



Amos

ASK THIS:

What is your reaction to the phrase “With opportunity comes responsibility”?

READ ALOUD: SERMON RECAP

One of the most dangerous times in life is when things are going well for someone. Why? Pride and indifference creep in. God opposes the prideful, especially those who take advantage of the poor. Amos points to the personal sin that is against other people, particularly the weak. He is the prophet of abused privilege.

PRAY TOGETHER:

Take a few moments and ask God to help you discern, understand and apply the spiritual truth(s) of this week's lesson.

READ TOGETHER:

Amos 2:7 (HCSB)

“They trample the heads of the poor on the dust of the ground and block the path of the needy.”

Amos 4:1 (HCSB)

“Listen to this message, you cows of Bashan who are on the hill of Samaria, women who oppress the poor and crush the needy, who say to their husbands, Bring us something to drink,”

READ ALOUD

Some information About Amos

1. Amos' name means “Burden Bearer” or “He who carries the load”. Amos was a shepherd and a fruit picker from the Judean village of Tekoa, but he considered himself just a “layman” with a message. Even though he lacked an education or a priestly background, Amos' job was to proclaim the message that God was disgusted with His people, His patience had worn out, punishment was inevitable and the nation would be destroyed unless the people changed their hearts.

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2. At the time of Amos' prophesy, the Jewish nation was split. Both Judah and Israel enjoyed a time of great prosperity, military success and expansion. However, at the same time, decades of struggle with Damascus had left the population exhausted. Many farmers were reduced to poverty. Their more affluent neighbors, and especially the aristocracy, swooped in with loans the poor could not repay, forcing the debtors into slavery and seizing their lands.
 3. The dominant theme throughout the book of Amos is that God is impartial and judges with perfection. He despises human pride and calls for social justice.

READ THIS:

Recall Main Points from the message:

1. Amos identifies that affluence and power often lead to indifference (lack of concern). Indifference can come in two forms: Passive/Inactive attitude and Active/Aggressive.
 - A. Passive/Inactive = seeing something that needs to be done and doing nothing.
 - B. Aggressive/Active = Doing something that you know you shouldn't do.
2. The purpose of Amos' prophesy was to warn that God would not be indifferent to His people's indifference and that He would bring judgment on them -- as listed in chapters 7-9 -- in the form of locusts, fire, plumb line, earthquake and the sword.
3. In Amos 9:11-15, God gives Amos the message that after His Judgment, He will restore the people in hopes that by having His compassion extended, they will also learn to extend compassion.

Discuss:

1. Why do success and prosperity often bring out the worst in nations and individuals?
2. Read Amos 2:6-8. What sin(s) does God judge Israel for?
3. If Amos were writing to America today, what sins do you think God would judge us for?
4. What is an illustration of passive and aggressive indifference displayed in our society? (See #1 in Recognize section.)
5. Is there any indifference evident in your life?
6. Jesus said in Luke 12:48, "Much will be required of everyone who has been given much. And even more will be expected of the one who has been entrusted with more."
 - A. Discuss how the words of Jesus in Luke parallel with the message of Amos.
 - B. What are some tangible ways we can be responsible with resources entrusted to us?
7. Is God indifferent to us when we refuse to have compassion toward those in need?
8. Read Amos 5:21-24. How does God view our religious activities and our worship when we remain indifferent?
9. In the book of Amos and throughout the Old Testament, God used judgment and punishment to reveal sin and indifference in the lives of His people. Read Amos 2:1-2. Since the coming of Jesus, Christians are now under the New Covenant. We are no longer judged but are justified through our faith in Christ. Read Romans 5:16 and Romans 8:1. What does God use under the New Covenant to reveal our sin and indifference? READ: Hebrews 12:6, John 16:7-8

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10. Amos 8:11-12 says that as a consequence of His judgment, God will “send a famine through the land: not a famine of bread or a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. People will stagger from sea to sea and roam from north to east, seeking the word of the Lord, but they will not find it.” The HCSB study notes say this “The famine for hearing the words of the Lord suggests the time of Israel’s exile and Diaspora, when Jewish people would wander through the nations, alienated from their God and Messiah.” Does God ever withdraw His word or His presence from us? READ: Hebrews 13:5, Ephesians 1:13-14
 11. Directly after the announcement of judgment on Israel in Chapter 9, Amos proclaims in verses 11 -15 that a day is coming when God will “restore the fallen booth of David.” The HCSB study notes says that the booth of David “refers to the dynasty and empire of David (normally called the “house” of David but here a “booth,” symbolic of the pathetic condition of this once-mighty line of kings).”

READ: Acts 15:16-18 and discover how James interprets Amos’ announcement. Who else will be eligible for restoration and salvation along with the Israelites?