

# Amos

by Welcome Detweiler

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*Amos' prophecy emphasizes the importance of returning to God and preparing to meet Him, as God's judgment is coming upon Israel and Judah due to their sin.*

**Duration:** 35:08

**Scripture:** Amos 3:3, Amos 4:11-13, Amos 9:11

**Topics:** "Gods Judgment", "Spiritual Accountability"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the book of Amos in the Bible and its message for the children of Israel. He highlights how Amos discusses Israel's past blessings and reminds them that these blessings were not due to their own intelligence, but because God wanted to bless them. However, despite these blessings, the preacher emphasizes that Israel did not benefit spiritually. Amos also speaks about the present and future judgment that God will bring upon the nation. The sermon concludes with the preacher urging the audience to remember the verse in Amos 4:12, 'prepare to meet thy God,' as a reminder that by nature, they are not prepared for God's judgment.

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## Transcript

You may want to know that our brother Oglesby will be speaking at the coffee hour, and you are interested in this subject matter. This year, it will be your Bible questions answered. You are going to have a part in the program.

Whatever your question may be, you put it in the box, and Mr. Oglesby, Mr. Solomon Oglesby, will answer all of your questions. He sent me a list of some of the questions that will begin the program on the 25th, and they will include these if he gets that far. Does God want all Christians to be free from sickness? Second, does God hear the prayers of sinners? Third, should Christians teach their children the myth of Santa Claus? And fourth, what is the true meaning of worship? That will start our exciting Bible class on Tuesday morning, October 25th, and if you can attend, you will hear the answers to these questions, and then you can put your own questions in, and this should be a very happy time.

Just in case you are interested in knowing where I have been hiding the past few weeks, I just make these few comments. That last Sunday morning I had the privilege of meeting with Christians in Cleveland, Ohio. On the Sunday before, I had the privilege of meeting with some Christians in Waterloo, Iowa.

And between those two Sundays, I had the privilege of sharing the word of God with a number of others of the Lord's servants at a workers' conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota. In dropping into a place that you've never been before and meeting Christians, it's a tremendous experience, because all of the Christians that I met in these places were perfect. And the reason they were perfect is because I didn't know too much about them.

And you can imagine how discouraging it is to come back and to meet with Christians who are only 99% perfect. However, I have this assurance from the Bible that if I stayed around those places, I would find that they too are normal and probably are only 99% perfect. But it was a delightful experience.

Yesterday was the 15th of October, and I learned two years ago on that day the meaning of the word surgery. And the Lord has been pleased to give me two additional years to tell the story of God's love and grace for which I am deeply thankful. Let's look to the Lord in prayer.

Our gracious Father, we thank thee that our times are in thy hand and that we can praise thee for whatever measure of health and strength thou dost allow us to have. We thank thee for thy goodness to us in allowing us the privilege of meeting with thy people. And we ask our Father again that as thy word is opened, it is a living word, it is a convicting word.

And we pray that he, the Holy Spirit, may have the privilege of warming our hearts this morning as we think once again of the things that thou hast revealed in thy precious word. And for those who were not able to come this morning, detained because of illness, or perhaps even because of carelessness, we do ask by blessing upon them, those who are sick physically and those who are sick spiritually, we pray our Father for the restoration that Christ may be glorified and honored. And for those of thy people that are going through deep waters, we pray that thou wilt use this experience in blessing to them so that they may be enriched thereby.

We give thee thanks for the privilege of being together and for the wonderful land in which we are found and for all the privileges that we have of meeting thy people, those who love our blessed Savior and feeling at home in their presence as soon as we meet them. We give thee thanks as we look to thee for blessing. In his name.

Amen. What do you know about Amos? Or should I restate that question? What do you know about the Amos that is mentioned in the Bible? Let's read about him. There is a book hidden in the Minor Prophets in your Old Testament that bears his name.

If you happen to have an old school field Bible, it could be on page 938. And we shall know, not 938, 934. And we shall read a few verses from the first chapter and then from the fourth chapter.

Amos 1 and verse 1. I might ask you to do a little homework. Not only read these nine chapters, but it would be good exercise sometime to memorize the books of the Old Testament backwards. You can always get them forward because you've learned to sing the books, but it would be nice if you could start with Malachi and go right back and end up with Genesis.

That's your homework, at least until next week or the first of November. The words of Amos, who was among the herdsmen of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Isaiah, king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam, son of Joash, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake. And he said, The Lord will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem, and the habitation of the shepherds shall

mourn, and the top of Carmel shall wither.

Chapter 4 and verse 6. And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places. Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. And also I have withholden the rain from you, when there was yet three months to the harvest, and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city.

One place was rained upon, and the place whereupon it rained not withered. So two or three cities wandered into one city to drink water, but they were not satisfied. Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

I have smitten you with blasting and mildew, when your gardens and your vineyards and your fig trees and your olive trees increased, the palmer worms devoured them. Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt.

Your young men have I slain with a sword, and have taken away your horses, and I made the stink of your camp to come up unto your nostrils. Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a firebrand sucked out of the burning.

Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel, and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel. For lo, he that formeth the mountains and createth the winds, and declares unto man what is his thought, that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth, the Lord, the God of hosts, is his name.

And God will bless to us the reading of these few portions of this book. And we are interested in thinking upon one of the less known Bible characters, and this has been our theme for a number of weeks. Amos.

He tells us something about the period in which he was living. At this particular time the nation of Israel was divided. There were ten tribes who went under the banner of Israel, and two tribes under the banner of Judah, each having their king.

Uzziah was king of the two tribes, and Jeroboam was the king of the ten tribes. It was not pleasing to God. It was because of their sin that they were divided, and at certain times were fighting each other.

There should be a lesson perhaps for us to learn, because there is only one thing worse than the record of Israel being divided, and that is when God's people are divided unnecessarily, and are fighting one another, rather than fighting the common enemy that is dragging souls to a lost eternity. This is the period in which Amos is prophesying. His background, he admits that he is a herdsman, and a little later in the seventh chapter we have a few more details.

He was a cultivator of wild pigs, plus a herdsman. Ordinarily you think of this person being called a farmer, and as compared to other professional people around, usually a farmer is considered a person who is not of high social status. Unless you call him a specialist in agriculture, that sounds a bit better.

But he is still considered, so far as men are concerned, as a nobody. God has been pleased to raise up some wonderful men, and as you have read your Bible and studied the men that God has used, he has used men who were highly trained in this world's wisdom, and he has also used men who had no secular training, or very little, and used them because they were willing to obey God completely. And one thing we

shall notice about this man Amos, even though he is considered among the minor prophets, he was an important prophet, otherwise his name would not have been mentioned in the Holy Scriptures.

He was important because he obeyed God. There is a possibility of a person in his background who would excuse himself from stepping out and doing what the Lord told him, because, I'm just a farmer, what could a herdsman do? What could a man who is out there in the open country all the time, what does he know? He can't go out there and proclaim God's message. But God has used a number of them.

In your New Testament, you will find a man very similar to this one, John the Baptist. Did you see what kind of a suit he was wearing? Did you remember the diet that he had while he was preaching? He was considered no one so far as social status was concerned. And he had a message that was not too pleasing to the ears.

He had a message of repentance, a message of judgment, and that's the reason I like to link him with Amos of the Old Testament, because the message that Amos has for his generation was not one that would tickle your ears or make you say, that's good news. In the first chapter, you will find that there are six nations around Israel that are spoken of, and he is taking these six nations and saying that there are... Let's read just the first one, verse 3. Thus saith the Lord, for three transgressions of Damascus, and for four I will not turn away the punishment thereof, and so on. When he uses this expression, and he does with all of the six cities that he speaks of, three transgressions means that the cup is full.

Four transgressions means that God has come to the end of his patience and your wickedness has overflowed and now you are ready for judgment. The nation of Israel probably were listening to Amos and saying, that's right, that's true, all of these nations around us are guilty and it's good for you to tell them, tell them what they've done. But Amos goes beyond that.

After he's finished with the six cities, Gentile cities, he comes down to the nation of Judah and the nation of Israel and he spends a little more time and he says, you too are guilty of the same thing in fact. You are of greater guilt because you have had greater privilege. God in his word always meets out his judgment in accordance with the privileges that those people have had.

And while the people were listening to Amos and saying, good, give it to them, they stopped doing that when finally he got down to the nation of Israel and said you are guilty of the very same thing. In this particular area where Amos is preaching, the result of prosperity, both in Judah and in Israel, and sometimes prosperity is a very dangerous time, a time when people will be turning away from the Lord. You have experienced that yourself.

When everything is going your way, the sun is shining and everything is going well, you do become careless regarding your responsibility to God. And God loves us so much that on certain occasions he sees us go so far and he says, it will be good for this person if I bring some reverses in and that will bring them back to me. In chapter four where we were reading the things that God claims to be responsible for, it almost sounds like 1977, doesn't it? A lack of water, different cities getting water from other cities and then coming into this city.

It rains on certain places and certain places it doesn't rain. Kansas City has a flood and people are killed and we are perishing for water around here. And God claims responsibility for allowing it to rain on this city and not on this city to allow things to wither there and to prosper here.

Why? He does want the ears and the eyes of men to be turned to him and continually acknowledge, I am a poor, helpless creature apart from a wonderful God who has taken care of me from the day of my birth to this day and I must realize I can't get along without him. Our praises to him will overflow when he allows us to come into reverses and then brings us back to himself. But we read something very sad in this fourth chapter for as Amos, by the Spirit of God, relates the different things that were missing the famine, the rain, irregularities, the pest, the death, the earthquake all of these and after each one of them you will read yet has he not returned unto me.

Why not? When God in his infinite wisdom tries to bring us back to himself there is enough of the old Adam nature within us to sometimes just bow our heads and say okay God I don't care what you do to me I don't care just let anything come you want and when we do that we are asking for the next lesson and the next lesson and the next lesson until we return. And sometimes we go beyond that returning point and Paul mentions this in his Corinthian epistle that some had gone so far and had not returned when God used various means and he took them home to heaven. They were fit for heaven because they trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ but they were not fit on earth that is they were no asset to God while they were here and God was justified to take them off the scene to lay their bodies in the grave because they would not return.

Isn't that sad? Yet has he not returned unto me. We are told in our lesson this morning that these things that God claims responsibility for are very similar to the things that that nation experienced in their early existence when they were as slaves under the hand of Pharaoh and God laid plagues upon Pharaoh in order to bring them out and God claimed responsibility for all of those things and God turned those plagues into a blessing because eventually that nation was delivered from slavery because of God's wondrous grace and intervention. But just as Pharaoh and his armies were defeated and lost through those plagues they should look back to that and say when God does this to Pharaoh it's to teach him something and they should have said when God does that to us he does it to teach us something and it would be wonderful if we could read at the end of these and because God allowed this to happen the reigns to be withheld they returned to the Lord and God blessed them once more.

Little wonder that Amos had a tremendous burden for the nation of Israel. When judgment comes and I think through this book when you read the nine chapters you will find that God has the power to avert these because in the sixth chapter he says seek ye the Lord he gives instruction how to avert these terrible things that God has planned to bring upon you but they didn't.

Judgment can be averted judgment can be restrained and we have many illustrations in our Bible where God is prepared to do something and he does it conditionally if you won't listen if you won't return some more if you listen I'll hold back I'll restrain the judgment that I plan to send upon you and then of course the saddest of all is judgment executed this was a message that Amos had for the children of Israel in this book you will find that he goes over Israel's past the blessings that they enjoyed and he wants them to consider this is not because you were smart this is because God wanted to bless you but the blessings didn't help you spiritually and the present is mentioned and all of these things are the things that Amos saw coming upon this nation for the present and he goes beyond

and he says the future as well God is not going to put up with you he always eventually sees that you reap what you sow but I guess the climax of this message is in chapter 4 and verse 12 and by the way I guess it would be interesting and maybe it would be good homework to memorize one verse in every book of the Bible could you memorize 66 verses so that when you turn to Genesis what verses do I remember that I

can repeat and where is it located Exodus, Numbers, Deuteronomy and then of course when you come to Amos well you can make your own selection there are some wonderful ones 3 and 3 is good can two walk together except they be agreed that's short if you have a short memory or in verse 12 that we read today you don't have to remember all of it but at least the last part therefore thus

will I do unto thee O Israel and because I will do this unto thee prepare to meet thy God surely you can remember five words 412 prepare to meet thy God Amos if you were living today I'd let you on the platform because the people of this generation need to hear your sermon your five word sermon prepare to meet thy God of course there are a number of inferences in this statement first of all it means that by nature you are not prepared he wouldn't tell anyone to prepare if they were prepared and this is a part of the gospel message that I have to tell men and women you were born in Adam's family you received physical life you've had a great time enjoying the material blessings of the Lord but you are not prepared for eternity you are a sinner by nature you are a sinner by black practice

and God will not tolerate sin in his city therefore you will never see within the pearly gates you will never be in his presence unless you prepare to meet your God there is enough rebellion in the human heart that will say and I've heard some just a few people say this if God will mind his business I'll mind mine and I'll be quite happy if we don't bother each other that sounds like a pretty tough man doesn't it but the rebellion that's in the heart of man is I don't want to meet God at our conference there were some discussion periods and among them the question was raised about Christians being cremated whether it was whether there was anything in the bible regarding it and one of the men from Colorado suggested he said generally speaking we associate cremation with a person who wants

this done so that he can outwit God so that God will never find him he said in most cases this is what is behind it of course the thoughts were brought out that in our day it's a little cheaper to dispose the body that way than to have a regular funeral that was debated because in some areas it may not be but so far as general opinion is concerned the idea behind cremation is I'll go so far to make a request and this way God won't get me I won't have to be him if there's one thing that you must face everyone in this building there is coming a day when you will have to meet God you will have to God will not ask you would you like to you will have to, this is one of the musts and you better put it down in your book and it would be good for you in case you are not saved to remember this

every day there is coming a day when I will not be on earth I will stand in the presence of God there are two ways by which to meet God meet him in your sins and be passed out eternally and if you want to know how solemn that will be I suppose the most solemn portion of our Bible is the Revelation chapter 20 where we are told about a great white throne being set up where all guilty sinners will be brought before God and the books will be opened the whole life story will be exposed and you will be there to face all of your sins once again it's just going to be a Sunday school picnic when you stand in the presence of God in your sins little wonder that a prophet said it's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of a living God and what he meant to fall into the hands of the living God

unprepared you may ask what do I have to do to prepare well here's where the devil has been working overtime and he has been telling people if you live a decent life if you are a good moral person if you are a religious person you've got nothing to worry about you are prepared false preparation false security all the thousands yea the millions that are resting in this last Sunday noon we had the pleasure of being in a rich bachelors home and there were probably a dozen young people college people who came in here who were invited for the meal as well I asked a number of them when they were saved and most of these were

saved just recently within a year or so and I asked one from Minneapolis who was there she said the reason I wasn't saved I had no idea how to be saved the church that I

attended left me under the impression that I was saved I was pretty good reasonably good I never realized that I was a sinner and all these things were new to me and just within this last year fellow students have told me that I need to be born again that I'm a sinner and I didn't understand that saved just recently because she was resting formally on a false preparation and just in case there's someone in this audience this morning and you feel quite secure it might be well before you settle down to ask does my bible endorse what I am resting upon for my salvation and if it does you are secure and if it does not however good you may feel and however many people have told you that you are a wonderful person and therefore a Christian don't you believe it prepare to meet thy God meaning

that you have to admit that you are a lost guilty hell deserving sinner and you can only be saved not by yourself but by Jesus Christ who came into the world who loved you and died for you on Calvary's cross have you ever heard that before that the only way I can be saved is through what Jesus Christ did for me on Calvary's cross have you and maybe you're thinking oh I've heard that dozen of times then these words fit you yet have you not returned them to me saith the Lord isn't that sad you have heard it before you've never done anything about it and that's inexcusable your cup is full your cup may be at the point of running over and God's patience with you may be exhausted it may even be that you can look back in your life and say there have been some unpleasant things that have come my

way across my pathway and I just presume coincidence it happens to everybody you can't win them all I didn't realize maybe God is speaking to me through circumstances it may be your job it may be your health it may be bereavement it may be a number of things and God in His infinite wisdom and grace loves you enough to continue but if you keep on turning down God's salvation I must remind you His patience will cease one day and then there will be no more opportunity of receiving the Savior the lessons for the unsaved man to learn from the book of Amos is His golden text prepare to meet thy God and I ask every one of you can you say thank God I am prepared I trusted Jesus Christ as my Savior and my Bible tells me that I am ready to go when the roll is called up yonder I'll be there on the

authority of God's word but just in case you can't say that I'm not sure I don't want you to put it off any longer I want these words to burn in your heart day after day prepare to meet thy God listen to Amos as he brings the message that is most appropriate for our day in our city prepare to meet thy God this would be a good day to do it I see no reason why you should continue unprepared one day longer the Savior is ready to receive you He has done everything that He will do He provided salvation full and free you can't get it any cheaper than that all He asks you to accept Him and surely you could do that in case you don't want to be prepared of course you have to have a reason I wonder what reason you would give for remaining unprepared when you could be much happier and be sure that

you're on the way to heaven and for those of us who are saved the lesson from Amos is that when God calls us to obey to follow immediately He says I am not a prophet nor the son of a prophet so far as public opinion is concerned but the Lord spoke to me and when I heard His voice I obeyed and Christians sometimes lack happiness because there are certain areas in their life where they have not obeyed 100% little areas that the Lord has been kept out and because of that there is only a measure of happiness when there could be fullness of joy do you know Amos? of the Old Testament? a few things about him at least remember his golden text and read the nine chapters and get all the details of the wonderful story of a man that is considered less known than some of the rest of the Bible

characters but who had a wonderful and appropriate message I would like to have the opportunity of sitting down beside anyone who may be in this audience who has never yet trusted Jesus Christ their Savior I would love to speak to you show you from the word of God how that could be settled today and for eternity let us pray our Father thy word is so wonderful thou art so concerned about sinners that thou hast warned them on every account we thank thee for this warning that Amos sounded many years ago we thank thee down through the centuries since the gospel message has had the alarm prepare to meet thy God speak to any heart who may be unprepared we thank thee that the Savior made it possible for us to be prepared through his death on Calvary bless everyone bless every Christian we ask in

his worthy name Amen

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