

# Amos 1:1

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[ 0 : 00 ] And let's get out our Bibles. And this would be a good sword drill moment right now. I want you to find the book of Amos. Book of Amos in your Old Testament.

One of the minor prophets. And while you're finding it, and it'll take a little time, what I want to do in the next, I don't know how many weeks of Wednesdays, is to do a study through the book of Amos. And I'd say for the most part, nobody studies Amos. Nobody hardly studies the minor prophets ever. And that's just, it is what it is. I don't even know if anybody knows much of anything, even in this room, about the book of Amos, except for a few kind of popularized lines.

And that's neither here nor there. It's just kind of what it is for some of these books of the Bible. And so what I want to do, Lord willing, is to attempt to diversify your Bible study a little bit.

And what we study in this book is not going to be discipleship material. It's not going to be Pauline doctrine for the church, but it is going to be Bible. It is preserved.

[ 1 : 24 ] It is inerrant. It is inspired by God. And there's truth to be discerned from the words of Amos' book. It is, you're going to get revelation that God gave to this preacher and to his people.

And in this revelation, you'll learn the mind of God. Among other things, God's actions and God's judgment and his desire and plans for not only his people, but for others.

We'll study the book. And more than just learning facts about the nation of Israel back in that day, we want to learn of God and learn of his ways and of his thoughts and of his doings.

And furthermore, I believe as well as I know you do, that the word of God is quick and powerful. And that even in studying the minor prophet like Amos, it's capable of speaking to you and it's capable of challenging you.

And it's my intentions to study through this book with you so that we can learn not only the words of this book, but what God might have for us today out of this book. So I'm going to take the time today to really introduce things in this book, just really in the very first verse and a little bit jumping around.

[ 2 : 40 ] And then we'll get into the content of it going forward in the next several weeks. But before we do anything, let's pray together about this study. Lord, as we gather here today, and I'm thankful for each one that's here tonight and thankful for the King James Bible that we have in our laps and able to read it and study it and see each word.

We trust that each word is pure and that they're your words. And it's my request tonight that you would, even in this very beginning, that you'd bless this study of this book and that you would speak to hearts through it, that you would minister your words to us from this holy book that's been preserved for hundreds and hundreds of years.

And God, it's our desire just to learn of you. And so I pray that you'll minister to us and show up and just teach us some things, reveal some things about yourself and speak to hearts and even answer questions and needs in the room through your words.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. So the book is divided into nine chapters. And the way that it's positioned in your Old Testament, you can see that just before this you have the book of Joel, or as some of the Bibles show, it's Joel.

And then to the right of it, you'll see this minor, really minor prophet, Obadiah. And it's interesting that Obadiah and even the next book, Jonah, these guys both precede Amos.

[ 4 : 07 ] They've years before Amos. So what you learn right away is this is not laid out in any kind of chronological manner. As a matter of fact, if we started moving back to the left earlier in your Bible, before Joel, you see Hosea.

Hosea would be a contemporary of Amos. They're prophesying in the same area, give or take, and they're prophesying at the same time, although I think Hosea outlasts Amos in the prophecies and visions that he records.

But even if you went further back, then you end up in Daniel, and Daniel's way later than all of these guys. As far as timing goes, Daniel's in the captivity. These guys precede the captivity by a good bit. And so if you want to just kind of get a little glimpse of where this is positioned in your Bible, this is when certain kings are reigning, and then they're sent into captivity.

And Daniel takes place in the captivity, as does some of Jeremiah, some of Ezekiel. And then as you get past that, you've got, let's see, Ezra comes back into the land, and then you've got Zechariah prophesying.

[ 5 : 16 ] You've got Haggai prophesying during that time. And then after that, you have, let's see what's next. Then Nehemiah's time comes into there, which would be followed by the last book of your Old Testament, Malachi.

And so the timing of this, the book of Amos, it's just sandwiched in there with some other things, and it's fine where it is, but it definitely is not chronological going through your Bible, which that's the way that is.

So Amos, you've heard the, you know of famous Amos, right? You know the cookie maker? I think he's, is he out here, L.A.-based, I think? Yeah. Linda's shaking her head.

She knows. The famous Amos, and I want to just do a little section here, why you know Amos. I said earlier, most of you don't know Amos, but the truth is you do know some things about Amos. You just may not know that what you, what these certain words or verses are, are from this book. And I'll show you what I mean. There's a couple of them here that I think you've heard or are familiar with. Look at chapter 3 and verse number 3.

[ 6 : 18 ] And tell me if you haven't heard that one before. Can two walk together except they be agreed? Now, if I asked you where's that found before you came in the door today, maybe you'd get it.

Most likely most of us would not know that's Amos. And so you do know a little bit about Amos. Look at chapter 4 and the end of verse number 12. Here's another one that is put on scripture signs and posted out there for people to see.

4.12, the very end of it says, Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel. That's Amos. That famous line came from Amos. There's another one in chapter 8.

Flip over to chapter 8. I bet you've heard of this one or seen this one or had it posted elsewhere.

Kind of just the signs of the times. One of those kind of verses. 8.11, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land.

Not a famine of bread, nor of thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. And there's another pretty famous verse. And one more, kind of futuristic toward the end times.

[ 7 : 20 ] 9.13, this description of the kingdom and how blessed everything's going to be and how the land is going to be restored. And come back to the, before the curse, perhaps.

9.13 says, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper. And the treader of grapes, him that soweth seed. And the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and et cetera.

And so there's just another kind of a semi-famous line from this book that maybe you've been familiar with or heard of. And whether you knew it was him or not, that's who it is. So back at the very beginning, who is Amos?

Who is this guy anyway? In verse number one, it says, The words of Amos, who was among the herdmen of Tekoa. Tekoa gives us a location, which is approximately 12 miles to the south of the capital city, Jerusalem, in Judah, in the kingdom of Judah.

You may remember during the reign of King David that there was some mischief going on with some of his kids, Amnon. And he had a sister that he fell for, Tamar.

[ 8 : 26 ] And Amnon had a friend, or rather, let's get into the situation where Absalom murders his half-brother Amnon for what he did to his sister.

Absalom's sister. And Absalom kills him, and then he flees away, and he won't show his face, and he has no, he can't come into the land. He's afraid of his father David, the king.

And so Joab, David's captain, he sent to Tekoa, and fetched thence a wise woman. And he said, Feign thyself to be a mourner.

And he gave her the script, and he sent her in unto the king. And fast forward through all of that, David says, Hold on a minute. Tell me something. Isn't Joab's hand in this?

And she said, You got it. You see right through it. You're right. And the only point I'm making at is she was a wise woman. Joab said he sent to Tekoa, specifically to that town, to find a particular woman.

[ 9 : 24 ] And who knows how or why, but that's the town. It shows up a few other times in your Bible. But there's one that you're probably more familiar with than others. Amos is either from Tekoa, the town, or he's at least he's employed there.

And then God takes him and sends him out of Judah up to the northern tribes of Israel and has a minister for him up there. And verse number one says, The words of Amos, who was among the herdmen of Tekoa.

So he's among the herdmen, making him just an absolute common man and a common laborer in his day. And look at his own testimony.

Look at chapter number seven. And so flip over there and we're going to come back to it back here a few times. Look at chapter number seven and verse number 14.

Then answered Amos and said to Amaziah, I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son, but I was an herdman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit.

[ 10 : 31 ] And the Lord took me as I followed the flock. And so Amos, as a man, is a common laborer. He is a herdman. He calls himself a gatherer of sycamore fruit.

Sycamore trees are extremely common in the land of Israel. Many times certain kings said that they're going to attempt to make cedar trees as like two sycamore trees for abundance, implying that they're just everywhere.

And they were. And the fruit of the sycamore tree that he was, what did he call himself, a gatherer of sycamore fruit. The fruit of a sycamore tree is a type of a fig.

It is not the common fig tree that you'd be more familiar with, but it's what they call a poor man's fruit. It's so abundant and it just wasn't to the top shelf, so to speak.

And so what can you discern from that? It was not a delicacy. It indicates to me that Amos does not come from money. He does not come from power. He's just a common, ordinary, minimum wage kind of laborer.

[ 11 : 35 ] That's who he is. He's following a flock. He's picking fruit when it's in season. In plainer words, he's just a nobody. And that's not a shot at the man.

It's just who he is. Now, to give you a little illustration of this, something you may remember from reading in your Bible, and there's a hundred of them maybe, but just this one for the time.

In 1 Samuel 25, do you remember when King David, or he's not king at this time, but he's on the run from Saul and he's got his men with him. And he ends up in this area around Carmel, and there's sheep shearers that are there.

And he ends up with his men kind of protecting him and overseeing him and making sure that nobody messes these guys. And they were workers, and the sheep were the property of a man named Nabal.

And so David sends to Nabal, and he says, Hey, you know, I'm taking care of you, so why don't you hook up my men and send some stuff out here for us while we're out here doing good work for you. And, you know, Nabal flips out on him and, you know, on and on.

[ 12 : 36 ] But the point I'm getting to with Amos is that he's just like one of those guys. He is not Nabal. He is not the owner of the animals.

He's not the owner of anything. He's not even the steward of all of the operation. He's just one of the sheep shearers. He's just a hired hand out in the field doing the labor.

That's all this guy is. He's a nobody. And yet God calls nobodies. And so now back in chapter 7, flip back there or stay there for a second.

Look at 7 again. And verse number 15. He says, The Lord took me as I followed the flock.

He was not a prophet. Verse number 14. He was not a prophet's son. He wasn't raised in a preacher's home. But the Lord took him. That's the wording.

[ 13 : 38 ] The Lord took me as I followed the flock. And the Lord said unto me, go. Prophecy unto my people Israel. This man is doing his job in Judah.

He's surely content to live there and to work there. And God says, hey, go. Hit the road. You're going to preach for me. And there's more to this.

But for now, just notice that God sends this man to the northern kingdom. He had a specific call while he was doing his everyday job. He was just working, making ends meet, getting up in the

morning and going back to work.

If the season is to be picking the fruit, then that's the job he had today. If that wasn't it, it was following the flock and taking care of the sheep. He wasn't fasting for God to move and to do something and to call him into the ministry.

He wasn't proving to God that he is worthy and saying, oh, Lord, you know I can handle more responsibility. Why don't you give me something to do? He's just working the job. I don't think he's seeking a call.

[ 14 : 44 ] And that's when it came. And it shows us that this calling on this man's life was holy and completely of the Lord. God called him and God commissioned the man and said, go and prophesy to Israel.

Now, this is something that's very relatable to note here because things have not changed with God's calling today. According to 1 Corinthians 1, we've been there enough recently.

You don't need to go back there. But he tells us that not many wise, not many noble, not many mighty. He's not. God chose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise.

He says he chooses the base things. He chooses the things that are not. That's the stuff God did, the things that are despised. And he still operates in that manner.

He still calls nobodies, just like Amos, to do his service. Common people that live simple lives, that aren't looking for a position, that don't have aspirations of, I want to be the holy man of God.

[ 15 : 47 ] And the Bible says he, the Lord took him. God took him. And he puts his word in him. And he says, Amos, go. It's like if we could just walk onto some random farm somewhere and see some random worker and look upon him, you might be looking at God's next preacher.

You might look around the church and just some, just every common day people that just go to work and come and want to serve the Lord and want to do right. And you don't know who you're looking at. You might be looking at somebody God's going to call.

You get a chance to work with some kids or you get a chance to minister. You get a chance to witness to somebody. You don't know who you're talking to. But if the Lord moves in your heart to deal with them and to speak to them and to bring them in, you better be faithful to do it.

Because that might be the next Amos. Just an everyday common person. Learn this, learn not to look past people. Learn not to despise those that you think aren't as smart as you or aren't as capable or they're rough around the edges.

You know, they're a little bit worldly. And you better learn not to look down on them because the Lord looks at them, you don't know what the potential is. And if you could look back in your own heart and life, and maybe not a year ago, maybe not five, maybe 20, maybe 50, who knows where you were.

[ 17 : 06 ] But wherever you were before God got a hold of your heart. Boy, I bet you some people, I can testify to this. I grew up as a church brat. But if you would have talked to the people that knew me as a young man or a teenager, they would have said, he's a punk.

Look, he's going to get out of here and you're never going to see him again. Because that's the attitude. But you don't know. And the point here is God will call somebody that's base and somebody that's despised.

And so learn to see things the way God sees them because he took an Amos that's just out there with the herd. Out there picking the fruit off the tree. And he says, go, Amos.

So let's look now at his visions. Amos' visions. It said in verse 1 of chapter 1, the words of Amos, who was among the herdmen of Tekoa, which he saw.

God revealed some visions to Amos. Take a look back at chapter 7 again. I want you to stick around there. The words of Amos, who was among the herdmen of Tekoa, which he saw, concerning Israel.

[ 18 : 15 ] So Amos saw some things. Chapter 7 and verse 12. This is the priest of Bethel, Amaziah. And he says to Amos, also Amaziah said unto Amos, O thou seer, go.

He calls him a seer. Because he could see visions of God. That's a former name for a prophet is a seer. And you see that from back with Saul and Samuel back in 1 Samuel 9 or somewhere back there.

8 or 9, I forget. And so the word seer shows us that Amos could see things. God showed him things. For instance, look at chapter 7 and verse 1. Chapter 7, verse 1.

Thus hath the Lord God showed unto me. And behold, he formed grasshoppers in the beginning of the shooting up. He showed him something.

He saw something. Chapter 8 and verse 1. Thus hath the Lord God showed unto me. And behold, a basket of summer fruit. And he said, Amos, what seest thou?

[ 19 : 20 ] And so he's giving him a vision of something and then a message. Look at chapter 9, verse 1. I, oh, this one gets way higher really quick. I saw the Lord standing upon the altar.

And he said, smite the lintel of the door and on. A vision of God, Amos God. Very, very few get such a glimpse of something like that.

And so Amos has some visions. Back in chapter 1 and verse 1, we read this. The words of Amos, who was among the hermit of Tekoa, which he saw.

If we could take out that phrase referring to the man, it says, The words of Amos, which he saw concerning Israel. The words which he saw.

Now, he didn't see words flashing through the screen or in front of his eyes. But what he saw in a vision was delivered and was recorded in the form of words.

[ 20 : 21 ] And we have the very words. And so when we have the words, we don't need the vision. We have the words. We don't need to see it.

We don't need the spectacular events when you have the words. This is an important Bible doctrine that every one of us should be very settled upon, is we don't need anything but the words that God has given to us.

The Bible is a collection of words. They're God's words. And they're not, by the way, they're not just some stories that have been passed down and handed down from generation from one to the other. I'll give you an example. I ran into a girl at a coffee shop not too long ago. And she had a Bible. And she was marking it up. And she had a notebook. And she had her headphones on. And she was reading and studying her Bible.

And like, how rare is that to see somebody in public with the scriptures opened up? And so I kind of did the old man thing and went up to her and started a conversation and tried to talk to her a little bit about what she was studying.

[ 21 : 23 ] And I wasn't trying to teach her the Bible. I just complimented her on what she was doing and told her, I think that's the greatest book in the world. And you can't pass your time doing anything better than studying the Word of God.

And we talked a little bit. And by the time I got my coffee and by the time I could tell that she wasn't really interested in talking too much more than we already had. And she made a comment while we were discussing it.

She made a comment that said something about that a lot of this has been passed down from oral tradition. And I thought, oh, girl.

No. No, that's not true. Who's teaching you this nonsense? You have a Bible in front of you. And you're already believing that it's not the words of God. You're already looking at it like it was just passed down from one generation.

The idea with that, if you're not familiar, is that when Moses wrote Genesis, those 50 chapters, but Moses wasn't alive through any of that. Moses doesn't show up until Exodus chapter 2.

[ 22 : 21 ] So how could he possibly know about Adam and Eve or Enoch or Noah or Abraham or all the way up to the captivity in Egypt?

And the thinking is, well, then this is just some humanistic reasoning that was just passed down from one generation. So that Adam knew how God formed him. God must have told him that after the fact.

And then Adam told his son, Seth, and then it went on down. And it just completely takes God out of the picture. And then all scripture given by inspiration of God? No, not all of it.

Just some parts, maybe. And it's a terrible teaching. And the point I want to get to here more strongly than any of that is that we have the words of God. And we believe that the scripture was given by inspiration of God.

And so when we're reading about the words of Amos, we're reading what God had him penned or had penned possibly by another scribe. And I'll show you why I think that.

[ 23 : 20 ] Look at verse 1 where it says, The words of Amos, which he saw. Now this is not the normal way of introducing a book of the Bible.

Go back to your left a little bit to the previous guy, Joel. And look how Joel begins his book. Joel chapter 1 and verse 1 says, The word of the Lord that came to Joel.

And he begins quoting it in verse number 2. Hear this, ye old men, and give ear. Look at the previous guy from him. Go back to Hosea. Now not everybody begins their books the same, but the majority of the prophets would say something very similar to this.

Hosea 1 verse 1. The word of the Lord that came unto Hosea. And he identifies those prophets or those kings.

And he says in verse 2, The beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea. And the Lord said unto Hosea, Go. And there comes his message. Now the point is, If God came to me and showed me and spoke through me, if I was one of these prophets, and I began to pen this and began to declare this to men and wanted to show it to them, I would not say the words of Toby.

[ 24 : 44 ] I would be like, If anybody's going to hear me and believe me, I've got to let them know this is the word of the Lord coming to me and giving it to you. So for Amos to start off saying the words of Amos, it doesn't sound like he's the one penning that.

It sounds like somebody else is the scribe and Amos is the preacher. The words of Amos, which he saw, verse 2 says, And he said, and begins the quote, The Lord will roar from Zion, Amos' message.

So it seems just by that little beginning that there might be another hand doing the writing, which is not, it doesn't matter. It's neither here nor there to me. It's not something I could prove.

It doesn't, who cares? It's just possible because he doesn't begin by saying the word of the Lord which came to or the word that he spake by me like other prophets do. So, his visions, Amos saw some things and we have those words.

How important are those words? Let's consider some of the things, we're running out of time so fast. Let's consider some things about the timing of the book. Notice in verse 1, he gives us the setting of his ministry and he dates it by the certain kings that ruled during his ministry.

[ 26 : 01 ] In verse 1, the words of Amos, which was among the herdmen 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.

So, he gives us a timing whether we can identify the earthquake or not. You at least can definitely identify the two kings that he mentions, one ruling over the southern kingdom of Judah, one ruling over the northern tribes of Israel.

I just, I didn't read it, but the prophet Hosea said something very similar. In his message, he started with Uzziah. He shows that he was a contemporary ministering in that same time. Isaiah does the same thing.

Isaiah in the south references Uzziah as the king that he prophesied under, and then three more after him, ending with Hezekiah. So, his ministry was much longer than Amos's was.

But, let's note a few things. Just, we're not going to get too far here, but look at the, something about the, the setting of these kings, and I think it's as important to learn. Find first, or second kings, let's go there first.

[ 27 : 11 ] Second kings 14. I think it's always helpful to understand the situation, or the theme, I'm sorry, or the scene, when you're studying a book like this.

Try to get a little insight into the environment, into the culture, into what the, the layout of the land was, and the times of his preaching and ministry.

So, down, let's see, this is Jeroboam. This is the king over Israel that he is prophesying to. In second kings 14, and notice verse number 23.

This is not the Jeroboam that the kingdom was split under after Solomon were Rehoboam and Jeroboam. This is another Jeroboam years later, and some call him Jeroboam the second, although he's not technically a second, it's just a way of separating him from the other Jeroboam. So, this one's the son of Joash. Verse 23, In the fifteenth year of Amaziah, the son of Joash, king of Judah, Jeroboam, the son of Joash, king of Israel, began to reign in Samaria and reigned forty and one years.

[ 28 : 24 ] And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord. He departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, that who made Israel to sin. He restored the coast of Israel from the entering of Hamath under the sea of the plain, according to the word of the Lord God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his servant Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet, which was of Geth-Hefer.

For the Lord saw the affliction of Israel, that it was very bitter, and there was not any shut up, nor any left, nor any helper for Israel. And the Lord said that he would not blot out the name of Israel from under heaven, but he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam, son of Joash.

Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam and all that he did and his might, how he warred, and how he recovered Damascus and Hamath, which belonged to Judah, for Israel. That's Damascus?

That's not in the land. That's pretty far out there. He's conquering the region. And they're written in the book of Chronicles of Kings and so forth. The point is, this man, even though he was wicked, God, it says in verse 26, he saw the affliction of Israel that was very bitter and he did something. He helped them and he allowed them to conquer some of the region. And so, understand that Jeroboam, this king, that he's dwelling and ruling from Samaria over the northern ten tribes, he's a successful man and he's got things going his way.

[ 29 : 46 ] Even despite his wicked heart, he's still on top of the world and he's in power and he's not hurting for anything. So, for God to send this man up there and say, I want you to go preach to Israel, he's stepping into some hostile territory as far as like, we don't need to hear that.

Everything's going fine. Now, look at the kingdom that he left. Look at 2 Chronicles chapter 26. 2 Chronicles 26 and this is the king Uzziah that reigned over Judah.

And I don't want to read all of this, but in the first 15 verses, you can see that this man was a complete and total success. He had it going on down there in Judah.

He built the city in verse 2. Let's see. He did that which is right in the sight of the Lord. In verse 6, he went forth and warred against the Philistines, break down the wall of Gath.

He's triumphant there. God helped him against the Philistines in verse 7. Verse 8, the Ammonites gave gifts to Uzziah. His name spread abroad even to the entering in of Egypt. So going south and even to the east, he's just dominating.

[ 31 : 02 ] He builds towers. Fortified, built towers in the desert, dig wells, much cattle, husbandmen. He's going on fighting men in verse 11.

You can just skim this. Just a powerful army, mighty power, it says in verse 13. shields, helmets, engines invented by cunning men.

Just a marvelous, says a marvelously helped till he was strong. And that's the man, that's the kingdom down in the south.

And so understand that they're both, over Israel, Judah, the two of them are both successful sovereigns. They're ruling in complete success and enjoying prosperity.

And that helps you to understand just when he's going to go and start preaching some messages, you've got to understand that and just see the scene. Even though they're to the north, we'll get into this, I guess we're going to have to wait until next week to see some of the worship that's going on up there.

[ 32 : 07 ] Understand the king doesn't need, doesn't want to hear from the Lord. He's happy with the way things are going as they are. Next week, we're going to have to look at his location to where Amos is preaching.

Most everybody, I shouldn't say most everybody, but the majority of scholars or Bible teachers on Amos say that he prophesied in Samaria because Samaria is the capital and that's where the king dwelt and it just assumes that that's where he would have gone.

But studying this epistle or his writings, I don't think he went to Samaria at all, maybe somewhat, but I think he preached in Bethel. And I think it's pretty plain from this text and I'll show you why next time we come together that he preached in Bethel and there's some comments and some things we can learn from that as well.

So, didn't even get through the introduction fully today, but we did get into the first verse a little bit and Lord willing, we'll be able to pick this up next week and start moving and covering some ground and trying to learn some things from this obscure and often overlooked minor prophet, Amos.

So, we'll stop right there and be dismissed. Remember, don't show up Saturday because we won't be here. The rain will be falling, Lord willing, we'll enjoy that.

[ 33 : 22 ] But next Wednesday, plan on coming a little bit early for our meal. So, let's be dismissed with prayer. Father, thank you for the evening. Thank you that we were able to meet together.

Thank you for the time we could get into the Bible as brief as it was even tonight.

I pray that we'd develop a hunger to learn and to understand your words. I pray that you'll bless again this study as we go through this book. Please minister to each one, each heart. Bless our

fellowship to follow.

I ask also that you'll give safety on the road. Keep each one safe and dry in the rain and may you give us opportunities to minister for you. Help us not to overlook those that we come across and not to despise those things that are not in our eyes and to see them as you see them with potential. May we be faithful to bear the name of Jesus Christ wherever we go. We pray it in Jesus' name. Amen.