

Book of Amos

Historical Background

Amos came from the southern kingdom of Judah under the reign of King Uzziah (767 BC to 753 BC). However, his prophetic messages speak directly to the northern kingdom of Israel under the reign of Jeroboam II. With increased territories and material profits under the Jeroboam II, the moral decay, that is, treating others with injustice also had increased.

How is the book of Amos relevant to us today?

Amos' prophetic messages were directed against the privileged people of Israel, people who had no love for their neighbors, who took advantage of others, and who only looked out for their own concerns. The book of Amos holds God's people accountable for their ill-treatment of others while pointing out the failure of their full embrace of God's idea of justice. Moreover, people had lost their compassion for one another and particularly for the most vulnerable. Our world today seemed not too far from Amos' time.

Amos 1 (Affirmation)

Observation: How did God call Amos?

Interpretation: Why did God call Amos? Were there any qualifications or prerequisites God wanted/needed?

God loving Us: How has God gifted us with people who affirm our calling?

God Meeting Us: In the life of the saints who affirmed/affirm our calls, when and where did you experience their affirmation?

God Refining Us: What are some people or means to help you stay focused on God's calling in your life?

God Inspiring Us to Serve: What ways can you affirm God's call in a community, in a church, or in the world?

Real Life Today: What kind of community would you like to play a role in affirming God's call in the future?

Amos 2 (Impartiality/Fairness)

Observation: Who is/are the audience(s) of Amos's message?

Interpretation: Who do you think God cares about? How does God care for the oppressed and the oppressors?

God loving Us: How has God gifted us with God's impartiality toward us?

God Meeting Us: In the life of the saints who possessed/possess impartiality, when and where did you experience their fairness?

God Refining Us: What are some people or means to help you cultivate fairness in your life?

God Inspiring Us to Serve: What are some ways in which you can practice/demonstrate fairness in a church, a community and the world?

Real Life Today: What kind of community would you like to play a role in practice/demonstrate/cultivate fairness in the future?

Amos 3 (Intimacy)

Observation: How did God's intimacy manifest in this passage?

Interpretation: Why did God's intimacy manifest in such a way?

God loving Us: How has God gifted us with intimacy to know God?

God Meeting Us: In the life of the saints who demonstrated/demonstrate intimacy with God, when and where did you experience their closeness with God?

God Refining Us: What are some people or means to help you stay intimate with God in your life?

God Inspiring Us to Serve: What are some ways in which you can practice/demonstrate intimacy with God?

Real Life Today: What kind of community would you like to play a role in practicing/demonstrating/cultivating intimacy with God in the future?

Amos 4 (Openness)

Observation: How had Amos' message been received by the people of Israel?

Interpretation: Why had Amos' message been perceived by the people of Israel the way it did?

God loving Us: How has God invited us to learn about God before we even knew God?

God Meeting Us: In the life of the saints who embodied/embody openness, when and where did you experience their attitudes/practices?

God Refining Us: What are some people or means to help you cultivate openness in your life?

God Inspiring Us to Serve: What are some ways in which you can practice/demonstrate openness?

Real Life Today: What kind of community would you like to play a role in practicing/demonstrating/cultivating openness in the future?

Amos 5 (Lament as a way toward repentance)

Observation: What feelings or emotions did Amos' message bring out from the people of Israel?

Interpretation: What feelings or emotions did Amos' message bring out from you?

God loving Us: How has God gifted us to lament over the things we let go of for the better?

God Meeting Us: In the life of the saints who demonstrated/demonstrate lamenting as a way toward repentance, when and where did you experience their practices?

God Refining Us: What are some people or means to help you cultivate some ways of lamenting in your life?

God Inspiring Us to Serve: What are some ways in which you can practice/demonstrate lamenting?

Real Life Today: What kind of community would you like to play a role in practicing/demonstrating/cultivating lamenting in the future?

Amos 6 (Self-control)

Observation: What kind of behaviors had Amos pointed out, which God will judge later?

Interpretation: Why would God judge such behaviors?

God loving Us: How has God gifted us with self-control?

God Meeting Us: In the life of the saints who demonstrated/demonstrate self-control, when and where did you experience their practices?

God Refining Us: What are some people or means to help you cultivate self-control in your life?

God Inspiring Us to Serve: What are some ways in which you can practice/demonstrate self-control?

Real Life Today: What kind of community would you like to play a role in practicing/demonstrating/cultivating self-control in the future?

Amos 7 (Dedication)

Observation: How had Amos' message been received by the "insider" in the northern kingdom of Israel and particularly that of Amaziah, the priest?

Interpretation: What would be needed of Amos to prophesy as boldly as he did in front of Amaziah? Why did you think that?

God loving Us: How has God gifted us with people who are dedicated?

God Meeting Us: In the life of the saints who demonstrated/demonstrate dedication to God, when and where did you experience their attitudes/practices?

God Refining Us: What are some people or means to help you stay dedicated to God?

God Inspiring Us to Serve: What are some ways in which you can practice/demonstrate your dedication to God?

Real Life Today: What kind of community would you like to play a role in practicing/demonstrating/cultivating dedication to God in the future?

Amos 8 (Balance)

Observation: How had Amos' prophecy relevant to the audience (people in the northern kingdom) and, at the same time, accurate to the message of God?

Interpretation: How did Amos balance the relevancy of the message with the accuracy of the meaning to the audience? Why was/is this important?

God loving Us: How has God gifted us with ways to have a balance in life?

God Meeting Us: In the life of the saints who demonstrated/demonstrate a balanced life, when and where did you experience their balancing acts?

God Refining Us: What are some people or means to help you stay balanced in your life?

God Inspiring Us to Serve: What are some ways in which you can practice/demonstrate the balance you've cultivated?

Real Life Today: What kind of community would you like to play a role in practicing/demonstrating/cultivating a balanced life in the future?

Amos 9 (A relentless pursuer of justice)

Observation: How God showed up in Amos' message? What was the final message of God through the prophecy of Amos?

Interpretation: Why had God ended the prophecy in such a tone?

God loving Us: How has God gifted us with justice?

God Meeting Us: In the life of the saints who pursued/pursue justice, when and where did you experience their relentless pursuits?

God Refining Us: What are some people or means to help you cultivate the steadfast pursuit of justice?

God Inspiring Us to Serve: What are some ways in which you can practice/demonstrate in pursuing justice in your life?

Real Life Today: What kind of community would you like to play a role of practicing/demonstrating/cultivating in pursuing justice in the future?