

# THE MINOR PROPHETS

## Amos – Does God Care About Injustice?

January 19, 2025

### Background

The words of Amos, who was among the shepherds of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake. Amos 1:1 (ESV)

#### A. Who was Amos?

Then Amos answered and said to Amaziah, "I was no prophet, nor a prophet's son, but I was a herdsman and a dresser of sycamore figs. Amos 7:14 (ESV)

#### B. Where did God send Amos?

...which he saw concerning Israel... Amos 1:1b

#### C. When did Amos write?

...in the days of Uzziah king of Judah and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake. Amos 1:1c (ESV)

#### D. What was life like in Israel when Amos wrote?

### 1. God will judge the nations.

He said: "The LORD roars from Zion and thunders from Jerusalem; the pastures of the shepherds dry up, and the top of Carmel withers." Amos 1:2 (NIV)

Thus says the LORD: "**For three transgressions of Damascus**, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment, because they have threshed Gilead with threshing sledges of iron." Amos 1:3 (ESV)

For there was not left to Jehoahaz an army of more than fifty horsemen and ten chariots and ten thousand footmen, **for the king of Syria had destroyed them and made them like the dust at threshing.** 2 Kings 13:7 (ESV)

Thus says the Lord: "**For three transgressions of Gaza**, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment, because they carried into exile a whole people to deliver them up to Edom." Amos 1:6 (ESV)

Thus says the Lord: "**For three transgressions of the Ammonites**, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment, because they have ripped open pregnant women in Gilead, that they might enlarge their border." Amos 1:13 (ESV)

1. God promised to destroy the pagan nations, not for their false worship, but for how they treated people.
2. God does not have a different standard for other people compared to his people.

*Thus says the LORD: "**For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment, because they have rejected the law of the LORD, and have not kept his statutes, but their lies have led them astray, those after which their fathers walked.**" Amos 2:4 (ESV)*

## 2. God will judge Israel.

*Thus says the Lord: "**For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment, because they sell the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of sandals— those who trample the head of the poor into the dust of the earth and turn aside the way of the afflicted; a man and his father go in to the same girl, so that my holy name is profaned...**" Amos 2:6–7 (ESV)*

*"Now then, I will crush you as a cart crushes when loaded with grain."  
Amos 2:13 (NIV)*

### A. They oppressed the poor.

*"Hear this word, you cows of Bashan, who are on the mountain of Samaria, who oppress the poor, who crush the needy, who say to your husbands, 'Bring, that we may drink!' The Lord GOD has sworn by his holiness that, behold, the days are coming upon you, when they shall take you away with hooks, even the last of you with fishhooks." Amos 4:1–2 (ESV)*

*... "Woe to those who lie on beds of ivory and stretch themselves out on their couches, and eat lambs from the flock and calves from the midst of the stall, who sing idle songs to the sound of the harp and like David invent for themselves instruments of music, who drink wine in bowls and anoint themselves with the finest oils, but are not grieved over the ruin of Joseph! Therefore they shall now be the first of those who go into exile,..." Amos 6:3–7 (ESV)*

*The Lord GOD has sworn by himself, declares the LORD, the God of hosts: "I abhor the pride of Jacob and hate his strongholds,..." Amos 6:8 (ESV)*

### B. They were engaged in dishonesty and government corruption.

*They hate him who reproves in the gate, and they abhor him who speaks the truth... you who afflict the righteous, who take a bribe, and turn aside the needy in the gate... Amos 5:10–13 (ESV)*

*Hate evil, and love good, and establish justice in the gate; it may be that the Lord, the God of hosts, will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph. Amos 5:15 (ESV)*

### C. They were playing games with God.

*"Come to Bethel, and transgress; to Gilgal, and multiply transgression; bring your sacrifices every morning, your tithes every three days; offer a sacrifice of*

thanksgiving of that which is leavened, and proclaim freewill offerings, publish them; for so you love to do, O people of Israel!" declares the Lord GOD.

Amos 4:4–5 (ESV)

"I hate, I despise your feasts, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them; and the peace offerings of your fattened animals, I will not look upon them."

Amos 5:21–23 (ESV)

### **How can we play games with God?**

1. We skip financial worship.
2. We hold a grudge and refuse to forgive.
3. We neglect church attendance.
4. We don't pursue sexual purity.

### **D. God called them to repentance through trials.**

"I gave you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and lack of bread in all your places, yet you did not return to me," declares the LORD. "I also withheld the rain from you when there were yet three months to the harvest; I would send rain on one city, and send no rain on another city; one field would have rain, and the field on which it did not rain would wither;...I killed your young men with the sword, and carried away your horses, and I made the stench of your camp go up into your nostrils; yet you did not return to me," declares the LORD. "I overthrew some of you, as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and you were as a brand plucked out of the burning; yet you did not return to me," declares the LORD.

Amos 4:6–11 (ESV)

## **3. What is the character of God's judgment?**

### **A. A Vision Of Locusts And Fire — God is merciful and often doesn't give us what we deserve.**

This is what the Lord God showed me: behold, he was forming locusts... When they had finished eating the grass of the land, I said, "O Lord God, please forgive! How can Jacob stand? He is so small!" The Lord relented concerning this: "It shall not be," said the Lord. Amos 7:1–3 (ESV)

### **B. A Vision Of A Plumb Line — God's judgment is just.**

...Then the Lord said, "Look, I am setting a plumb line among my people Israel; I will spare them no longer." Amos 7:7–9 (NIV)

### **C. A Vision Of A Basket Of Summer Fruit — God's judgment is ripe.**

..."A basket of summer fruit." Then the Lord said to me, "The end has come upon my people Israel; I will never again pass by them..." Amos 8:1–3 (ESV)

## D. A Vision of Famine — God will withdraw His Word.

*“Behold, the days are coming,” declares the Lord GOD, “when I will send a famine on the land— not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD....” Amos 8:11–12 (ESV)*

## 4. Where can we find mercy in God’s judgment?

*“In that day I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen and repair its breaches, and raise up its ruins and rebuild it as in the days of old, that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations who are called by my name,” declares the LORD who does this. Amos 9:11-12 (ESV)*

*And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written, “ ‘After this I will return, and I will rebuild the tent of David that has fallen; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will restore it, that the remnant of mankind may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who are called by my name, says the Lord, who makes these things...’ ” Acts 15:15–17 (ESV)*

## 5. Conclusion

1. God cares about oppression and injustice, especially when the rich use their wealth to take advantage of the poor.
2. Playing games with God is dangerous. God is angry when our Sunday doesn’t change our Monday.
3. God is patient and merciful, but He is still angry against sin. Opportunities for repentance will come to an end.
4. God never gives up on his people. He restores us and saves us through Jesus.

### Life Group Questions

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1. Share an experience where you, or someone you love, was unfairly treated by someone in a powerful position. How did that kind of injustice make you feel?
2. **Read Amos 1:2-15.** What kind of sins did God identify as particularly offensive to him in the nations around Israel? What can we learn from this?
3. **Read Amos 2:6-7, 6:3-7.** What kinds of sins did God point out in the nation of Israel that were especially offensive to Him? What does this teach us about how Christians in positions of power should conduct themselves?
4. **Read Amos 5:10-15.** What does God feel about government corruption and those in positions of power unfairly tipping the scales of justice in their favor?
5. **Read Amos 4:4-5, 5:21-23.** How does God feel about our worship when there is a disconnect between our Sunday words and Monday life?
6. Pastor Kurt, under point 2. C., in the outline, gave four ways we play games with God. Do you agree with his examples? Is God calling you to repent because you are playing games with God in one of these areas?