

## INTRODUCTION (or SUMMARY)

CHARACTERS: Narrators 1, 2 & 3

RUN TIME: 1 minute

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Amos

NARRATOR 1: Amos prophesied two years before the earthquake.

NARRATOR 2: That is during the reigns of Uzziah, king of Judah, and Jeroboam, king of Israel.

NARRATOR 3: Their reigns overlapped for fifteen years, from 767 BC to 753 BC.

NARRATOR 1: God's word was directed against the privileged people of Israel.

NARRATOR 2: Each had no love for their neighbor, but took advantage of others.

NARRATOR 3: They looked out for their own concerns.

NARRATOR 1: We know from God's law he expected better of them.

NARRATOR 2: In Philippians 2:4 we are told Everyone should look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

NARRATOR 3: More than almost any other book of Scripture, the book of Amos holds God's people accountable for their ill-treatment of others.

NARRATOR 1: It demands social justice rather than selling off needy people for goods

NARRATOR 2: Or, taking advantage of the helpless, oppressing the poor.

NARRATOR 3: The land was filled with sexual immorality.

NARRATOR 2: The people of Israel were intent on strengthening their economic position and successes

NARRATOR 1: Even if it meant ignoring God's will to care for one another.

NARRATOR 2: Amos rebuked them.

NARRATOR 3: He presented evidence that Israel had forgotten God.

## Judgment Against Many Nations choral reading

CHARACTERS: Narrators 1 & 2, Voice of God, Amos, All

RUN TIME: 2-3 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Amos 1-2

NARRATOR 1: The words of Amos, a sheep breeder from Tekoa

NARRATOR 2: 10 to 12 miles south of Jerusalem.

NARRATOR 1: His name means burdened and he was.

NARRATOR 2: Amos prophesied about the northern kingdom of Israel in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah

NARRATOR 1: and Jeroboam, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake.

AAA: The Lord roars from Zion and raises His voice from Jerusalem

ALL: For three crimes, even four, the nations will be punished.

VOICE OF GOD: I will not relent from punishing Damascus

ALL: Why, Lord?

VOICE OF GOD: Because they threshed Gilead with iron sledges.

NARRATOR: That means it was a cruel invasion.

ALL: It was cruel. What will you do, Lord?

VOICE OF GOD: Send fire, break down their gates and send those people into exile.

AMOS: Will you punish the Philistines and Tyre?

VOICE OF GOD: Yes, because they exiled a whole community of my people

ALL: They handed them over to Edom.

VOICE OF GOD: I will send fire and they will perish.

ALL: The Lord God has spoken.

VOICE OF GOD: I will not relent from punishing Edom

AMOS: because he pursued his brother Israel with the sword.

ALL: He stifled his compassion and he harbored his rage.

VOICE OF GOD: I will send fire against Edom and the Ammonites

AMOS: They ripped open the pregnant women of Gilead

ALL: in order to enlarge their territory.

VOICE OF GOD: I will set fire to the walls

ALL: There will be shouting on the day of battle

AMOS: and a violent wind on the day of the storm.

VOICE OF GOD: Their king and his princes will go into exile together.

ALL: The Lord has spoken.

VOICE OF GOD: I will not relent from punishing Moab with fire

ALL: The Lord has spoken.

VOICE OF GOD: I will not relent from punishing Judah because they have rejected my instruction

AMOS: The lies that their ancestors followed have led them astray.

VOICE OF GOD: I will send fire against Judah,

ALL: and it will consume the citadels of Jerusalem.

## Judgment on Israel choral reading

CHARACTERS: Narrators 1 & 2, Voice of God, Amos, All

RUN TIME: 1 minute

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Amos 2

VOICE OF GOD: I will not relent from punishing Israel

AMOS: They sell a righteous person for silver and a needy person for a pair of sandals.

ALL: They trample the heads of the poor and block the path of the needy.

VOICE OF GOD: I brought you from the land of Egypt.

AMOS: You led us 40 years in the wilderness

VOICE OF GOD: But you made the Nazarites drink wine and commanded the prophets,

ALL: Do not prophesy.

VOICE OF GOD: I am about to crush you like a wagon full of sheaves crushes grain.

AMOS: Escape will fail the swift,

VOICE OF GOD: the strong one will not prevail by his strength,

ALL: and the brave will not save his life.

VOICE OF GOD: The archer will not stand his ground,

AMOS: The swift runner or rider will not save himself

ALL: Even the most courageous of the warriors will flee naked on that day.

AMOS: This is the Lord's declaration.

## God's Reasons for Punishing Israel

CHARACTERS: Narrators 1 (neutral and unbiased) & 2 (confrontational), Amos, Israelite man, Israelite woman, soldiers 1 & 2, commander

RUN TIME: 4 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Amos 3-4

*STAGE is divided into three sections. Center stage AMOS and NEWSCASTERS, LEFT and RIGHT are the scenes in Israel.*

NEWS 1: Welcome to Nightly News in the North.

NEWS 2: We have the prophet Amos from Tekoa in the Southern Kingdom here tonight.

NEWS1: Amos, you have been preaching doom and gloom against the people of the northern kingdom. Why?

AMOS: God has seen the great turmoil in the city and the acts of oppression within it. The people are incapable of doing right. They store up violence and destruction.

NEWS 1: How do you know this?

AMOS: The Lord God does nothing without revealing His counsel to the prophets.

NEWS 2: What is your God going to do about it?

AMOS: An enemy will surround the land, destroy your strongholds and plunder your citadels.

NEWS 2: But you're just an uneducated shepherd. Who are you to tell us how to live?

AMOS: God sent me. But as a shepherd I know about lion attacks.

NEWS 2: Lion attacks? Huh?

AMOS: As the shepherd snatches two legs or a piece of an ear from the lion's mouth, so the Israelites who live in Samaria will be rescued.

NEWS 1: What does that mean?

AMOS: Very few will be saved, but if they escape death, they'll save only the corner of a bed or the cushion of a couch.

NEWS 2: Why? What's wrong with us?

AMOS: Your rulers have grown rich and live in luxury.

NEWS 2: (*belligerent*) Who says?

AMOS: The Lord God, the God of Hosts, the God of the angel army.

NEWS 1: Give us an example of what God doesn't like.

AMOS: Things like this (CUT TO STAGE LEFT)

IW: Husband, bring us something to drink. It's tiresome work oppressing the poor and crushing the needy.

IM: Ok, but then I need to show off an offering to the calf idols in Bethel.

IW: What are you taking?

IM: Bread. Do we have any without leaven?

IW: No, that's old fashioned leaving out the leaven. It's too much work. Take regular bread.

(CUT TO CENTER STAGE)

AMOS: Look, the days are coming when those proud, lazy women will be taken away with hooks, dragged through breaches in the wall.

NEWS 2: Who says?

AMOS: This is the Lord's declaration.

NEWS 1: Is that fair?

AMOS: God warned you to change your ways with shortages of food and rain.

NEWS 2: (*disgusted*) He also struck us with blight and mildew and locusts.

NEWS 1: Like the plagues of Egypt.

(CUT TO STAGE RIGHT)

SOLDIER 1: Commander, many young men have died by the sword.

COMMANDER: (*disgusted and beaten*) I know. The stench of death fills my nose.

SOLDIER 2: And the horses were captured.

SOLDIER 1: The destruction is like Sodom and Gomorrah.

SOLDIER 2: The few of us who remain are like a burning stick snatched from a fire.

(CUT TO CENTER STAGE)

AMOS: Yet you did not return to God. Israel, prepare to meet your God!

NEW 1: Tell us more about this God you worship.

AMOS: He is here: the One who forms the mountains, creates the wind, and reveals His thoughts to man, the One who makes the dawn out of darkness and strides on the heights of the earth. Yahweh, the God of Hosts, is His name.

## Lamentation for Israel choral reading

CHARACTERS: Amos, All, Voice of God

RUN TIME: 3 minute3

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Amos 5

AMOS: Listen to this message that I am singing for you, a lament, a sad song.

ALL: She has fallen; Virgin Israel will never rise again.

AMOS: She lies abandoned on her land, with no one to raise her up.

ALL: For the Lord God says:

VOICE of GOD: The city that marches out a thousand strong will have only a hundred left,

ALL: and the one that marches out a hundred strong will have only ten left.

AMOS: For the Lord says to the house of Israel:

VOICE of GOD: Seek Me and live!

AMOS: Seek Yahweh and live, or He will spread like fire that will consume everything,

ALL: Beware if you turn justice into wormwood or throw righteousness to the ground.

AMOS: The One who made the Pleiades and Orion, who turns darkness into dawn

ALL: and darkens day into night,

AMOS: who summons the waters of the sea and pours them out over the face of the earth—

ALL: Yahweh is His name.

AMOS: He brings destruction on the strong who pervert justice.

ALL: They hate the one who convicts the guilty

AMOS: and despise the one who speaks with integrity.

ALL: You evil men trample on the poor and tax them

AMOS: While you live in luxury.

ALL: Your crimes are many and your sins innumerable.

AMOS: You oppress the righteous, take a bribe, and deprive the poor of justice.

ALL: The days are evil.

AMOS: Seek good and not evil so that you may live,

ALL: and the Lord, the God of Hosts, will be with you.

AMOS: Hate evil and love good.

ALL: Establish justice.

AMOS: Perhaps the Lord, the God of Hosts, will be gracious to you.

ALL: Woe to you who long for the Day of the Lord!

AMOS: What will the Day of the Lord be for you?

ALL: It will be darkness and not light.

AMOS: It will be like a man who flees from a lion only to have a bear confront him.

ALL: He goes home and rests his hand against the wall only to have a snake bite him.

AMOS: God cannot stand the way you worship.

ALL: Those ways stink to high heaven.

AMOS: Instead, let justice flow like water, and righteousness, like an unfailing stream.

ALL: If you worship other Gods

AMOS: God will send you into exile beyond Damascus.

ALL: Yahweh, the God of Hosts, is His name. He has spoken.



## Woe to the Complacent

CHARACTERS: News reporter 1 (neutral and unbiased) & 2 (confrontational) & 3, Amos, Answerer, Burner

RUN TIME: 3-4 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Amos 6 & 7

*At rise: Amos is at a press conference.*

REPORTER 1: Amos, you have prophesied doom and woe to then notable people who are at ease and feel secure. Why?

AMOS: They think they are better than the kingdoms around them.

REPORTER 2: Aren't we? Didn't we capture Karnaïm by our own strength?

AMOS: NO, foolish one.

REPORTER 2: I don't believe in your talk of evil days bringing in a reign of violence.

REPORTER 3: We may not have a huge territory, but isn't Israel the best kingdom in the world?

AMOS: Instead of serving God, you serve yourselves.

REPORTER 3: Give us an example.

AMOS: You anoint yourselves with the finest oils then lie on expensive beds inlaid with ivory.

REPORTER 2: (*conceited*) We Israelites deserve to sprawl out on our couches, feasting on lamb and stall fed calves.

REPORTER 3: Just the other night I was at a party where we improvised songs and drank wine by the bowlful.

AMOS: You should be grieving over the spiritual and moral condition of your country.

REPORTER 2: What's wrong with partying?

AMOS: God detests your pride. He will hand over the city and everything in it. You will go into exile.

REPORTER 1: I don't believe you.

REPORTER 1: What will happen to our homes?

AMOS: The large house will be smashed to pieces, and the small house to rubble.

REPORTER 3: Why would God let that happen to us?

AMOS: You have turned justice into poison and the fruit of righteousness into wormwood.

REPORTER 1: Exactly what will happen to us in the city?

AMOS: Disease. If there are 10 men left in one house, they will die. As a close relative and burner will remove corpses from the house, one will call to someone in the inner recesses of the house

BURNER: Any more with you?

ANSWERER: None. Shhhhh. Silence. Yahweh's name must not be invoked.

REPORTER 1: What about that vision of locusts you had?

AMOS: The Lord God showed me this: He was forming a swarm of locusts at the time the spring crop first began to sprout—after the cutting of the king’s hay.

REPORTER 3: Locusts ate all the vegetation and ruined Egypt. Are you saying that will happen here?

AMOS: No because, I prayed, “Lord God, please forgive! How will Jacob survive since he is so small?”

REPORTER 1: So the Lord relent concerning this?

AMOS: Yes. “It will not happen,” He said.

REPORTER 1: What about your vision of the Lord God calling for a judgment by fire?

REPORTER 2: You said it would consume the great deep seas and devour the land.

AMOS: I prayed, “Lord God, please stop! How will Jacob survive since he is so small?”

REPORTER 1: Did the Lord relent concerning this?

AMOS: God told me that this will not happen either.

REPORTER 3: What did the vision of the Lord standing by a vertical wall with a plumb line in His hand mean?

AMOS: As a builder uses a plumb line to see if the walls are correct and vertical, so the Lord measures you.

REPORTER 2: How did we measure up?

AMOS: You are crooked. God will no longer spare you. Israel will be deserted, and your sanctuaries will be in ruins.

## Amaziah's Opposition

CHARACTERS: Amos, Amaziah, Narrator 1, Jeroboam, Voice of God

RUN TIME: 1 minute

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Amos 7

NARRATOR 1: Amaziah the priest of the calf god at Bethel sent word to Jeroboam king of Israel.

AMAZIAH: Amos has conspired against you right here in the house of Israel. The land cannot endure all his words.

JEROBOAM: What does Amos say?

AMAZIAH: Jeroboam will die by the sword, and Israel will certainly go into exile from its homeland. *(to Amos)* Go away, you seer! Flee to the land of Judah. Earn your living and give your prophecies there, but don't ever prophesy at Bethel again.

JEROBOAM: Bethel is the king's sanctuary and a royal temple.

AMOS: I was not a prophet or the son of a prophet; rather, I was an ordinary herdsman, and I took care of sycamore fig trees.

AMAZIAH: All the more reason for you to shut up.

AMOS: The Lord took me from following the flock and said to me, 'Go, prophesy to My people Israel.'

AMAZIAH: Do not prophesy against Israel.

AMOS: This is what the Lord says:

VOICE OF GOD: Your wife will be a prostitute in the city, your sons and daughters will fall by the sword, and your land will be divided up.

AMAZIAH: How dare you!

AMOS: You yourself will die on pagan soil, and Israel will certainly go into exile from its homeland.

## Fourth Vision: A Basket of Summer Fruit

CHARACTERS: Amos, Voice of God, Man, Woman

RUN TIME: 2 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Amos 8

VOICE OF GOD: What do you see, Amos?

AMOS: A basket of summer fruit.

VOICE OF GOD: The end has come for My people Israel; I will no longer spare them. In that day the temple songs will become wailing and many dead bodies, thrown everywhere!

AMOS: Hear this, you who trample on the needy and do away with the poor of the land, impatient to open the markets so you can cheat people with your dishonest scales.

MAN 1: When will the New Moon be over so we may sell grain?

WOMAN 1: And let's get the Sabbath over with so we may market wheat.

MAN 1: (*rubbing hands together in greed*) We can reduce the measure while increasing the price.

WOMAN 1: And cheat with dishonest scales.

MAN: We can buy the poor with silver and the needy for a pair of sandals

WOMAN: We can even sell the worthless chaff mixed in with the good.

VOICE OF GOD: I will never forget all their deeds. Because of this, won't the land quake and all who dwell in it mourn?

AMOS: This is the declaration of the Lord God—

VOICE OF GOD: I will make the sun go down at noon; I will darken the land in the daytime.

AMOS: God will turn your feasts into mourning and all your songs into lamentation;

VOICE OF GOD: I will cause everyone to wear sackcloth and every head to be shaved.

WOMAN: Even the women? That would be horrid.

VOICE OF GOD: I will make that grief like mourning for an only son and its outcome like a bitter day.

AMOS: Hear this! The days are coming— this is the declaration of the Lord God—

VOICE OF GOD: when I will send a famine through the land:

AMOS: not a famine of bread or a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord.

MAN 1: What will happen?

AMOS: People will stagger from sea to sea and roam from north to east, seeking the word of the Lord, but they will not find it.

VOICE OF GOD: In that day the beautiful young women, the young men also, will faint from thirst.

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AMOS: Those who swear by the false gods of Samaria will fall, never to rise again.

## The Lord beside the Altar (Fifth Vision)

CHARACTERS: Amos, Amaziah, Narrator 1

RUN TIME:4 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Amos 9

AMOS: I saw the Lord standing beside the altar, and He said:

VOICE OF GOD: Strike the capitals or tops of the pillars so that the thresholds shake; knock them down on the heads of all the people.

AMOS: Some will die by the sword.

VOICE OF GOD: None of those who flee will get away; none of the fugitives will escape.

AMOS: What if they dig down to Sheol?

VOICE OF GOD: from there My hand will take them.

AMOS: What if they climb up to heaven?

VOICE OF GOD: from there I will bring them down.

AMOS: If they hide themselves on the top of Carmel?

VOICE OF GOD: From there I will track them down and seize them.

AMOS: If they conceal themselves from God on the sea floor,

VOICE OF GOD: I will command the sea serpent to bite them.

AMOS: And if they are driven by their enemies into captivity?

VOICE OF GOD: from there I will command the sword to kill them. I will fix My eyes on them for harm and not for good.

AMOS: The Lord, the God of Hosts—

ALL: He touches the earth; it melts, and all who dwell in it mourn;

AMOS: He builds His upper chambers in the heavens

ALL: and lays the foundation of His vault on the earth.

AMOS: He summons the waters of the sea and pours them out on the face of the earth.

ALL: Yahweh is His name.

VOICE OF GOD: Didn't I bring Israel from the land of Egypt?

ALL: Yes, Lord, you did.

AMOS: Look, the eyes of the Lord God are on the sinful kingdom,

VOICE OF GOD: and I will destroy it from the face of the earth. However, I will not totally destroy the house of Jacob—

ALL: This is the Lord's declaration—

VOICE OF GOD: I am about to shake the house of Israel as one shakes a sieve

ALL: but not a pebble will fall to the ground.

MAN: (*scoffing*) Disaster will never overtake or confront us.

ALL: You will die by the sword.

VOICE OF GOD: In that day I will restore the ruins, and rebuild as in the days of old.

ALL: This is the Lord's declaration— He will do this.

AMOS: Hear this! Later on the days are coming—

ALL: this is the Lord's declaration—

AMOS: when the plowman will overtake the reaper

ALL: and the one who treads grapes, the sower of seed.

AMOS: The mountains will drip with sweet wine,

ALL: and all the hills will flow with it.

VOICE OF GOD: I will restore the fortunes of My people Israel. They will rebuild and occupy ruined cities,

ALL: plant vineyards and drink their wine,

AMOS: make gardens and eat their produce.

VOICE OF GOD: I will plant them on their land, and they will never again be uprooted

ALL: Yahweh our God has spoken.