

# AMOS - A STUDY GUIDE

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## THE CENTRAL QUESTION:

### What does this book/story say to us about God?

This question may be broken down further as follows:

- a. Why did God do it/allow it?
  - b. Why did He record it for our study?
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1. What picture of God would you have if you had only Amos? What does this book teach us about civil rights and social justice? Human cruelty? Of what God wants from us? How were the people of Israel to decide if Amos's message was from God? Are there any important "key texts" in Amos? Where does Amos come from and to whom does he address his messages? What was Amos' profession? (Amos 1:1; Amos 7:14) When did he live and prophesy? Who were his best known contemporaries? (Hosea 1:1; Isaiah 1:1; 6:1; Micah 1:1) What other book(s) are similar to Amos in content and purpose?
2. Amos 3:2 suggests that God has "known" only the children of Abraham. After making the other statements he makes about the surrounding nations, how can He make such a statement?
3. Do you think Amos won any popularity contests by starting out his book condemning the sins of everyone around him? (Amos 1 & 2; Compare Matthew 5-7) Is it ever a good idea to approach someone and immediately begin pointing out their sins? How do people usually react? How did the people of Israel react? (Amos 7:10-13) Have you ever met anyone who wants to preach the "straight testimony" by pointing out the sins of all around him?
4. Is it true that "the Sovereign Lord does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets?" (Amos 3:7, *NIV*; Compare Deuteronomy 29:29; 2 Chronicles 20:20)
5. What do you think of Amos' description of the sins of God's people? Had they become irreligious? (Amos 4:4,5; 5:21-24) Can you think of any later groups who might fit these descriptions? What about us? Do we ever boast that we give generous offerings and pay a faithful tithe? (Amos 4:5) Does God cringe as we sing our hymns? (Amos 5:23)
6. Why do you think the people of the northern tribes to whom Amos spoke were longing for the day of the Lord? (Amos 5:18) Doesn't even our name (Adventist) suggest that we are

longing for the day of the Lord? Notice God's attitude to the people who were religious for the wrong reason. (Amos 5:21-24)

7. What is the meaning of Amos 5:21-25? (Compare Jeremiah 7:22-23; Isaiah 43:23; Exodus 6:6-9; Acts 7:42-43; Galatians 3:19-25) After reading all the commands and laws in Exodus through Deuteronomy, can you believe this verse? Is this a contradiction in the Bible?
8. How could Amos say, "I am neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet?" (Amos 7:14, *Phillips*) What did he mean? Why did Ellen White make a similar statement? (1 *Selected Messages* 32) When Paul says, "I am the least of the apostles," (1 Corinthians 15:9; Ephesians 3:8) was he right? Was he "the worst of all sinners?" (1 Timothy 1:15)
9. Weren't the people in Amos' day faithfully keeping the Sabbath? (Amos 8:5) Did it do them any good? (Amos 5:21-24; 8:5-6) Is it possible for a certain kind of Sabbath keeping to turn us against God?
10. In Amos 8:11-12 there is a prediction of a famine of the Word. What kind of a famine would this be? "They shall run to and fro' to seek the word of the Lord." (Other occurrences of this Hebrew word are found in Job 1:7; 2:2; Daniel 12:4; and Zechariah 4:10. Compare DA 234,5; GC 356) Could this "famine" be still future? Is there anywhere in the world today where, if a person wants the Word, he cannot find it? Aren't Bibles available almost everywhere in the world? Or is this referring to a "blindness" that prevents people from knowing the Word?
11. Notice the last words of Amos in 9:11-15. So often God warns His children and then adds words of hope. Israel seemed to think that because they were "children of Abraham" disaster could not touch them. Was God's final promise to Israel in these verses ever fulfilled? Is it possibly still future? Do you think what is happening in Israel in our day fulfills these words?
12. How does God feel about other nations? (Amos 9:7-8)
13. Could you pick out one word that describes the "God" of the book of Amos? Would it be A) loving? B) Consistent? C) Judgmental? D) Angry? E) Some other word?

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