however, wider than the northern kingdom, including the whole 'house of Jacob'" (Introduction to Amos in the *Scofield Bible*).
4. Scofield divides Amos into four parts:
  - I. Judgments on the cities surrounding Palestine (1:1—2:3).
  - II. Judgments on Judah and Israel (2:4-16).
  - III. Jehovah's controversy with "the whole family" of Jacob (3:1-9:10).
  - IV. The future glory of the Davidic kingdom (9:11-15).
5. Amos prophesied "two years before the earthquake" (1:1; cf. Zech. 14:5). This would be about 787 BC (*Scofield Bible*).
6. Amos was a contemporary of the prophet Hosea, but he had a much different message. Whereas Hosea emphasized the love of God in the midst of His judgments, Amos preached only God's judgment against sin. The only exception would be the very end of chapter 9 (end of the book)

when Amos describes the millennial kingdom. But the judgment of God must precede the blessings of the millennium.

7. Amos prophesied during the reign of Jeroboam II, while Uzziah was the king of Judah.

## **I. THE PROBLEM OF MATERIALISM**

1. The reign of King Jeroboam II was a period of great wealth and luxury. But it was also a time of moral decay, and cold, lifeless formal worship (cf. 5:21, 22).
2. Materialism, covetousness, selfishness, the constant craving for money, possessions, and other creature comforts, has always been a big problem, even among God's people.
3. Under King Jeroboam II, the kingdom of Israel reached the zenith of its prosperity, but the gulf between rich and poor widened, and there was much oppression of the poor (cf. 2:6, 7).
4. Israel was prospering financially but was decaying spiritually and morally. Most of Israel's prophets and priests were wicked men like Amaziah, the priest of Bethel (Amos 7:10-17).
5. But the backslidden people liked it that way.
6. "That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the LORD: Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits" (Isa. 30:9, 10).
7. "The priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment. For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean" (Isa. 28:7, 8).
8. "I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem an horrible thing: they commit adultery, and walk in lies: they strengthen also the hands of evildoers, that none doth return from his wickedness; they are all of

them unto me as Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah” (Jer. 23:14).

9. America has become a very materialistic country. The founders of this country were not that way, but over the years materialism has become more and more of a problem.
10. The Puritans eschewed worldly pleasures and materialism, but each succeeding generation has moved further and further away from the Word of God.
11. God sent America great revivals in the past (First and Second Great Awakening, etc.) but there has not been a major revival in America in over 100 years.
12. The people in Amos’ day believed financial prosperity was a sign that God was blessing them. This idea is popular today as well. The “health and wealth” preachers (like Benny Hinn) teach that if you are saved God will give you great material wealth.
13. Amos’ prophecies of judgment did not sit well with the materialistic people. His preaching went against the prevailing political climate of hope and prosperity.

## **II. THE PROBLEM WITH FALSE PROPHETS**

1. Second Peter 2:1 says, “But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.”
2. Amos was much different from the false prophets. God called Amos to preach and Amos preached what God told him to preach (Amos 7:14-17).
3. Amos did not attend a prestigious school. He was not ordained or approved by any ministerial association. He did not associate with unsaved priests like Amaziah (7:14-17).

4. Amaziah told the unsaved King Jeroboam II everything he wanted to hear. Amaziah tried to intimidate Amos. He insulted him and told him to get out of town (7:10-13).

### **III. THE MESSAGE OF AMOS**

1. Amos exposed the wickedness of the people. He prophesied against the apostate condition of the religious leaders (7:16, 17).
2. Amos prophesied that the kingdom of Israel would surely be destroyed (cf. [5:1-2](#); [8:2](#)). This was fulfilled when the Assyrians invaded Israel and took the people off into captivity.
3. “The end is come upon my people of Israel; I will not again pass by them any more” (8:2b). The people of the northern kingdom of Israel never returned. They intermarried with the heathen, and when we get to the New Testament the people in northern Israel are referred to as “Samaritans,” half-breed people who have mixed the worship of Jehovah together with pagan idolatry (II Kings 17:5-41).
4. Our Lord said to the Samaritan woman, “Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews” (John 4:22).

### **CONCLUSION:**

1. Amos’ message to Israel was not entirely without hope.
2. When Christ returns, He “will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land.” (9:15).
3. God will restore Israel and “will build it as in the days of old” (9:11).