



GROUP DISCUSSION

Amos is an interesting tale, our story starts after the Israelite kingdom splits about 140 years before Amos comes on the scene. The country had divided after King Solomon's son Rehoboam did not follow the wisdom of the elders of Israel. Rehoboam's pride and the ambition of another opposing leader named Jeroboam caused the country to fracture into two nations.

Now we have the prophet Amos stepping on the scene as a farmer who hears the call of God to travel from his home in the southern kingdom of Judah to the northern kingdom of Israel and preach to them and their leader Jeroboam II in hopes that they will repent of their sins. That sounds like a tall order.

Imagine if you will if someone during the United States Civil War from Mississippi traveled up to Washington D.C. to bring a message to the leaders that they need to repent and follow the Lord's commands. Not an exact comparison but I am sure you see the difficulty his message may receive.

Question: Can you share a time when you had an unpopular message you had to deliver?

Read: Amos 1:1-8

Amos's message opens with calling out the direct sins of the neighbors of Israel, but then quickly shifts to calling out the errors of Israel.

Read: Amos 2:6-10

Question: What reasons does Amos list for God's anger?

Why does he point out Egypt in verse 10?

As we see in Chapter 1 Amos points out the sins of the surrounding nations. Then he turns to Israel with a longer scathing rebuke saying you are doing what they do and worse yet you know the God who brought you out of Egypt.

Read: Amos 3:1-7, Amos 5:4-14, Amos 6:1-7

In this part of Amos, we see the sin of the people called to the forefront, the wealthy have continued their worship of God publically but have been oppressing the poor.

Question: Why does comfort often work against what God has called us to do?

Two key themes in Amos are righteousness and justice. Think of Biblical righteousness as right relationships with both God and others and justice as actions you take to create righteousness. You can see this theme in Chapter 5:24.

The final section of Amos is covered in chapters 7-9 which talks about the destruction of Israel.

Read: Amos 7:1-9

Notice how there are a series of warnings and each time the prophet pleads with God and he relents. This is showing what has happened and continues to happen through the story of Israel.

The story does not end with only a warning though.

Read: Amos 9:8-15

The last part of the book refers to the house of David. A strange reference until you remember that in 2nd Samuel 7 God makes a promise to David.

The Lord says

“I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he will be my son....

Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.”

God reminds the people that even though they have been unfaithful and will suffer consequences for living like all the other nations he will be faithful to his people and plan to restore his kingdom of righteousness and justice.

Group Question: What is a practical action you can take this week based on studying through Amos with your community?