

## ***The Minor Prophets - Part 1 (Amos)***

**8-1-18**

1. Amos was the first of four eighth-century BC writing prophets in Israel. The other three were Hosea, Isaiah, and Micah.
2. Amos and Hosea prophesied in Israel, while Isaiah and Micah ministered in Judah.
3. Amos chapter 1 verse 1 - contains a clue for the date of Amos's ministry. Uzziah was king in Judah, and Jeroboam, the son of Joash, was king in Israel.
4. But - we also have another piece of information to help date the time of his ministry - the reference to "two years before the earthquake."
5. It was apparently a memorable event, one with which the people would have been very familiar. This event is also recorded in Zechariah 14:5.
6. We have archaeological evidence of an earthquake at Hazor dated between 765 and 760 BC.
7. The period was characterized by moral and spiritual decline and by social upheaval.
8. The rich oppressed the poor, indulged in extravagant lifestyles, denied justice to the oppressed, and engaged in immoral sexual activities. (Amos 2:6-8; 4:1; 5:11-13)
9. Such were the times of Amos's arrival in Israel with a strong message of judgment from God.
10. All we know about Amos is what is in verse 1.
11. Amos came from Tekoa in Judah - a village ten or eleven miles south of Jerusalem and about eighteen miles west of the Dead Sea. (2 Chronicles 11:5-6)
12. We also find his occupation in verse 1. He was a shepherd of Tekoa. (Amos 7:15)
13. His strong sense of the Lord's call to prophesy was the driving motivation of his ministry. Such a sense of call has continued to be the authority and motivation for service to the Lord.
14. The message of Amos concerning the imminent destruction of Israel was based on Israel's sin - Israel would not survive the judgment of God.
15. The Northern Kingdom of Israel did not survive the assault of the Assyrians in 725-722 BC. (2 Kings 17)
16. Amos had the credentials of a true prophet; he had the "word of the Lord" for Israel.
17. The proper credentials have always been more than formal training, formal ordination, and an official title. Just these alone do not qualify one to speak for God.
18. Amos addresses Israel as the covenant people - not as the breakaway Northern Kingdom.

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19. Amos' theme in verse 2 is that Israel and the other nations were about to be violently judged for their sins.
20. He pictured the Lord as a lion who had roared and begun His attack.
21. Northward, the fertile south and west slopes of Mount Carmel—some of Israel's choicest farmland would wither and die as the heat wave of God's wrath moved on to engulf Damascus.
22. Everywhere the sound passed, moisture would evaporate, the land would turn brown, and drought would crack the earth.
23. Those who heard Amos' words would understand that the sovereign Lord of the universe was about to judge them for their covenant violations.
24. The Northern tribes of Israel in particular would understand as they heard that the Lord's roar was originating from Zion (Jerusalem) - that central holy abode from which they had revolted.
25. The eight judgment messages begin in verse 3.
26. "Damascus" was the capital of Aram, located to the northeast of Israel. The Arameans were Israel's most frequent and most powerful enemy.
27. Eight times Amos used the phrase "for three transgressions and for four." This is a Jewish idiom that means "an indefinite number that has finally come to the end."
28. Gilead, was the Transjordan Israelite region south of Damascus. It was an attractive territory for Aramean expansion.
29. There is a switch from third person in the introduction to first person in the message. With the introductory third-person phrase, Amos pointed to the source and authority for his message.
30. Then he delivers the message in the first-person divine speech in order to confront his audience directly and to call for their response.
31. The significance of this is that any messenger who would speak for God - their authority is in God, the sender, not in the one delivering the message.
32. Messengers must be faithful to deliver God's message clearly regardless of how it is received. The concern must be to be true to God rather than to be popular with the people. (Amos 7:10-17)