**THE LION ROARS**

**A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF AMOS**

**(THE PROPHET AND HIS WARNING)**

Amos 1:1, 2 Lesson 1

Main Idea: Many times, God calls common men and tasks them with an uncommon message. Though men are frail and weak, God uses them to deliver a powerful message. Often, God will use us in places where we are least adapted and in ways which we were never trained for.

Introduction: This is the third of the minor prophets: Hosea, Joel and Amos. Remember, they are “*minor”* only because of the size of the book, not because of any inferiority of the content or the prophet. In this book God calls a blue-collar worker to put on the clothes of a prophet and to cry out a message to a circle of nations. As Amos preaches, he goes from nation to nation in a circular pattern working his way to the center of the circle till he gets to the bullseye... the nation of Israel... the Northern Kingdom who had separated from the Southern Kingdom of Judah. This lesson looks at the common man Amos and his message to the nations.

# **THE MAN AMOS - Verse one –**

Amos, a commoner from the Southern Kingdom of Judah, is prophesying to the Northern Kingdom about 760 BC. Remember the Northern Kingdom was a more wicked and idolatrous kingdom than the Southern Kingdom. This was the kingdom that Ahab was king of while he was king. The Northern Kingdom worshipped idols much more frequently. They bowed to their god Moloch; they put their children through the fire; they made alliances with the heathen nations etc. They still had the golden calf built by Jeroboam.

1. Amos is also prophesying during a very prosperous time in Israel. Business is booming on the surface but there is a strong undercurrent of greed and sinfulness in the nation. They have the motions of religion but it’s all hypocritical. Sadly though, everybody feels secure because of it. They turn a cold shoulder to the message of God’s judgment.
2. The name Amos means “*to lift or carry a burden.”* This is the only place you’ll find his name in the OT. Amos takes up the burden of Israel on the shoulders of his heart and carries it to the people, stubborn as they were. He was a *herdsman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit*, just a common man “off the street” so to speak*.*
3. The sycamore fruit was a fruit that had to be cracked open before it ripened to allow the insects to escape and the ripening process to complete. That’s a great picture of what he’s trying to do with Israel. God has placed the burden, the weight of His message of judgment on Amos and he is going to deliver it!
4. Like Amos, preachers need to crack open the hearts of the people to whom they preach to allow the insects of sin and compromise to escape! Preaching the truth allows the Christian to break and to mature into the fruit producing Christian God wants each of us to be. This isn’t the time to soften on God’s Word and to begin to cave in to the pressures of the world! We must take a loving, godly stand in America again!
5. Amos prophesied in the days of Uzziah *king of Judah*, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, *king of Israel*. Under both kings their military was very strong and capable. This was a big factor in their attitude toward the prophet’s message. They found it hard to believe the message from the pulpit of this prophet. It made them even more convinced that the weaker nations surrounding them could not harm them and the preacher had to be a bit over zealous with his message.
6. America would do well to consider these factors... with her military might and finances. A nation can easily begin to trust in her resources rather than the God who gave the resources.
7. **Psalm 20:7**  Some *trust* in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God.
8. Individual Christians can also begin to trust in what they have amassed in wealth and possessions rather than in the God who gave them. **Luke 12:15**  And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.
9. Amos’ message is divided up in this book between eight prophecies, three sermons with five visions and five promises.
10. Verse one tells us this was *two years* *before the earthquake*. (Read vs. 1) Apparently this was an earthquake of the magnitude of an 8 point something on the Richter scale. (They have ways today of determining that from the floor of the Dead Sea?) This was an earthquake referenced several times. It was biblical proof of the wrath of God against His people.
11. Yes, natural catastrophes can be the direct hand of God trying to get the attention of His people! Think of all the destructive tornados, the flooding nationwide, earthquakes and hurricanes and tsunamis and yes... even viruses.

# **AMOS’ MESSAGE COMES IN THE FORM OF A WARNING** vs. 2

## In verse two, Amos describes God as *roaring* against His people. For a herdsman in the wilderness, this would have been a natural sound. (Describe what the roar of a lion usually does… brings its prey into a dead halt and complete submission). This roaring of a lion would strike fear and terror in the heart of both man and beast.

## Jesus is described in the Bible as “**The Lion of the Tribe of Judah**. And this roaring is a warning of what this Lion is about to do! This is a message that *should* strike deep fear in His people but has just the opposite effect.

## We are told that the Lord will *utter His voice from Jerusalem*... because that is the place where He had set His name.

## Over and again in these judgments you will hear the expression, “*for three transgressions of… and for four I will not turn away the punishment thereof…* Not that there were *exactly* four transgressions. God only mentions one crime each time He makes that statement to that particular nation. It’s just God’s way of telling us that there were *multiple* sins that He will be judging them for.

## He tells them in each of the judgments *He will not turn away* His judgment from them, it’s irrevocable!

## In each one of the judgments he mentions *fire*. Also, in each judgment, God mentions their *sin* and *then* the *judgment*. Typically, when God mentions fire it’s a reference to His judgment.

**Discuss:**

### What did Amos’ name mean and how did he live up to that meaning?

### Would there be any significance to where Amos’s homeland was?

### How did the harvesting of the sycamore fruit compare to Amos’ God-given duty?

### Describe how that compares to the preacher of today.

### Compare America’s condition physically to the Northern and Southern Kingdoms of Israel.

6. Describe how that has affected the spiritual condition of America.