



2

God Warns Israel

Key Theme

- God judges sin.

Key Passages

- Amos 3:1–2, 3:10–11, 4:6–10, 4:12, 7:14–15; Psalm 7:11

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe God's message to Israel through Amos.
- Identify the attribute of God that demands judgment.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

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Students will practice the memory verse by completing the Memory Verse Review Sheet using the letter clues. If time allows, they will recite the verse to a partner or to the teacher using only the letter clues.



Activity 1: God Warns Israel Class Notes

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Students will fill out the God Warns Israel Class Notes as you study the lesson. Pass out the class notes before you begin to teach.



Studying God's Word

page 5

The Lord sent the prophet Amos to the northern kingdom of Israel to deliver a message of judgment. Through Amos, the Lord warned Israel to turn to Him or He would send an adversary to destroy them. God showed His patience with Israel, but He must judge sin.



Activity 2: Thus Says the Lord

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Students will compare Scripture strips to determine what the repeated phrase and thought in each verse is.

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO

WHAT YOU WILL NEED



COME ON IN

- Print the Memory Verse Review Sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.

- Memory Verse Poster
- Memory Verse Review Sheet for each student



GOD WARNS ISRAEL CLASS NOTES

- Print one God Warns Israel Class Notes from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student. Keep the answer key for your use.

- God Warns Israel Class Notes for each student
- God Warns Israel Class Notes Answer Key
- Pencils



STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.

- Student Take Home Sheets



THUS SAYS THE LORD

- Print and cut the Thus Says the Lord Scripture Strips Sheet so each student gets at least one strip.
- Print one Thus Says the Lord Scripture Strips Sheet for your use.

- Thus Says the Lord Scripture Strips (at least one per student)
- Thus Says the Lord Scripture Strips Sheet for your use



Memory Verse

Isaiah 42:8 I am the Lord, that is My name; and My glory I will not give to another, nor My praise to carved images.

► **Pace your lesson!** Use the clocks to mark the time you want to finish each section. This will help you stay on track and finish on time. You may need to shorten or drop sections as necessary.





Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the lesson key passages along with this background.

In the opening verse of the book that bears his name, Amos is identified as a shepherd from Tekoa, a small town about nine miles south of Jerusalem. Amos was a simple man, caring for sheep and growing sycamore figs (Amos 7:14), and God used this humble man to communicate a message of pending judgment to the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Amos was one of many prophets sent by God who were rejected by the people of Israel.

As a prophet, Amos delivered his message as straight from God. Throughout the book, Amos recorded exactly as God directed. The phrase “says the Lord” appears in this small book over 40 times! There is no doubt here that God was the source of the message—as He was the source, through the Holy Spirit, of the writing of all Scripture.

Amos was faithful to deliver the message from God, which not only warned of coming judgment because of Israel’s sin and disobedience (Amos 2:13–16), but also offered forgiveness and grace to the people if they would repent (Amos 5:4, 5:6, 5:14–15). God would finally punish their sinfulness, but He gave Israel decades to repent—revealing His patience.

Ultimately, Amos’s message was rejected—even by Amaziah, the priest who accused Amos of conspiring against the king. The priest reported Amos to the king and told the prophet to flee to the land of Judah and never again prophesy in Israel (Amos 7:10–13). God warned that an army would come against Israel. An adversary would be all around the land, sap their strength, and plunder the palaces (Amos 3:11). Israel did not listen, and this judgment came upon them when the Assyrians captured and deported the people of Israel in 721 BC (2 Kings 17:5–6).

The Old Testament prophets are divided into two groups—major prophets and minor prophets. Amos is considered one of the minor prophets, but that certainly doesn’t mean that he was less important or that his message was less significant than any of the other prophets. The classification of “minor” primarily refers to the length of the book in our Bibles.

The books of the minor prophets do NOT appear in chronological order in the Bible. For example, Amos was prophesying long before Ezra and Nehemiah, whose lives are recorded in the Bible before the book of Amos. Likewise, Isaiah prophesied after Amos, yet

his writings appear in the canon before the book of Amos. This is something to be aware of as you pursue Bible study. The books of the Bible are not arranged chronologically, but are arranged by sections. Knowing this will help you to discern, through careful observation of all of Scripture, what the historical context is—not only of the major and minor prophets but of all biblical history as well.

The prophets of the Old Testament had many roles. Amos fulfilled two of those roles by delivering messages of judgment to God’s people and to foreign nations—both Israel and the Gentiles. Chapter 1 confirms this when we read that Amos delivered the message of God’s wrath against the Gentile nations of Syria, Philistia, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, and Moab. Then, using the same language, he focused on Judah and then at length on Israel. God spoke with the same certainty against the Gentile nations as He did against His own chosen people. The Bible tells us that “God is angry with the wicked every day” (Psalm 7:11). But though God’s justice knows no partiality, He had mercy on those who turned to Him in repentance and faith. And He is still willing to freely pardon all those who repent and place their trust in the Messiah—Jesus Christ (Acts 10:34–38).

HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

The introduction to the book sets Amos during the reigns of Uzziah, king of Judah, and Jeroboam II in Israel. Interestingly, Amos mentioned that his message was delivered two years before the earthquake. Throughout Scripture we find that earthquakes often accompanied God’s judgment. So what earthquake was Amos referring to? Apparently, he assumed the readers would know which earthquake he was talking about. As we compare Scripture with Scripture, rightly dividing the Word of truth, we find a similar reference in Zechariah 14:5. And, though not specifically recorded in Scripture, the Jewish historian Josephus reported an earthquake accompanying God’s judgment on Uzziah when he offered incense to God in the Temple. We read in 2 Chronicles 26:16–22 how Uzziah had sinned against God by entering the Temple to perform a duty assigned to the priests.

As we read and study Scripture, we need to keep in mind that, although historical information is great confirmation of what the Scriptures tell us, the records of men like Josephus are not inspired by God. Josephus was a reputable historian, and it is a reasonable

possibility that the earthquake occurred when God struck Uzziah with leprosy and was the same earthquake mentioned by Amos.

As God surely promised in Amos 3:11, Israel did eventually fall to an adversary. That adversary was the nation of Assyria, who under the leadership of Shalmaneser V besieged Israel's capital city of Samaria (2 Kings 17:1–8). God's patience with the 10 tribes of the Northern Kingdom had ended, and His justice was enacted through the destruction of their capital and the deportation of the people. Ten tribes of the 12 were now scattered among the nations. Now only two tribes (Judah and Benjamin) remained to the south in the nation of Judah. But it would not be long until Jerusalem and Judah would suffer the same fate as the nation to her north.

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.



BEFORE THE THRONE

Lord Jesus, I'm so blessed to be your called, chosen, and adopted child. In this lesson, I was saddened to read about how your chosen people, Israel, hardened their hearts against you. They did not embrace truth when your prophet spoke your message plainly. Thank you that when you judged your people, you kept your promise by preserving a remnant, so that I could be redeemed. I know that it is only by your grace that my heart is sensitive to your Word. Please keep me close, so that every time your Word delivers a message of correction to me, I will listen and return to you in humility. Help me clearly present your plan of salvation to my students this week. Please use this lesson to draw them to you as they consider your justice and your love.



COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- They will complete the Memory Verse Review Sheet. If time allows, have the students recite the verse together, to each other, or to you.

This time at the beginning of class should be used to review the memory verse. We have provided an activity sheet on the Resource DVD-ROM for you to use. You may have other ideas and ways to encourage your students to memorize the verse.



After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.



REVIEW

Using the Lesson Theme Posters provided with each lesson, quickly review the previous lesson(s) with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the Lesson Theme Posters. Reflect briefly on the passages you read, bringing the objectives and themes back into focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



God Warns Israel Class Notes

MATERIALS

- God Warns Israel Class Notes
- God Warns Israel Class Notes Answer Key
- Pencils

INSTRUCTIONS

Print the class notes for each student. Pass them out at the beginning of class. Have students fill in the blanks as you study the lesson.

We will be filling in these class notes as we study the Bible passages. Try not to

work ahead. Fill in the blanks as we come to them. I'll let you know when to fill in something.

After completing the class notes, have the students re-read the statement(s) together or call on individual students to read it.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

We will know more about the people of the northern kingdom of Israel, their sin, their stubborn hearts, and God's justice after completing the class notes today.



Studying God's Word

READ THE WORD

Refer to Lesson 1 Lesson Theme Poster. Remember we read that Israel and Judah were divided and both nations were ruled by kings. For 250 years the northern nation of Israel did not have a single king who obeyed God. All of the kings did evil in the sight of the Lord. God warned the people to turn away from their sins and turn back to Him. Today we are going to talk about one of

- Use the History of Israel Poster included with your teacher kit to show your class where the biblical accounts you study chronologically fit into this timeline.

the prophets who spoke the Words of God to the people in the northern kingdom of Israel during this terrible time. His name was Amos. *Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster and the History of Israel Poster.*

Amos was a shepherd—a simple man. He lived during the reign of King Jeroboam II. Although Amos was from Judah, the Lord sent him north to Israel to bring a message of judgment.

Amos 7:14–15

Turn to Amos 7:14–15. We'll learn a little more about Amos. *Assign a reader.*
Amos 7:14–15.

- ? Who was speaking? *Amos 7:14. Amos.*
- ? What was he? *Amos 7:14. A sheepbreeder or shepherd.*
- ? Who took Amos from his flock of sheep? *Amos 7:15. The Lord.*
- ? And where did the Lord send him? *Amos 7:15. To the people in Israel.*

Yes. God sent Amos to prophesy to the northern kingdom of Israel. Amos was a shepherd, but he was also a prophet of God. *Refer to Roles of the Prophets Poster.*

- ? Take a look at your class notes. We can answer #1 through #3 now. Will someone read those? How will you complete them? *Assign readers. 1) Shepherd. 2) Prophet. 3) Israel.*

Before we read more, let me give you some background about Israel at that time. The Bible says that the people of Israel had become greedy and mean. They were wicked and disobeyed God. This is where God sent His prophet Amos. God's message for them was to repent, to turn away from the sins they were committing against God. And Amos had to warn them that a disaster would come if they ignored him and did not repent.

Refer to the Roles of the Prophets Poster. Take a look here. Amos spoke of judgment as a warning to the people. He called the people to repent. And he told of future events—disaster—if the people did not repent.

- ? Let's go back to the class notes. You should be able to answer #4 through #6 now. How can we complete those statements? *Assign students to read each statement and give the answer. 4) Judgment. 5) Repent. 6) Disaster.*

Amos 3:1–2, 3:10–11

We know who Amos was and why God sent him. Now open your Bibles to Amos 3:1–2 and 3:10–11. We are going to read that now. *Assign readers.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Let's look closely at these verses so we can understand them better.

Observe the Text

- ? The prophet Amos was speaking. Who was Amos speaking for? *Amos 3:1. The Lord. Good. Complete #7 on your class notes.*

- ? Amos said, “The Lord has spoken against you.” Who was the “you” Amos was referring to? *Amos 3:1. The children of Israel.*
 - ? Yes, this was a message of judgment against the nation of Israel. What did God say He was going to do to the people of Israel? *Amos 3:2. Punish them for their iniquities.*
 - ? What did God mean by iniquities? *Allow discussion.*
- Iniquities refer to sins and disobedience to God. God was going to punish them for their sins.
- ? Look at #8 on your class notes. Will someone read it? How will you complete that? *Assign a reader. Sins.*
 - ? God was going to punish the people of Israel for their sin and disobedience. Can He do that? Does God punish? Isn't God a God of love? *Allow discussion.*

This is a good question. Some people only talk about God's love. And yes, He is loving! He wants what is best for His children. And He showed His love to Israel by waiting patiently for 250 years, warning them to turn back to Him. But they would not!

That brings us to another attribute of God. He is just. He must be fair. And in His fairness, He must punish sin. The time had come that God had to punish the people of Israel for the idolatry and wickedness.

- ? With that in mind, look at #9 and #10 on your class notes. Will someone read those? How will you complete those? *Assign readers. 9) Just; 10) Love.*
 - ? Now back to the book of Amos. What did the Lord say about the people? How were they acting? *Re-read Amos 3:10. They did not know how to do right.*
 - ? They were sinning against God. And Amos 3:11 tells us what God's punishment was going to be on them. Someone read Amos 3:11 again. *Assign a reader. What was God going to do about their sin? Amos 3:11. Send an adversary to the land.*
 - ? What is an adversary? What does that mean? *Allow discussion.*
 - ? An adversary is an enemy. Could someone read Amos 3:11 using the word enemy instead of adversary? *Have someone read Amos 3:11 again using the word "enemy."*
- Good. That makes the verse a little easier to understand. An enemy or adversary would come on their land. That enemy was going to sap their strength and plunder their palaces. The word “plunder” means to steal and destroy their city, their homes, and their palaces! This was a very serious warning from the Lord.
- ? Will someone read #11 on your class notes and tell me how you will complete it? *Assign a reader. 11) Enemy.*

LOVE
JUST

(Refer to Attributes Poster)

Adversary: an enemy; one who opposes.

Discover the Truth

God's message to Israel was very clear. God sent Amos to warn them of His coming judgment. The people of Israel were God's special, chosen people. But they had turned away from God. They did not obey God but worshipped idols. The rulers were wicked, and they were cruel to the poor. God warned the people through Amos that He was going to send an adversary, or an enemy, to take over the land. God warned them that the enemy would make them weak and destroy their land. God warned that His judgment would come because of their sin against Him.



READ THE WORD

Amos 4:6–10

These people were very stubborn. They did not want to listen. In fact, God had already sent several disasters or punishments to the people of Israel. God had already warned them. Turn to Amos 4:6–10. We'll see what those first warnings were! *Choose students to read Amos 4:6–10.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

These sound a little weird. But it really is clear when you look at it right.

? Amos 4:6 says God gave the people cleanness of teeth and lack of bread. What do you think that means? *Allow discussion.*

Well, cleanness of teeth is a way of saying there was no food. You see, if you don't have any food, your teeth won't have any food stuck in them, right? So, in a way, they have cleanness of teeth. If you look at that verse further, you'll see it says they lacked bread—they had no food!

? Did the people return to God when they were hungry? *Amos 4:6. No.*

Complete #12 on your class notes. This was one warning from God. *12) Food.*

? Now look in Amos 4:7. What did God withhold from the land? *Rain.*

? Did the people return to God when He held back the rain? *Amos 4:8. They did not return to Him.*

? Look at #13 on your class notes. This was another warning from God. What did God withhold? *13) Rain.*

? Let's move on to Amos 4:9. Someone read that for me again. There are two punishments mentioned there. Can you tell me what they are? *Blight and mildew. Locusts.*

? What did the locusts do? *Amos 4:9. Devoured the crops.*

This is not good. God sent blight and mildew that caused mold and rotteness to set in. I would think the people had a hard time keeping what

little food they had because of all the rotting and mold. And on top of that, the Lord sent locusts to eat all of the crops. This was a terrible situation.

- ? As bad as this was, did the people return to the Lord? Read the end of Amos 4:9. *Amos 4:9. No.*
- ? Look at #14 and #15 now on your notes. How will you answer those? *14) Rot; 15) Locusts.*
- ? Sadly, the people still would not turn back to God. Read Amos 4:10 again. God brought another punishment on the nation. What was it? *A plague.*
- ? What happened to the young men? Look at Amos 4:10 carefully. *They were killed with a sword.*

That's right. God brought war on the nation. God was warning them to return to Him! But they wouldn't. He brought war on the nation; the men and horses were killed.

- ? Well, did the people return to the Lord? The Bible tells us at the very end of Amos 4:10. *No.*

No. God warned Israel in all these different ways. Yet the Bible tells us that they did not return to the Lord. Complete #16 on your class notes. *No.*

Discover the Truth

God warned Israel again through the prophet Amos. God had sent so many judgments on them in the past. Yet they still would not repent and turn from their sins. Because God is just, He had to judge them. God finally told Israel to prepare to meet Him! His judgment had come. Someone read Amos 4:12. *Assign a student to read.*

- ? God's patience had run out. What did He tell them in Amos 4:12? *Prepare to meet your God, O Israel!*

Amos 4:12

The people continued for YEARS to ignore God. They worshipped false gods and lived very sinful lives. And God was finally going to bring judgment on them. He told them "Prepare to meet your God!" They had to prepare now for the judgment they were due because they refused to turn back to God.

- ? Who remembers what God would do to the nation of Israel because of their sin? We talked about it earlier. Look in Amos 3:11. And you can find the answer on # 11 of your class notes. *God would send an enemy—an adversary—to destroy the nation of Israel.*

Because of their stubborn hearts, they would now have to face the punishment of Lord God Almighty! He would destroy the nation and move the people away to another land. He had warned them, they ignored Him, and now they had to prepare to meet Him and face His punishment.





Thus Says the Lord

MATERIALS

- Thus Says the Lord Scripture Strips
- Thus Says the Lord Scripture Strips Sheet for your use

INSTRUCTIONS

Give each student at least one Scripture Strip. Each strip has a verse from the book of Amos. The phrase “Thus says the Lord” or “Says the Lord” appears in each verse.

Students will compare their verses with each other to determine this repeated phrase/thought. Ask someone to tell the class what the repeated thought is. Then have each student read the verse they have out loud, emphasizing “THUS SAYS THE LORD!” or “SAYS THE LORD!”

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Amos cried out, “Thus says the Lord!”
God was speaking through His prophet.
The people would not listen. Over and

over again God warned them. The Lord is patient, loving, and merciful. But He must be just. He must be fair. And in His fairness He must finally punish sin.

Hold up your Bible as you discuss this. Refer to the Roles of the Prophets Poster. **God’s prophets spoke for Him. Remember, the Bible hadn’t been written yet. These very special men spoke the very Words of God. And now those words are recorded for us right here—in the Bible! Amos repeated the phrase, “Says the Lord” over 40 times in his message. God wants us to know that this is HIS Word! We can be confident of it because we are confident in our holy, perfect God! God cannot lie—His Words are true. When we turn to His Word for answers, we can say, “Thus says the Lord!”**



Applying God’s Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

Amos was a shepherd from Judah, but God called him to go north to be His prophet in Israel. Amos spoke the Words of the Lord pronouncing judgment on the evil practices of the Israelites. He warned the people that if they didn’t turn back to the Lord, they would be destroyed by an enemy. God is a just God and He must punish sin.

Refer to the History of Israel Poster. God’s justice did finally come on the people of Israel. Because God is just, He must punish and judge all sin. We’ll see God sent more prophets to warn Israel. But, in the end, after 250 years of warning, and 250 years of turning away from God to false gods and idols, the northern kingdom was finally judged by God. He sent the adversary that we read about in Amos 3:11—the Assyrians—to capture Israel in 721 BC, and move the people out of the land and into the surrounding nations. We will read about that later in the year.

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

The Lord judged Israel. He used the Assyrians to carry out His judgment on them because He must judge and punish sin. The Lord must judge our sin, too! The Bible says that God must judge all sin. Let's read Psalm 7:11. You can find it on your class notes. *Read Psalm 7:11.*

Psalm 7:11

Do you understand this verse? God is a just judge. He is angry with the wicked every day. That means He is angry with all sinners—because all sin is wicked. So what can we do? We all sin, and the Lord will judge all of us because of our sin. Our sin makes God angry!

There is an answer! Because God is merciful, He sent Jesus Christ to be the Savior for sinners. If we love Jesus, He promises to send the Holy Spirit to change our hearts, and with His help we can turn away from our sins and obey and trust in Him. Then we can be saved from God's judgment—because Jesus died on the Cross. He has already taken the punishment for anyone who will turn to Him in repentance and faith!

Have you repented to God for your sins? Have you turned away from your sins and turned to Jesus Christ? Have you humbly asked Him for forgiveness? That is a very important question.

God wants us to make Him the Lord of our lives. He watches over all that we do and say. He knows everything. He knows those who have made Jesus the Lord of their life and He knows those who continue to turn away from Him. And one day, just like the Israelites, we will all be judged by God. Jesus promises that if we call on His name, we will be saved. He is the only way to eternal life.

► Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the students to practice the memory verse this week.

? In light of this wonderful truth, someone read #17 on your class notes. How will you complete that? *Jesus Christ.*



MEMORY VERSE

Isaiah 42:8 I am the Lord, that is My name; and My glory I will not give to another, nor My praise to carved images.



GROUP PRAYER TIME

- Praise the Lord for His attributes of justice and love.
- Thank God for being patient with us and not giving up on us when we fail.
- Ask the Lord to help us be a reflection of Him by being more loving and patient toward others and less tolerant of sin in our own lives.

