

Remember: Even in judgment, God reveals his mercy.

The Book of Amos

Theme: God's righteousness (and mercy) is displayed in the judgment (and preservation) of his wayward people.

Context: In the first verse of the book of Amos, author, audience, and timeframe are all given to the reader. The shepherd Amos is the writer of these prophecies, these prophecies are addressed to Israel, and these prophecies are being announced during the times of the Judean king Uzziah and the Israelite king Jeroboam. Significantly, these prophecies would have come during a time of great prosperity—particularly so for the northern kingdom of Israel. It is within this prosperity and comfort that sin rules and righteousness all but disappears. God through Amos denounces such things to the point of utter destruction for those who will not turn from these ways. Deep themes of sovereignty (control) and just condemnation (God's righteousness on display) inform the entirety of these prophecies, but God reveals his mercy and grace through the preservation of his people at the very same time. This sovereign, righteous, and merciful God reveals in Amos who he is, who we are, and our great need for him.

Connection: There are three dominant ways this book finds connection with the rest of Scripture. First, there are two prominent quotations of this little prophecy book during an integral time of the Church. As an unbelieving Saul (later known as Paul the evangelist) looked on, Stephen the Deacon bears witness before the people who would kill him using Amos 7:25, 26. Alongside this, during the integral Jerusalem council, when a matter of utmost importance was on the table (the free offer of the Gospel without undue burdens of the ceremonial law), Amos is again used in the conversation. Quoting Amos 9:11, 12, James the brother of Jesus recognizes Amos' prophecy as one revealing God's people in their entirety (Jew and Gentile). This is a vital moment in church history, and the book of Amos is a key help to the decision (Acts 15:16, 17). Secondly, the key theme of the Day of the Lord connects this prophetic book with the rest of Scripture. Speaking of when God is to fully and ultimately reveal himself in vindication of his people and judgment of those who oppose him, the Day of the Lord can be found mentioned in Amos 5:18, 20, Obadiah 15, Zephaniah 1:7, 14, Malachi 4:5, Isaiah 13:6, 9, Jeremiah 46:10, Ezekiel 13:5 and 30:3, and Joel throughout. This is not to mention the references and connections with Daniel, Jesus' words in Matthew on the last days, Revelation, and so on. Thirdly, connection can be seen ethically. Though all of Scripture is inherently connected in this way, there are some very obvious ethical stances on certain pervading sins in Amos that connect the book with other parts of Scripture. A good example is the book of James in the New Testament, which includes similar themes of justice for the poor, condemnation of greed, and a denouncement of "status" based preferential treatment.

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Solid Rock Verses:

- Amos chapters 1, 2—*For three transgressions... and for four...*
- Amos 3:2; 7, 8—*For the LORD GOD does nothing without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets... the Lord GOD has spoken; who can but prophesy?*
- Amos 4—*Yet you did not return to me...*
- Amos 5:4, 6—*Seek me and live...*
- Amos 5:18-26—*But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.*
- Amos 6:8—*I abhor the pride of Judah...*
- Amos 7:2, 4; 8—*O Lord GOD, please forgive... the LORD relented... I am setting a plumb line...*
- Amos 8:2—*The end has come upon my people Israel...*
- Amos 8:11—*The days are coming... I will send a famine... of hearing the words of the LORD...*
- Amos 9:8—*I will destroy it from the surface of the ground... except that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob...*
- Amos 9:11—*I will raise up the booth of David... and repair... and raise... and rebuild...*
- Amos 9:12—*That they may possess the remnant...*
- Amos 9:13—*The days are coming... the mountains shall drip sweet wine... the hills shall flow...*
- Amos 9:14—*I will restore...*
- Amos 9:15—*I will plant them on their land, and they shall never again be uprooted...*