

The Prophet Amos

AMOS



Old Testament 7
Part 2: The Divided Kingdom

SUNDAY MORNING

Old Testament 7 [Class Attendance Sheet](#) provided in activity sheets (NOTE: The document is interactive, allowing the teacher to type in the Class, Teacher, and the children's names.)

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

Amos; Deuteronomy 15:7-11; Proverbs 14:31; 17:15; James 1:27; 2:1-9

MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: "Seek good and not evil" (Amos 5:14a).

OLDER CHILDREN: "But let justice roll down like water, and righteousness like a mighty stream" (Amos 5:24).

SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS:

A [song book](#) and [audio recordings](#) of many of the curriculum songs are available on the curriculum Web site.

- Any songs from this unit

LESSON VISUALS AND TEACHING AIDS (NOTE ANY DISCLAIMERS):

- See [AP's Pinterest page](#) for ideas on bulletin boards, visuals, crafts, etc.
[DISCLAIMER: Pins may sometimes need to be adjusted to be Scriptural.]
- [The Divided Kingdom 1](#) Bible fact cards (provided under "O.T. 7 Bible Facts")
- "Summary of the Bible" from "[Kids Prep](#)" CD by Jeff Miller
- Pictures/drawings from any books listed under 3rd-4th Grader Pre-Class Activities/Learning Centers
- Betty Lukens' felt pieces
- "[Map of the Divided Kingdom](#)" (provided in activity sheets)—show the children where Syria is, relative to Israel
- A mask to illustrate the word "hypocrite"
- Pictures of children demonstrating both good behavior (during worship services, in school, on the playground, etc.), but misbehaving at other times
- Enlarge a simple drawing of a Bible times man ("Amos") onto a poster board (or project it onto the marker/chalk board with a projector). Write on the board key words about him and his message as you teach the lesson. Examples: was an ordinary man called to do extraordinary things, trusted God, was brave, was a



prophet = a messenger, spoke against the selfish rich, against those who were not fair, taught about right worship plus right living, etc.

- **Use a real plant and an artificial plant and talk about the differences. Use to compare those who *act* religious and those who are “the real thing.” Discuss what it means to be the “real thing.” Give biblical and current examples of “acting religiously” versus truly being Christ-like. Example: an athlete “praises” God for winning a ball game, but uses terrible language or actions during or after; an adult they know from their congregation uses terrible language at school or tells a lie, etc.**

PERSONAL APPLICATION:

God wants me to **always** follow His Word—not just when I’m around others from the church or when I am “at church.” He wants me to show my love for Him all day, every day, in the ways I treat other people.

LESSON STARTS HERE

INTRODUCTION:

Review last week’s lesson.

We have talked a lot about Elijah and Elisha. They were great prophets—chosen by God to be His special messengers, teachers of His Word. They performed miracles to prove they spoke for God and to show God’s great power. There were other great prophets in the Old Testament. Today we’re going to talk about a brave man whom God sent to tell the Israelites to live right (follow God’s Word) all day, every day.

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. 2- and 3-year-olds: Focus on the fact that God sent Amos to tell the Israelites they needed to change the way they were living. Amos was a good man whom God chose to teach His people that they were making bad decisions. Amos tried to get God’s people to live right and have the right attitude toward God’s Word. We can read the book of Amos and learn the same lessons: we must treat other people fairly and be unselfish. God wants us to worship Him, but He wants more than that. He wants us to do right all the time—when we are “at church,” when we are with friends on the playground, when we’re all by ourselves and think no one can see the choices we make, etc.
2. The Old Testament consists of 39 books, 17 of which are books of prophecy. “Prophecy” was a message from God, given through men specifically chosen by God. Sometimes their messages were about something that would happen in the future. Most of the time the prophets were sharing with the Israelites special messages/teachings from God. Twelve of the O.T. books of prophecy are usually called Minor Prophets, indicating their short length—not a lack of significance or importance. Amos is one of the Minor Prophets.
3. Amos was a herdsman of sheep and goats, as well as a “dresser of sycamore [or fig] trees” from the town of Tekoa, about 12 miles south of Jerusalem and about five miles south of Bethlehem. He preached God’s message in the Northern Kingdom (Israel) during the reign of King Jeroboam II, and for a short time in the Southern Kingdom (Judah) during the reign of King Uzziah. His contemporaries were Isaiah, Hosea, and Micah.

4. During the reign of Jeroboam II, Israel was almost as large as the kingdoms of David or Solomon. There was great prosperity for many, great trade opportunities, a booming economy, and great luxury for the wealthy. It was also a time of peace with neighboring nations. The Jews were very comfortable. [Amos equates the women of Israel to “fat cows” or “cows of Bashan.”] But all was not well in Israel. The rich people were only interested in making more money. They saw no need to help the poor. The gap between the rich and the poor got bigger and bigger. Instead of trying to relieve the terrible conditions of the poor, the rich seemed to look for ways to make their lives more miserable. There was rampant corruption, drunkenness, and idolatry. There was also hypocrisy among the Jews who did not worship idols but lived as if they did. Amos 3:10 is a sad commentary: “But they do not know how to do what is right.”
5. Amos was sent to Bethel, one of the two great centers of idol worship in Israel originally set up by Jeroboam I (the other being at the city of Dan). His God-given message included the following points:
 - God is the One who decides what is right and wrong; each man does not determine standards of morality for himself.
 - God expects you to show justice to everyone. Be fair and unselfish to those who are “different” (in this case, in a different socio-economic level).
 - It is of no benefit at all to go to the synagogue (i.e., to “go to church”), make sacrifices, and “go through the motions” of worship and religious festivals if you choose not to live as God wants every day. Stop being “hypocrites.” A hypocrite is someone who says one thing and does another; it’s as if he wears a mask that he takes off so he can be someone else/act like someone else.
 - Everyone must change (repent) and live according to God’s Law, or your entire nation will be destroyed.



NOTE: Note the repeated statements of Amos verifying that his message is from God: “thus says the Lord,” “hear this word which the Lord has spoken.” Also, note the repeated use of the phrase “for three transgressions and for four.” This is a Jewish idiom which means “an indefinite number that has finally come to an end,” referring to the end of God’s patience with the Jews.

The word “hypocrite” originated from Greek theater. For a long time, all the actors were men, and they changed from one role to another by wearing different masks. So, hypocrite is one who is “playing a role,” trying to be someone he is not. The phrase used today is “two-faced” and means the same thing.

6. Amos had five visions [discuss the meaning of a “vision”] which illustrated God’s patience with Israel—but also His role as the final and ultimate Judge. Through Amos, God warned the Israelites that His great patience would run out if they did not change their ways (repent).
7. The New Testament is filled with similar messages and warnings for God’s chosen people under the New Law, i.e., the Lord’s Church/Christians. We can’t just “go to church” and act like we love God for a few hours a week, then live like we don’t love God the rest of the time. [As the saying goes, “Sitting in a church building doesn’t make you a Christian any more than sitting in a hen house makes you a chicken.”] I must try to be like Jesus “24-7”—both at worship services and in how I act every day.



RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS: See the article “[Where is God when I Hurt?](#)” by Dave Miller on the Apologetics Press Web site for a discussion about how various Bible heroes weathered suffering and where God was while it happened.

PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—BEFORE CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

- Click here for complete [Activity Book](#) and [Answer Key](#).

Ages 2-5:

- “[The Prophet Amos Coloring Sheet](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- Sack puppet: Provide each child with a paper bag (lunch size) and a face pattern. [Patterns for sack puppets can be found in pattern books from Bible book stores or on-line.] On the bottom of each sack puppet, write “Amos preached about doing what is right.”
- Memory verse reminder: Give each child a half sheet of card stock or construction paper on which the memory verse is printed. Let them decorate their papers (using stickers, stamps, “jewels,” etc.) and add a piece of magnetic tape to the back of their papers. While they work, discuss what the memory verse means (“Seek good and not evil.”) (“[Memory Verse Reminder](#)” provided in activity sheets)
- Picture frames: Cut posterboard or cardstock to make a picture frame for each child. (**Or** buy foam frames at a craft store.) Write “(child’s name) will seek good and not evil (Amos 5:14a)” on each frame. Let the children decorate their frames. Take their pictures with an instant camera, or take the pictures on Sunday morning and finish this activity on Wednesday night after the pictures have been developed/printed. Tape each picture, facing forward, to the back of the frame (so tape doesn’t show on the front). Add a magnet or ribbon to the back.
- Review game: Write the names Elijah, Elisha, Naaman, and Amos several times on craft sticks. Put the sticks in a can, bag, or box. Let each child take out a stick and tell something about that person. (Teacher may have to help.) Give the children stickers when they successfully tell something about the name they drew.
- Which One?: Make copies or cutouts of four different Bible times men. [Can be found on-line or in pattern books from Bible bookstores or can use old flannelgraph figures]. Put the figures on the board, with their names (Elijah, Elisha, Naaman, Amos).]. On index cards or strips of paper write facts about each man. Help the children match the facts to the correct men.

1st-2nd Graders:

- Sword Drill: Give the class passages of Scripture (one at a time) from some or all of the Minor Prophets. The first one to find each passage must raise his hand and then read it aloud.
- Memory Verse Review: Have the children sit in a circle. Write the Scripture reference on the board, as well as the first word for one of the verses in the unit. Ask the child sitting next to you to say the second word. The next child says the third word, and so on, until all the words in the verse have been said in the correct order. Do this with some or all of the memory verses in the unit, letting a different child start each time.
- “Who Am I?”: Give clues, one at a time, about people from this unit. Let the children guess about whom you are talking. The class can be divided into teams and point values can be given (e.g., guess right on first clue = three points, guess on second clue = two points, guess

on third clue = one point, etc.). (“[Who Am I?](#)” questions provided in activity sheets)

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- “[The Divided Kingdom Word Search](#)” (provided in activity sheets)

3rd-4th Graders:

- Sword Drill: Give the class passages of Scripture (one at a time) from some or all of the Minor Prophets. The first one to find each passage must raise his hand and then read it aloud.
- Memory Verse Review: Have the children sit in a circle. Write the Scripture reference on the board, as well as the first word for one of the verses in the unit. Ask the child sitting next to you to say the second word. The next child says the third word, and so on, until all the words in the verse have been said in the correct order. Do this with some or all of the memory verses in the unit, letting a different child start each time.
- “Who Am I?”: Give clues, one at a time, about people from this unit. Let the children guess about whom you are talking. The class can be divided into teams and point values can be given (e.g., guess right on first clue = three points, guess on second clue = two points, guess on third clue = one point, etc.). (“[Who Am I?](#)” questions provided in activity sheets)
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- “[The Divided Kingdom Word Search](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- Have the children read the book of Amos. [This could be assigned Sunday, to be completed by Wednesday.] Print out copies of the two Amos quizzes from AP’s [Advanced Bible Reader](#) site for the children to take.
- *Discovery* magazine articles: “Amos: The Shepherd Who Tried to Lead Israel Back to God,” [December, 2003](#)

SONGS:

Use songs from this quarter.

*** IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS PERTAINING TO THIS LESSON, PLEASE CLICK THE
“SUGGESTION” BUTTON BESIDE THE BUTTON FOR THIS LESSON ON THE
CURRICULUM WEB SITE.



The Prophet Amos

Amos

BONUS LESSON



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WEDNESDAY EVENING

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PERSONAL APPLICATION:

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INTRODUCTION:

Review [O.T. 7 Bible Fact Flash Cards](#) (provided under “O.T. 7 Bible Facts” on curriculum Web site).

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

Review Sunday’s lesson. (See [O.T. 7 Review Questions](#) for example questions.)

In the New Testament we can read Jesus’ parable of the Pharisee and the publican (Luke 18:9-14). This parable, as well as most of Jesus’ teachings against the Pharisees, emphasizes many of the same things Amos was preaching against. [See Matthew 23’s long list of “woes” against the Pharisees.] Emphasize the life of Jesus and how He is our best example of how to show our love for God and how to treat others. Encourage the children to give specific examples of “good” things they can do everyday for someone.

Discuss “real life” situations where the students would be tempted to act like a hypocrite.

PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—**BEFORE CLASS**, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

- See Sunday morning’s lesson.

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