

# AMOS & HOSEA

Week 3

## INTRODUC TION

**AMOS** - Judgment for exploiters

A diminutive of Amasiah - *one sustained by God*.

Amos was called from Judah during the reign of Uzziah to prophesy in Israel during the reign of Jeroboam II (782 - 753).

Amos was sent by God to warn them of their impending doom.

Dating 767-753 BC

### Authorship

If Amos was an oral prophet (7:10-17), who wrote the book?

Some proponents of the form criticism method<sup>1</sup> argue that a series of editors<sup>2</sup> compiled and modified the words of Amos over the course of time.

### Amos' Message

Chs.1-4 YAWEH ROARS FROM ZION

The "X...X + 1" pattern.

Notice that Amos does not call for the nations to repent.

Notice the order of the prophecy...it runs from far to near politically, genetically and geographically.

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<sup>1</sup> Studies of vocabulary and literary style to 1. Distinguish authentic from editorial 2. Understand the meaning of the text and 3. Compare documents. Generally, this method is used to undermine the authority and integrity of biblical texts using methods that are questionable for purposes that are often hostile to supernaturalism.

<sup>2</sup> a.k.a. redactors

Damascus - capital city of Syria (Northeast of Israel)

- Threshed Gilead with iron sledges (2Ki.10:32)
- Assyrians defeated Syria in 732 BC
- The valley of Aven
- Beth-Eden may refer to Aramnaharaim (a.k.a. Mesopotamia)

Philistines (Southwest of Israel)

- 2 Chron.21:16
- The Philistines may have invaded for the sole purpose of gathering slaves to sell.
- 730 BC the Assyrians defeated the Philistines

Phoenicians (Northwest of Israel)

- 2Chron.21:16; Joel 3:4-8
- Didn't honor the covenant of brothers.<sup>3</sup>
- Tyre was burned by the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar and the reconstructed island city was completely destroyed by Alexander the Great.

Edom, Ammon & Moab (East & Southeast of Israel)

- It is a dangerous thing to harm Israel
- All of these nations fell to Babylon around 587 BC
- Edom –
- Ammon –
- Moab (2Ki.3) -

Judah (South of Israel)

- Forsaking Torah
- Embracing idolatry
- Judah fell 597 BC

Israel

- 2:6-8 Israel is similarly under the judgment of God
  - Social injustice (v.6-7b,8)

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<sup>3</sup> Between King Hiram of Tyre & David/Solomon; 2Sa.5:11; 1Ki.5:2-6; 15-18; 9:11-14; no Israel/Judah king ever made war on Phoenicia.

- Sexual immorality (7c)
- Idolatry (8)
- 2:9-16 God's grace has been answered by Israel's sin (vv.9-11)
- 3:1-8 God's election brings responsibility
- 3:9-10 Even the Philistines & the Egyptians know better than you
- 3:11-15 Very little of you will remain when I'm finished.<sup>4</sup>
- Ch.4:1-3 You cows of Bashan
- 4:4-5 You're rituals are elaborate but you don't do it to obey
- Apart from God's mercy nothing would have been left.
- Israel fell to Assyria in 721 BC

#### Chapters 5-6 REPENT

- 5:1-2 A dirge for Israel
- 5:4-17 Seek me and live  
Bethel & Gilgal are worship centers.

Many believe that Beersheba was a pilgrimage site where idolatry was practiced (c.f. 8:14).

You hate good & repress the poor (vv.10-12).

- 5:18-27 The Day of the Lord  
5:25 is difficult to interpret.

5:26 is also hard to interpret because it is not clear whether some of the words are proper nouns.

*Sikkut malk<sup>e</sup>kem* could mean "shrine of your king" or "shrine of Milcom" (a.k.a. Molech).

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<sup>4</sup> 3:12 instead of *dammeseq* (Damascus) it should probably read *demeseq* (corner of) - *edge of their beds & corner of their couches*

*Kiyyun* can mean "pedestal" or it could be the proper name of another astral deity.<sup>5</sup>

- 6:1-7 Woe to the complacent of Israel & Judah.  
Calneh - leading city of Syria (i.e. called Calno by Isaiah 10:9).

Hamath-Rabbah - leading city of Syrians

Gath - leading city of Philistia

Was Amos saying that they will also be defeated or that they are full of greed?

1. *Are you better than they? NO! They were conquered and so it will happen to you. Are their territories bigger than yours? NO! They were greatly reduced in size and so will you.*
2. *Are they better off than you? NO! You have more than they do. Are their territories larger than yours? NO! You have more than they do.*

The *marzeah* was a particular kind of banquet that followed the form detailed by Amos.<sup>6</sup>

- 6:8-14 God hates Israel's Arrogance

#### Chapters 7-8 - Visions & Judgments

- 7:1-3 Locust vision
- 7:4-6 Fire vision
- 7:7-9 Plumb line vision
- 7:10-17 Amaziah's judgment
- 8:1-7 Summer fruit  
A word play ('summer' *qays* & 'end' – *quets*)
- 8:8-10 The earthquake judgment<sup>7</sup>
- 8:11-14 The Revelation Famine

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<sup>5</sup> Mesopotamian art does show images of gods attached to poles to be carried about. In one picture there is an 8-point star above the head of the image (from ANET, fig.535).

<sup>6</sup> Meat always preceded wine; anointing, music & reclining were all part of the *marzeah*, from an Ugarit description of a *mrzh* celebrating the house of Shamuman and other ancient near eastern texts.

<sup>7</sup> Josephus indicated that an earthquake killed 10,000 during this period (Antiquities 15.5.2)

- 9:1-7 Temple vision
- 9:8-10 God will destroy Israel but not utterly
- 9:11-15 God will restore Israel

### Applications

God is a Righteous Judge

Intrinsic worth of humans

Sacrifice without obedience is meaningless & self-serving  
4:4-5; 5:4-6, 21-26

Miscellaneous Issues

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**HOSEA** God loves his unfaithful people.  
Hosea's name means 'salvation.'<sup>8</sup>

This was a time of unprecedented peace & prosperity for Israel and Judah. It was also a time of unprecedented wickedness amongst the people.

Amos emphasized the justice of God flowing from his righteousness.

Hosea emphasizes the discipline of God flowing from his love.

Israel's infidelity toward God took many forms.

The most prominent sin was the sexual immorality associated with the Baal cultus.

Hosea also mentions human sacrifice (13:2) as part of the idolatry.<sup>9</sup>

Also, Hosea expresses God's intense hostility toward the gold calves at Dan & Bethel,

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<sup>8</sup> The names "Joshua" & "Jesus" both mean Yahweh is salvation. Hosea is a derivation of these names. To us in the west, his name would be translated, 'Joseph' or 'Joe'

<sup>9</sup> Examine appendix A - Religion under Baal, Anath & Molech.

The book of Hosea is unusual in that the prophet's failed marriage is used to illustrate God's relationship with Israel.  
The first three chapters of Hosea characterize the rest of the book.

Date c. 790-725 BC

#### Authorship Issues

Hosea writes as someone would write living at this time and in this place.<sup>10</sup>

Are the references to Judah editorial insertions<sup>11</sup>?

Are the salvation passages editorial insertions<sup>12</sup>?

#### Message

Chapters 1-3 Marrying an unfaithful woman.

1:2-3 There are several views of Hosea's commission to marry *an adulterous wife and children of unfaithfulness*.<sup>13</sup>

- Some regard the marriage as an allegory.<sup>14</sup>
- Others argue that Gomer was a prostitute when Hosea married her.
- Many hold that Gomer was chaste when she married but resorted to prostitution later.

1:6 & 8 - Some believe the last two kids were fathered by someone else.

1:10 - Not until May, 1948 was Israel both autonomous and united.

1:11

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<sup>10</sup> He focuses on the known sin problems in Israel at this point; he uses many Aramaisms as would be expected in the region so influenced by Aram.

<sup>11</sup> 4:15; 5:5,10,12-14; 6:4,11 and etc.

<sup>12</sup> 11:8-11; 14:2-9

<sup>13</sup> *eset zenunim* wife of harlotries and *yalde zenunim* children of harlotries suggests the children were also or would also practice such infidelities.

<sup>14</sup> This was held by medieval Jews and was a popular view into the late 1800's because God would not have asked him to marry an unchaste woman (i.e. he didn't allow priests to do so, why would he allow a prophet? c.f. Lev.21:7,14). However, the evidence shows that it is not symbolic because formal names are used; details are supplied that have no relevance to the supposed allegory but are typical of historical narrative and the putative allegory is split by chapter 2.

2:2-7 - Israel is estranged from God because of her infidelities

2:8-13 Israel doesn't know the source of her blessings, so God will take them away

2:14-23 After the time of discipline God will win Israel back through

3:1-4 Hosea is to win back Gomer the way God will win back Israel.

Chapter 4-14 Israel is guilty so she will be purged, cleansed & restored

- 4:1-7:16 Israel's guilt
  - 4:1-4
  - 4:5-5:7 The leaders did not show God to Israel
  - 5:8-15 Impending judgement for Israel & Judah
  - 6:1-3 Predicted words of repentance from Israel
  - 6:4-7:1 Further accusations
  - 7:2-7 Crime & dissipation in Israel
  - 7:8-16 Foolish associations with other nations
- 8:1-10:15 Israel's judgment
  - 8:1-14 Warning of impending doom
  - 9:1-9 Assyria will be God's instrument of judgment
  - 9:10-17 Israel's glory will fly away
  - 10:1-15 Israel's sin leads to judgement
- 11:1-14:9 Israel's restoration
  - 11:1-7 God's love & Israel's rebellion
    - Matthew cites 11:1b as being fulfilled in Christ but how so?
  - 11:8-11 Restoration will occur in the end
  - 11:12-12:14 Israel's foolishness

- 13:1-16 Israel's decline into evil
- 14:1-9 Israel will repent and God will bless

### Applications

God uses calamity to purge the wicked and to discipline the remnant.

God disciplines those he loves

God will accomplish his goals with or without our cooperation.

Self-sufficiency leads to sin (10:13; 13:6) including the sin of greater self-sufficiency (12:8b)

### **HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT**

- Read and annotate Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk & Zephaniah
- Memorize Micah 6:8 & Habakkuk 2:4b (*but the righteous will live by his faith*) & Zephaniah 3:5
- As you read through these three prophets, identify the principles that could apply to you. Which of these are the hardest to believe at this point in your life?
- **Prepare answers for the following based on your study:**
  1. **Identify the kings of Judah during the activity of these prophets. Were any commended? Were any condemned?**
  2. **What nations posed a threat to Judah during this time?**
  3. **Identify one major theme for each of the four books.**