



# 2

## God Warns Israel

### Key Theme

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- God judges sin.

### Key Passages

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- Amos 3:1–2, 3:10–11, 4:6–7, 4:9, 4:12; Psalm 7:11

### Objectives

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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 fill in the missing letters from the memory verse. Then, they will say the verse to each other and/or the teacher.



### Activity 1: God Warns Israel Class Notes

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Students will fill out the God Warns Israel Class Notes during the lesson.



### Studying God's Word

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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 was patient with Israel, but He must finally punish sin.



### Activity 2: Thus Says the Lord Match-Up

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Students will play a game to match up strips that say, "Thus says the Lord." Then, they will read their strips aloud.

# Lesson Preparation

## WHAT YOU WILL DO



### COME ON IN

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



### STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.
- Print one Yet You Have Not Returned Mini-poster.



### THUS SAYS THE LORD MATCH-UP

- Print and cut one Thus Says the Lord Puzzle Strip for every two students.

## WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- Memory Verse Poster
- Memory Verse Review Sheets
- Pencils

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

- Student Take Home Sheets
- Yet You Have Not Returned Mini-poster

- Thus Says the Lord Puzzle Strips cut in half (enough for each student to have one half)
- Container to put the strips into



## 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.

➤ Because of the age and ability of 1st and 2nd graders to read and comprehend, we encourage you to read the Scriptures to the students. However, if you have strong readers, by all means have them participate by reading God's Word.



## COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- They will complete the Memory Verse Review Sheet by filling in the blanks.
- They will say the verse to each other and/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 the 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 circle true or false as you study the lesson.*

Before we get started with our lesson I am going to give each of you a copy of the

God Warns Israel Class Notes. We will be completing these class notes as we study the Bible passages. Do not work ahead. I'll let you know when to answer the questions.

## CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

After we complete the class notes, we will know more about the people of the northern kingdom of Israel, their sin, their stubborn hearts, and God's justice.



# Studying God's Word

## READ THE WORD

*Refer to Lesson 1 Lesson Theme Poster.* Remember when we read that Israel and Judah were divided and were ruled by kings? For 250 years the northern nation of Israel didn't have any kings who obeyed God. They all did evil in the sight of the Lord. God told the people to turn away from their sins and turn back to Him. Today we are going to talk about one of the

➤ 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.

prophets who spoke the Words of God to the people in the northern kingdom of Israel. His name was Amos. *Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster and the History of Israel Poster.* Amos was a shepherd—a simple man. The Lord sent him to give Israel a message of judgment.

- ? OK. Look at #1 on your class notes. Can someone read that for me? Is it true or false? *Allow someone to read #1 on the class notes. True. Have the students circle true for #1.*

Before we read more, let me give you some background about Israel at that time. The Bible says that the people of Israel were wicked and disobeyed God. God sent His prophet Amos to Israel. God’s message for them was to repent—to turn away from their sins. And Amos had to warn them that a disaster would come if they didn’t listen.

*Refer to the Roles of the Prophets Poster.* Take a look here. We have already said that Amos spoke of God’s judgment as a warning to the people. He told the people to stop sinning. And he told of future events—disaster—if the people did not turn back to God.

Open your Bibles to Amos 3. We’ll read some parts of this chapter.

## Amos 3:1

Let’s start with Amos 3:1. The prophet Amos was speaking. *Read Amos 3:1 and emphasize the Lord and children of Israel as you read.*

### EXAMINE THE WORD

We’ll look closely at these passages so we can understand them better.

#### Observe the Text

- ? Who was Amos speaking for? *Amos 3:1. The Lord.*
- ? So, is #2 on your class notes true or false according to what we just read? Who can read that for me? *Allow someone to read #2 on the class notes. False. Have the students circle false for #2.*

Amos was not speaking for the king of Israel. He was a prophet of God. He was speaking for the Lord Himself.

- ? Amos said, “The Lord has spoken against you.” Who was it the Lord had spoken against? *Re-read Amos 3:1 if necessary. The children of Israel.*

Yes, this was a message of judgment against the children of Israel. Let’s keep reading. This is Amos 3:2. *Read Amos 3:2.*

- ? What did God say He was going to do to Israel? *Amos 3:2. Punish them.*
- ? What did God mean by iniquities? *Allow discussion.*

God said He would punish them for their iniquities. Another word for iniquities is sin. The Israelites were sinning against God.

- ? So, look at #3 on your sheet. Is it true or false? Who can read that to the class? *Allow someone to read #3 on the class notes. False. Have the students circle false for #3.*

## Amos 3:2



The Israelites were not obeying God. Amos was warning them that God would punish their sin.

- ? God was going to punish the people of Israel for their sin and disobedience. Do you think God can do that? Do you think it is right for God to punish sin? *Allow discussion.*

The answer is yes. God can punish sin. In fact, God must punish sin because He is all good, loving, and just. And because of how good God is He can't be near sin or allow sin to go unpunished. This doesn't mean that God does not give all people the opportunity to turn away from their sins and turn back to Him. But if we don't do that, then He must punish our sin. God must punish sin because He is just. That is one of His attributes.

But remember that God is also very patient. He waited a long time to punish the Israelites for their idolatry and wickedness. He sent many warnings through His prophets. But they would not listen.

- ? Find #4 on your class notes. Based on what we just talked about, is that true or false? *Allow someone to read #4 on the class notes. True. Have the students circle true for #4.*

God is just. God must punish sin. That is a very true statement. Now I'm going to read Amos 3:10. *Read Amos 3:10.*

- ? Why was God going to punish Israel? *They did not know how to do right.*

They did not know how to do right. They were robbing and being violent, also known as sinning. God was going to do something about their sin. Let's read Amos 3:11 to find out what it was. *Read Amos 3:11.*

- ? What was God going to do? How was He going to judge them? *An adversary would be around the land and would plunder their palaces.*

- ? God was going to send an adversary. What is an adversary? Does anyone know what that means? *Allow discussion.*

An adversary is an enemy. Let's read verse 11 using the word enemy instead of adversary. *Read Amos 3:11 again using the word "enemy".* That makes the verse a little easier to understand, an enemy would be all around their land.

God was warning them about an enemy that would surround them and plunder their palaces. The word plunder means to steal anything that was good or nice. So the enemy would come and break into their homes and take anything that was worth any money. That's not good! This was a very serious warning from the Lord.

- ? Look at #5 on your class notes. Can someone read that? Is it true or false? *Allow someone to read #5 on the class notes. True. Have the students circle true for #5.*

God was warning the people. God does not like sin. An enemy would come and take over their land if they did not turn back to God. This was Amos's message to the people from God.

JUST

*(Refer to Attributes Poster)*

Amos 3:10

Amos 3:11

**Adversary:**  
one that fights  
against you, an  
enemy.

## Discover the Truth

God's message to Israel was very clear. God sent Amos to warn them of His judgment. The people of Israel were God's special, chosen people. And they had turned away from God. They did not obey God but worshipped idols. The rulers were wicked, and they were mean to the poor. God warned the people through Amos that He was going to send an "adversary" or an enemy to take over. 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

These people were very stubborn and did not want to listen. In fact, God had already sent several disasters or punishments to the people of Israel to try to change their hearts and get them to turn back to God. And this was before Amos went to warn them. Let's read what God had already done to try and get the people's attention! The people just did not want to listen. We'll read Amos 4:6–10 carefully and see what had been happening to the people even before Amos. *Read Amos 4:6.*

Amos 4:6

## EXAMINE THE WORD

### Observe the Text

Amos 4:6 says God gave the people cleanness of teeth and lack of bread. 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? The Bible says they had no food—they were hungry.

? Then what does the Lord say to them? Who can read this sign? This is part of the verse I just read. *Refer to the Yet You Have Not Returned to Me mini-poster from the Resource DVD-ROM.*

? Did the people return to God when they were hungry? *No.*

? What else did the Lord do? *Listen carefully as I read this. Read Amos 4:7 emphasizing "withheld rain."*

? What did the Lord take from the people? *Rain.*

So, the Lord held back food first. And then He stopped the rain. These are serious judgments from the Lord. The Lord God is all-powerful. He is sovereign. He is in control of everything—even the rain.

? The Bible tells us what the people did. This is how the people reacted. Who can read it? *Hold up the Yet You Have Not Returned to Me mini-poster. Let's read it together. Read it again with the class.*

Amos 4:7



? Did the people return to God when they were thirsty? *No.*

? Now, look at #6 on your class notes. Can someone read that? Is it true or false? *Allow someone to read #6 on the class notes. False. Have the students circle false for #6.*

It is false! We just read from the Bible that the Lord held back the food and stopped the rain. But there was even more God did to the people who were sinning against Him. Listen as I read this to you. *Read Amos 4:9.*

Amos 4:9

The Bible says God sent blight and mildew. That made things moldy and rot. And God also sent locusts—big bugs—to eat the crops up and destroy them.

And the Bible tells us again how the people reacted to God! Let's read the sign together. *Hold up the Yet You Have Not Returned to Me mini-poster.*

? Did the people return to God when their trees and crops died and the locusts came? *No.*

Sadly, the people still would not turn back to God.

### Discover the Truth

Wow! God warned Israel in so many different ways. God wanted the people to turn back to Him. Yet the Bible tells us that they did not return to the Lord.

? And what did the people do after all God's warnings? The Bible tells us over and over what they did. *Hold up the mini-poster again. Let's read it together again. "Yet you have not returned to me," says the Lord.*

? Now, look at #7 on your class notes. Can someone read that? Is it true or false? *Allow someone to read #7 on the class notes. True. Have the students circle true for #7.*

It is sad but it is true! God warned Israel through the prophet Amos. The people would not turn back to God and turn away from their sins. Because God is just, He had to judge them. Listen to what God told the people through His prophet Amos. *Read Amos 4:12.*

Amos 4:12

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

The people continued for YEARS to ignore God. They worshipped other gods and lived very sinful lives. And God was finally going to bring judgment on them. He told them, "Prepare to meet your God!" The people of Israel had to prepare now for the judgment they were due because they refused to turn back to God. Amos begged and pleaded with the people to turn back to God, but they were stubborn and would not listen. God's judgment would come. God would send an adversary—an enemy—to destroy the nation of Israel!





# Thus Says the Lord Match-Up

## MATERIALS

- Thus Says the Lord Puzzle Strips cut in half
- Paper bag or small container to put the strips in

## INSTRUCTIONS

*Cut enough strips for each student to have one half. (If you have ten students, cut five strips.) Put the cut strips in a paper bag. Pass the bag around the class and have each student take one piece of paper. If you have an odd number of students, take one for yourself. Each half strip has "Thus says" or "the Lord". When you say "go," have the students go around the classroom and try to find their match. The strips are cut in unique ways, so the student will need to find the correct partner.*

*Once all the students have found their match they can read their half one pair at a time. After the strips are read, they can put them back in the bag. Mix up the strips and play as many times as time permits.*

The phrase "Thus says the Lord" is used 40 times in the book of Amos. Thus says the Lord means that God said so! Today you'll pull a strip of paper out of the bag and try to find the match to complete the saying "Thus says the Lord." Each strip is a puzzle. You have to find the other half of your strip. Once you find your match, stay with your

partner. After everyone is matched up, we'll go around the room and read our strips.

## CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

? **Why did God use the phrase "Thus says the Lord" so much?** *Allow discussion. He wanted the people and us to know that He is the one speaking in His Word, the Bible!*

*Hold up your Bible as you discuss this. Refer to the Roles of the Prophets Poster. **Yes! And Amos was God's prophet. He wrote God's Word down for us. Remember, God's prophets spoke for Him. This was before the Bible had been written. These very special men spoke the very words of God. And now those words are recorded for us right here—in the Bible! God wanted us to know that this was HIS Word! God had His prophets repeat the phrase, "Thus says the Lord!" So we will always know for sure this IS the Word of God! We can be confident of it because we are confident in our holy, perfect God! God will not 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 just a shepherd, but God called him to be His prophet in Israel. Amos spoke the words of the Lord, speaking judgment on the Israelites' sins. 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. We'll see that after Amos, 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 people were finally judged. God sent the "adversary" that we read about in Amos 3:11—the Assyrians—to take over Israel and move the people out of the land into other nations. God is just. That is why He must punish sin.

## GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

The Lord judged Israel. He used the Assyrians to carry out His judgment. The Lord must judge our sin, too! The Bible says that God must judge all sin. Let's read Psalm 7:11. *Read Psalm 7:11.*

Do you see what it says here? 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 has already died on the Cross. He has already taken the punishment for anyone who turns to Him, repents, and has faith!

God wants to be the Lord of our lives. He watches over all that we do and say. He knows everything. He knows those who believe and trust in Jesus. And He knows everyone who does not love Him and believe in Him. One day, just like the Israelites, we will all be judged by God. But Jesus promises that if we call on His name, we will be saved. He is the only way to eternal life.



Psalm 7:11

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



### 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

- 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 towards others and less tolerant of sin in our own lives.

