

Kings & Prophets

Part 6

Leader Guide

(NASB and ESV)

PREPARED TO MEET
YOUR GOD
(A STUDY ON AMOS)

Kings & Prophets #6: Prepared to Meet Your God Leader Guide (NASB and ESV)

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USING LEADER GUIDES

Leader Guides are intended for you, the leader, to guide your Precept Upon Precept® and In & Out® discussions. They are designed to help you reason through the content of the lessons and to ensure you have understood what your group should have learned from their study. The guides offer effective plans for leading discussions.

The Holy Spirit is your guide as you prepare. He is the one who knows what your group needs to apply to their lives. Pray for them as they study and for yourself as you prepare to lead the discussion.

These guides can be used for either the NASB or the ESV edition of the courses. ESV words follow the NASB after a slash / or are set off with parentheses.

Leader Guides include the following:

- Lesson emphasis
- A logical order for the discussion
- Discussion questions
- Suggested visual aid(s)

Practical tips for using the Leader Guide:

- **Don't simply "do" the lesson.**
Stay with the lesson until you have a good understanding of it. This will give you a better grasp of how the Leader Guide takes you through the lesson.
- **You don't have to ask every question in the guide.**
Often one question will be covered while discussing another question so there is no reason to ask it. Your goal is not to ask every question, but to ask enough questions to make sure your group understood the lesson and to help them apply the truths to their lives.

Using the Leader Guide with In & Out


When your entire group uses In & Out

Compare an In & Out lesson with the Leader Guide. Use what relates to the In & Out lesson as a guide for the discussion. Don't teach what's not in In & Out lessons. Remember your goal in the discussion is for your group to discuss what they've learned, not for you to lecture on what you learned.

For groups studying both Precept Upon Precept and In & Out

Use the Leader Guides as designed for PUP, knowing that the In & Out assignments will be covered in the discussion. Make a note in the Leader Guide of what is not in the In & Out.

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PREPARED TO MEET YOUR GOD LEADER GUIDE Lesson 1

Lesson emphasis

- Amos 1–2

HISTORICAL SETTING

Begin your discussion by asking what historical information Amos 1:1 gives. Use the map in the Appendix as a visual aid for the discussion.

Amos was a sheepherder / shepherd.

He was from Tekoa which is about 12 miles south of Jerusalem, about 6 miles south of Bethlehem. Therefore, he might have been from the Southern Kingdom of Judah, but verse 1 says his words concerned Israel.

He prophesied in the days of Uzziah king of Judah and Jeroboam king of Israel. It was two years before the earthquake.

Now ask your group what they learned about the setting for Amos’s prophecies. Tell them to look at “The Historical Chart of the Kings and Prophets of Israel and Judah” in the Appendix of their workbook.

2 Kings 14:23-29; 15:1-7 and 2 Chronicles 25:27–26:23

Jeroboam, possibly named for the first king of Israel, was an evil man whom God used to restore Israel’s borders and save the people from a time of great distress.

According to Jonah’s prophecy, Jeroboam restored Israel’s border from Hamath, which he recovered for Israel, to the Sea of the Arabah. He also recovered Damascus for Israel.

Jeroboam’s reign was the height of Israel’s prosperity as a nation. There were many rich, but they were oppressing the poor. They had fine winter and summer homes.

He was king of Israel for 27 years before Uzziah (Azariah) became king of Judah. Jeroboam reigned a total of 41 years over the wicked nation of Israel.

Uzziah, Azariah in Kings, was made king of Judah at the age of 16 and reigned for 52 years. His kingdom was the most prosperous for Judah since the days of Solomon. He was a great king because he did what was right and sought the Lord.

At one point his heart became proud, and he entered the temple to burn incense (which only the priest could do). God then struck him with leprosy, and his son judged the people of Judah until the king’s death.

Uzziah's 52-year reign in the Southern Kingdom of Judah was also a time of great prosperity for his people. So both kingdoms of Israel and Judah were prospering at the time of Amos's prophesying.

Isaiah 1:1; 5:7-25 and 6:1

Although they had a king who sought the Lord, Judah as a whole was a sinful nation who had revolted against God. Compare with Amos 2:4.

They were busy adding house to house and field to field and getting further and further away from the Lord their God.

There was bloodshed as part of everyday life; the poor were oppressed by the rich. "Justice" for bribery was commonplace. People were calling evil good and good evil.

There was a lack of knowledge of the Lord's Word because of rejecting His law.

Ask if any of this is relevant to current times. Give a brief time to discuss application.

OVERVIEW OF AMOS

What are the segment divisions in Amos? Tell your group to look at their At a Glance chart.

Amos 1–2	God will punish eight nations for their transgressions
Amos 3–6	Hear this word... Three messages regarding Israel specifically
Amos 7–9	Visions about Israel's end

Encourage your group to pay specific attention to what they learn about God in this study of Amos, especially what it says about His sovereignty in this book.

AMOS 1

Verse 2

How does Amos' message begin?

The Lord roars from Zion, Jerusalem.
Pasture grounds mourn and the summit / top of Mt Carmel dries up / withers.
These statements do not sound good.

Verses 3-5

Who and what are these verses about? Remind your group to look at the map. Also discuss the word studies and cross-references when appropriate.

God would punish Damascus for its transgressions

“transgressions,” *pesha*—“rebellion, revolt; i.e., to rise up in clear defiance to authority . . . what is contrary to a standard . . . with a focus on the rebellious nature of the sin”¹

“going beyond the limits of God’s laws”²

Damascus was the capital of Aram / Syria.

Damascus’s judgment was being proclaimed by Amos specifically because they went against part of Israel—Gilead.

Fire was to consume the citadels / strongholds of Aram’s king.

“citadels / strongholds,” *armown*—“from an unused root (mean. to *be elevated*)”³
“a fortified dwelling, usually a part of the royal complex”;⁴ “a military stronghold defensive building, small-based and relatively tall”⁵

God through Amos said that exile was coming for Aram.

Isaiah 7:8 and 2 Kings 13:1-5

There had been war with Israel as far back as the days of Baasha, one of Israel’s early kings. There was also intrigue, treaties, treaties broken, etc. with Israel, Judah, and Aram / Syria. During the days of the kings of Israel and Judah, Aram / Syria was one of their enemies, and sometimes the Lord used them to temporarily judge Israel or Judah.

Verses 6-8

Who are these verse about, and what do they say?

Gaza, Philistines—the land of the Philistines, some of what is called Palestine today

The specific transgression was deporting an entire population to give to Edom. That possibly took place during Jehoram’s reign, king of Judah.

God said that the remnant of the Philistines would perish.

¹James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Hebrew (Old Testament)*. (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

²G. Herbert Livingstone, “1846 פֶּשַׁע,” in *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, eds. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), p. 741.

³James Strong, *The New Strong’s Dictionary of Hebrew and Greek Words* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1996), H759.

⁴Victor P. Hamilton, “164 אָרָם,” in *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, eds. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), p. 73.

⁵James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Hebrew (Old Testament)*. (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

Joshua 13; Judges 10; and 1 Samuel 4

God gave the land of the Philistines to Israel, and the two were enemies since the days of Joshua. Ashdod, Ashkelon, Ekron Gath, and Gaza were the five principal Philistine cities. David fought the giant Goliath from Gath of Philistine territory.

NOTE: Gath was not mentioned because it had been destroyed earlier by Uzziah (2 Chronicles 26:6).

Verses 9-10

Who is next for punishment, and why?

Tyre—in modern Lebanon

They were part of delivering the population / people to Edom.

They didn't remember the covenant of the brotherhood.

NOTE: The covenant of brotherhood might refer to the close ties Israel had in the days of David and Hiram king of Tyre. Hiram also helped Solomon with materials and workers for the temple in Jerusalem, 1 Kings 5:1-12.

Psalm 83 tells of Tyre being part of an alliance against Israel.

Joel mentioned a time of the Philistines and Tyre delivering Judah to the Greeks.

Verses 11-12

What is the message in these verses?

Edom—from Esau, the southern part of modern Jordan

He pursued his brother, Jacob=Israel, with the sword.

What do the cross-references say about the history of Israel and Esau?

Genesis 25 and 27

Twin brothers, born to Isaac by Rebekah

Esau was the firstborn who sold his birthright to his younger brother Jacob.

Then Jacob tricked Isaac into giving him the blessing as well.

The older was to serve the younger.

Esau threatened to kill Jacob after Isaac's death.

Relate this to Amos 1:11.

Deuteronomy 2 and Numbers 20

After Israel came out of Egypt, Edom refused to allow them to pass through his land, saying he if they passed through, Edom would come out against them with a sword.

They both became numerous as families.

God gave Mount Seir to Esau as his possession, and the land of Canaan to Jacob.

2 Kings 8

Judah ruled over Edom until there was a revolt in the days of Jehoram king of Judah.

At this point you might review the judgments.

- Aram, fire and exiled
- Philistines, fire and perish
- Tyre and Edom consumed by the fire

Verses 13-15

Who is last in this chapter? What do these verses say?

Ammon, northern part of modern Jordan

Amos said that they also came against Gilead, ripping open pregnant women of Israel and/ or Judah to enlarge their borders.

Their judgment was fire, battle, and exile.

What do the cross-references about Ammon add?

Genesis 19

The sons of Ammon came from Ben-ammi, Lot's son by his younger daughter. Lot was Abraham's nephew.

Judges 11

Ammon accused Israel of taking some of their land, but God had given Israel the land of the Amorites in battle.

1 Kings 11

They were idol worshippers. Molech was the god to which child sacrifices were made.

Tell your group to look at their At a Glance chart and ask what they noted as a possible theme for Amos 1.

God's punishment for Damascus, Gaza, Tyre, Edom and Ammon

You can ask your group what they learned about the Lord in Amos 1 and how it relates to their lives.

AMOS 2

Verses 1-3

How does Amos's messages about the nations around Israel continue?

Moab, the middle part of modern Jordan

Moab's judgment was because the king burned the bones of the king of Edom to lime. It wasn't enough to kill the king of Edom, but the vengeance went further.

They would suffer consuming / devouring fire amid battle like their brother Ammon.

What do the cross-references say about Moab?

Genesis 19 says Moab was Ben-ammi's brother, Lot's son by his older daughter.

Numbers 25

At one point when Israel was wandering in the wilderness for 40 years, Moab enticed them to come to a festival for their gods. The Lord killed many in Israel for that sin.

2 Chronicles 20

In the days of Jehoshaphat king of Judah Edom, Moab and Ammon were among a multitude who came against Judah.

Isaiah 16

Moab had great arrogance and pride against Israel.

Verses 4-5

How was the message to Judah different from the others? Also discuss the cross-references.

Judgment was because they rejected God's law, His Word, being led astray by lies or false gods.⁶

The devil is the source of lies; he's a liar and the father of lies, John 8:44. God's Word is truth, and Jesus prayed that God would sanctify His followers in the truth, John 17:14-19.

Deuteronomy 8:19; 11:16; Habakkuk 2:18-19; Romans 1:20-25

Deception and men exchanging truth for lies can lead to worshipping other gods, man-made gods.

Consuming / devouring fire was to be Judah's judgment also.

⁶*New American Standard Bible: 1995 update*, marginal note (Amos 2:4) (LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995).

Ask your group what application there is in the 1 Peter 4 cross-reference.

1 Peter 4:17

Judgment begins with God’s household, believers, but not eternal judgment as unbelievers.

Verses 6-8

Ask about the message to Israel and relate this to Amos 1:1, concerning Israel.
From this point in the book, who is the message for?

Israel’s specific sins in this chapter have to do with oppressing the poor, acts of profanity, improper drinking of wine, etc.

Verses 9-11

Ask what your group learned about God’s previous relationship with Israel.

Destroyed the Amorite and gave them his land
Brought Israel out of Egypt
Led them in the wilderness for 40 years
Gave them prophets and Nazirites

What is a Nazarite?

Numbers 6

One who took the Nazarite vow to dedicate himself to the Lord didn’t partake of any grape produce, including wine.

Verses 12-16

How do these verses contrast with the previous?

Israel made the Nazirites drink wine and told the prophets not to prophesy.
Then God became weighted down with them because of their sins.
(ESV—I will press you down in your place....)

Verses 14-16 begin telling of Israel’s coming judgment.
They were trusting in themselves—the swift, the stalwart / strong, the mighty, the bowman, and rider. None of them would save even himself, much less Israel.

What is a possible chapter theme for Amos 2?

God’s punishment for Moab, Judah, and Israel

You might end this discussion by asking how Jesus’ statements in Matthew 22 relate to this time of prosperity in Israel and mistreatment of others. What does that kind of behavior demonstrate?

Israel was secure in their prosperity, and they wanted more wealth.
They didn’t love each other—therefore, they didn’t love the Lord.
They only wanted what He provided.

PREPARED TO MEET YOUR GOD LEADER GUIDE Lesson 2

Lesson emphasis

- Amos 3, 4, and 5

REVIEW

Ask your group what they remember from the previous lesson about Amos. Tell them to look at their At a Glance chart and the map as visual aids for this discussion. Keep your review brief because there is a lot to discuss from this lesson.

It was during the most prosperous time for both nations, Israel and Judah.
His message was one of coming judgment because of transgressions.
He began by addressing six surrounding enemy nations and then Judah and Israel.

The book of Amos concerns the Northern Kingdom of Israel.
He told them to prepare to meet God.

AMOS 3

Verses 1-8

What information do the first two verses give? Who are they about? Also ask about the word study and cross-references.

Verse 1 includes the Southern Kingdom of Judah.

God brought them up from Egypt.
He had chosen (ESV—known) them alone from all other nations.

yada—"to know . . . to know by experiencing";¹ "to perceive, to discern . . ."²

Exodus 19:3-6

They were to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. They were God's own possession among all the peoples. They were the most special people on earth to the Lord God.

Ephesians 1:3-6

New Testament believers in Jesus Christ are also God's chosen people.

¹James Strong, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship, 1996), H3045.

²Warren Baker and Eugene E. Carpenter, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2003), H4035.

You might ask your group how they feel about being chosen by the Lord and give a brief time to share.

What else does verse 2 say about Israel? And ask about the word study.

Even God’s chosen wouldn’t escape punishment for “iniquities.”

‘avon—“perversity, depravity”³; “wrongdoing, with a focus of liability or guilt for this wrong incurred.”⁴ It can also be used for “consequence of or punishment for iniquity.”⁵

What is the main point in verses 3-8? Then ask about the cross-references in Hosea.

Cause and effect

Things happen for a purpose. If they heard a trumpet sound a warning, there was a reason for it. The Lord told them He was sounding a warning through Amos and they should fear the coming calamity / disaster from Him. Punishment was coming.

Hosea 5:8-14 and 13:4-9

Like a lion, the Lord was going to tear them to pieces / tear them.
He would tear open their chests / breast and devour them.

A / the lion had roared! They should have feared what Amos said.

Verses 9-10

Who and what are these verses about?

God called Ashdod and Egypt to witness what was happening in Samaria, the capital of the Northern Kingdom of Israel—tumults and oppressions.

His chosen people didn’t know how to do what was right. They hoarded violence and devastation / robbery.

Verses 11-15

Therefore, what did the Lord God say?

A surrounding enemy / adversary would pull them down; those in Samaria snatched away /rescued. Then He said the altars of Bethel would also fall.

³James Strong, *Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2001), H5771.

⁴James Swanson, J. *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Hebrew (Old Testament)* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

⁵James Strong, *Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2001), H5771.

Ask what your group learned about Bethel from the cross-references of Day Two.

Genesis 12:8 and 35:10-15

Abraham built an altar there and called on the name of the Lord. And Jacob—Israel—named it “the house of God,” because that’s where the Lord had appeared to him.

1 Kings 12:25-33

But the first king of Israel, Jeroboam, set up idols in Israel, one in Bethel and one in the north at Dan.

Throughout Amos, Bethel is referring to a place of sin instead of the “house of God” where Jacob, one of the fathers of the Israelites, met the Lord. It had become a place where the king of Israel had a royal residence, as well as at Samaria.

What is verse 15 about?

The wealth of Israel and the certainty of judgment on the great houses of the wealthy

Ask what they noted on their At a Glance charts as the theme of this chapter.

Lion roared—God spoke; prophesy

Give time for your group to discuss any application from this chapter.

AMOS 4

Verses 1-3

How does this message begin?

Again he said, “Hear this word.”

The rich women of Israel were like the cows of Bashan. But they would be taken away with meat hooks / hooks and fish hooks—taken away from their wealth, from their security, from their pleasures. Again, oppression is referred to.

Tell your group to look at their map and ask what the cross-references say about Bashan.

Jeremiah 50:19; Micah 7:14 and Ezekiel 39:18

Bashan was wonderful pastureland for cattle to graze and become fat.

How does the New Testament reference in 2 Timothy relate to Amos 4:1-3?

2 Timothy 3:1-7

“In the last days” men who claim to be godly will prey on weak women.

Women who are weighed down / burdened with sins and led by their impulses / passions.

They'll be led astray with false knowledge.

Now ask your group how these truths about women can be applied now. Have they seen these things happen?

Verses 4-5

What else was going on in Israel?

The women or all the people were continuing to transgress, but they loved to bring sacrifices, tithes, and offerings to their places of worship, false worship.

Ask your group what they learned about Gilgal from the cross-references .

Deuteronomy 11:29-32; Joshua 4:20-24; 5:10-12; 1 Samuel 11:15; Hosea 4:11-15

Gilgal was the first place God brought Israel in the land of promise.

- Joshua made camp there.
- They observed their first Passover in the land there.
- For the first time they ate some of the land's produce.
- The manna stopped on the next day.
- It was also the place where they made Saul king, their first king.

It was a significant place filled with memories of firsts for Israel. But they had made it a place of false worship.

What did God want from His people? What does He still want from His people?

Micah 6:8

God requires justice, to love kindness, and to walk with Him in humility. His people had strayed far away from that kind of true worship.

Does that kind of thing happen now?

Verses 6-13

What is the repeated statement? What is the rest of this chapter about?

Tell your group to look at the chart in the lesson on Day Three.

The Lord told all the things He had done to bring Israel back to Him.

- lack of bread
- withheld the rain
- scorching wind / blight, mildew, caterpillar / locust
- plague / pestilence
- sword
- overthrew them

But they did not return to Him.

And because of that, they needed to prepare to meet Him in judgment.

How do Leviticus 26 and Hebrews 12 relate to Amos 4?

Leviticus 26:17-33, 40-46

Israel was told what to expect if they disobeyed God. The Law was very specific about the consequences. The repeated use of “seven times / sevenfold” shows that God would continue in bringing those consequences on that disobedient nation. The first set of consequences was designed to cause them to return to Him.

Hebrews 12:5-11

The Lord disciplines New Testament believers because of His love. He wants believers to be holy—as He desired for Israel to be the holy nation among the other nations.

You might ask your group if they have experienced His discipline and what did it bring in their lives. And you might also ask what they learned about God in this chapter.

What is a possible theme for Amos 4?

You have not returned to Me

AMOS 5

Verses 1-3

Ask about this third message in the segment of chapters 3–6. What did the Lord call it and why?

God called Israel to hear a dirge / lamentation—about them.
It was as if these things had already happened.

Amos was filled with the certainty of judgment. Israel would fall and not rise.
There would be none to raise her up.

Verses 4-13

What did the Lord call the people to do? And ask how the Habakkuk cross-reference compares.

Seek Him so that they would live—because judgment was certain.

The certainty of captivity / exile was also clear.
Their places of false worship would be gone, consumed / devoured by the One true God.
They turned justice into wormwood and cast down righteousness.

Habakkuk 1:1-4 says basically the same thing.

Ask what your group learned about God, especially in verses 8-9.

Then ask what the people of Israel were doing. Also ask about the word study.

They hated, abhorred those with integrity / truth.

Oppression of the poor, transgression and “sin”

chattath—“. . . like other words related to the notion of ‘sin’ it assumes an absolute standard or law. But, whereas *peša* ‘ signifies a ‘revolt against the standard,’ and ‘*āwā* means either ‘to deviate from the standard’ or ‘to twist the standard,’ *hātā*’ means ‘to miss, to fall short of the standard.’ ”⁶

God’s people, who had His law—His standard—were revolting against it, twisting it, and missing it.

Verses 14-17

What else were they told to seek and why?

Seek good, not evil, to live—the contrast was that they were calling evil good and good evil. They didn’t even know how to do what was right because justice was so perverted.

If they sought the Lord, sought a repentant life, then perhaps He would be gracious to the remnant. God was not going to stop the judgment, but there was hope for those who remained if they sought Him. They could still turn even when judgment was imminent.

Verses 16 and 17 speak as if the calamity had already happened—a lamentation for Israel’s destruction.

Verses 18-20

Ask what your group learned about the day of the Lord from these verses. Tell them to look at the chart in the Appendix as a visual aid.

Some in Israel had misunderstood its intent. It’s to bring them to the Lord. They were looking forward to it, but it would be darkness not light to those who were so twisted in sin.

What did the Lord say through Amos in verses 21-26? And in the cross-references?

He hated their religious practices. He reminded them of their false gods they had brought with them even from the time of Egypt. They were worshiping the sun, moon, and stars gods. But He made the sun, moon and stars.

What is the theme of this chapter?

A dirge / lamentation; fallen, not rise

Give your group some time to consider modern idolatry, especially in comparison to who God is.

⁶ R. L. Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, eds., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Chicago, Illinois: Moody Press, 1999), p. 277.

**PREPARED TO MEET YOUR GOD
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 3**

Lesson emphasis

- Amos 6–9

REVIEW

To begin this last discussion, tell your group to look at their At a Glance chart and then ask about the overall message of Amos, the historical setting, and the prophet Amos.

Amos was a shepherd / shepherd. The Lord gave him messages concerning the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

It was a time of great prosperity for both kingdoms during Jeroboam’s reign over Israel and Uzziah’s reign over Judah.

God told Israel that judgment was coming on them. They would no longer be spared. Prepare to meet your God.

Ask about the segments of Amos.

Amos 1–2

God said that punishment was coming because of transgressions by . . .

Amos 3–6

God said, “Hear this word . . .” to Israel, and Amos gave 3 messages

Amos 7–9

Amos saw visions regarding Israel’s judgment and restoration

Tell your group to look at the map as a visual aid for this discussion. Point out the various places named in the text as they discuss each.

AMOS 6

Verses 1-3

How does this chapter begin? Who are these verses about, and what did God say about them?

“Woe,” is directed toward the distinguished of Israel, those who are at ease and feel secure in Zion and Samaria.

NOTE: Zion refers to the Southern Kingdom of Judah as in 2:4-5 and 3:1, but the emphasis is on the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

Even as leaders, they couldn’t put off / far away the day of calamity.

They weren't better than other nations who would be judged or had been judged.

Verses 4-7

Who and what are these verses about?

This gives further description of the lavish and easy life for the wealthy in Israel at that time. They cared more for their ease and wealth than they did about the ruin of their country.

They would be at the head of the exiles—they would be the first to go in exile.

How does Ezekiel 9 speak to the same kind of situation later in Judah's history? Ask how this applies to present times.

Only those who mourn, who grieve, over the sins surrounding them are the truly righteous ones. They are the only ones who will be spared from God's judgment.

Verses 8-11

What are these verses about?

Another of their sins was arrogance / pride.
All the city of Samaria would be taken.
Whole families would be cut off, die.

It was too late to call on the name of the Lord.
The greatness in which they put trust was about to be smashed / struck down.

Verses 12-14

How does this message end? How does it relate to 2 Kings 14?

There was no true justice or righteousness.
They were trusting in their own strength.

2 Kings 14:25-27

God used King Jeroboam in a time of distress in Israel to "save" them.

He restored the borders of Israel at that time, but God prophesied through Amos that those places restored would not help when He raised up a nation to afflict them even more—to take them to captivity.

What is a possible theme of this chapter?

Woe—arrogant / proud to exile

AMOS 7

Verses 1-9

What is in these verses?

There are three visions in this chapter.

The first vision is of a locust-swarm / locusts at the time of the main crop. When Amos appealed to the Lord, He changed His mind / relented from destroying the land with locusts.

The second vision was of a fire consuming / devouring the land. Again when Amos interceded, the Lord didn't do it.

But the third vision was of a plumb line put in the midst of His people Israel.

Ask your group what a plumb line is and let them discuss how it was used in this prophecy by Amos. Is there any plumb line in the midst of God's people now?

A plumb line shows true vertical, an absolute standard based on gravity.

God's Word is like a plumb line in that it's an absolute standard—it's God's standard of holiness, righteousness, doctrine, etc. It's complete and absolute in all that God wanted communicated to man.

The people didn't stand right according to the plumb line.
And God would spare them no longer.

How do the cross-references relate to verses 7-9?

Hebrews 1:1-2

God spoke in the Old Testament in the Prophets in many portions (ESV—at many times) and in many ways. That can be observed in Amos. He conveyed messages the Lord had spoken to him and also visions he had seen. Other Old Testament prophets, for example, Daniel and Jeremiah gave several messages or visions over a longer period of time than Amos.

But in the last days God has spoken in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

John 6:63; 7:17-18

Jesus' words are God's Word—they're spirit and life.

2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12

All Scripture is God-breathed and is able to pierce to one's innermost being to judge / discern the heart. God's Word brings life when it's heeded.

Lead the discussion back to Amos 7 and ask about the rest of what God said in verse 9.

There was also a prophecy about Jeroboam’s house being destroyed by the sword.

Verses 10-17

What is this part of Amos’s message?

Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, told King Jeroboam what Amos had said. Although he presented it as conspiracy by Amos, the message was accurately told to the king. He understood God’s message, but chose not to believe it.

Then he confronted Amos and did what Amos 2:12 said. Because of that, Amos also gave a prophecy against his house in 7:17.

How do Matthew 10:24-28 and 2 Timothy 4:1-5 relate to this?

Jesus said not to fear those who malign, but what the Lord gives to speak should be spoken. We, like Amos, are not to fear those who would physically kill but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Even as those in Amos’s time did not want to hear the truth, today people don’t want sound doctrine; they only want to hear what sounds good to them. They turn from the truth to myths, the lies of modern false prophets. But we’re to preach the Word in season and out of season as Amos did—reproving, rebuking, exhorting.

Ask your group what they learned from the cross-references about prophets. Be sure to help them apply the truth of what they studied—who are they listening to, true or false prophets, priests?

Ezekiel 13:17-20

Some prophesy from their own inspiration / hearts.

Their messages are not “God-breathed.”

They lie to people who listen to their lies and choose to believe them.

Micah 3:5-12

Some prophets only lead people astray from God.

They prophesy peace to those who give them something and war to those who don’t.

They have no vision from God, no answer from Him.

Ezekiel, Micah, Jeremiah, and Amos were true prophets from the Lord God who were filled with His power by the Spirit. They were just men who courageously spoke the truth.

Jeremiah 14:13-16; 23:16-18, 21-22, 25-32

Some prophets speak visions of their own imagination / minds or deception from their own hearts. The fact that they’re boastful compares to the arrogance of the people in Amos.

False prophets are not the slightest benefit to people, no matter how wonderful they make their dreams, visions, and prophecies sound.

A true prophet gives a message to turn people from evil to God Himself—not to a following of the prophet.

Now ask about a possible theme for Amos 7. What did they record on their At a Glance chart?

Visions—locusts, fire, plumb line; Jeroboam and Amos

AMOS 8

Verses 1-3

Ask about the next vision and what it meant.

A basket of summer fruit—that was the ripe fruit, it was done.
He said that the end had come for His people Israel . . . spare them no longer (ESV—never again pass by them).

Verses 4-6

What did the Lord say through Amos in these verses?

He said “hear this” again.
Again He called attention to their sinful deeds.

What did those deeds of injustice and oppression show about their hearts? Also, ask about the cross-references.

They were “worshipping” at the new moon, the sabbath, etc. But they couldn’t wait for the “worship” time to be over so they could go back to making money by cheating people.

Titus

People might profess to know God, but their deeds / works show whether or not they really do.

After the regeneration of the Holy Spirit, salvation by grace and redemption from lawless deeds, a purified believer becomes zealous for good deeds / works.

Those deeds are a testimony of one’s salvation.

Matthew 7:15-27

Jesus said that even false prophets can be known by their fruits. They can’t produce / bear good fruit because they don’t believe His Word.

Although some might prophesy, cast out demons and perform miracles / do mighty works “in Jesus’ name,” that doesn’t mean that they are true believers. The fruit of their lives, obedience to His Word is what shows who they really are.

Only those who do God’s will enter His kingdom.

Go back to Amos 8 and ask about verses 7-10.

God doesn’t forget deeds, and Israel’s deeds of pride against Him resulted in God bringing an earthquake two years after Amos’s message.

According to verse 9, it appears that there was also an eclipse of the sun.

NOTE: Some in your group might mention that those kinds of things are also in Revelation. Could here in Amos be a foreshadowing of the final judgment?

What is the subject of verses 11-14?

The Lord said that days were coming on His people when they would seek to hear from Him, but there would be a famine for Him speaking, for His Word.

Because they preferred their idols to Him, there would be a time when they could not hear from Him.

What do the cross-references about idolatry add?

Dan is mentioned in Amos 8:14.

1 Kings 12:28-30 and 2 Kings 10:29

Jeroboam, the first king of the Northern Kingdom had set up golden calves in Dan and Bethel, and each king such as Jehu continued in that sin.

Hosea 8:6

This speaks of God’s rejection of the golden calf of Samaria.

Amos said that those who worship idols would fall and not get up again. Certainly their false gods would not be able to help them.

What is a possible chapter theme?

End has come, not / never rise again

AMOS 9

Verses 1-6

Ask your group what they learned about God in verses 1-6 and Psalm 139:1-16.

As they discuss this, you can note the main things about God on a list, but don't make it lengthy or wordy. Remind your group that not only is Bible study to change their lives, but it's primarily for them to get to know who their God is.

His sovereignty over nature and mankind is clear.
Verses 1, 5, and 9 could also be references to the earthquake.

Man cannot hide from Him.

He said that Israel was going into captivity, exile, and that He would raise a nation against them, the sword.

Verses 7-10

Who and what are these verses about? Tell your group to look at the map and ask about the cross-references.

God's sovereignty over nations is clear here.

He brought Israel out of Egypt,
the Philistines from Caphtor—Genesis 10:6-14; Jeremiah 47:4 and Zephaniah 2:4-5
and the Arameans / Syrians from Kir, a place in Mesopotamia.¹

The Arameans / Syrians would also go into exile, and the Philistines would perish, as chapter 1 also noted.

Acts 17:24-27

He made all nations from one and determined their times and borders.

Verses 11-15

Who and what are these verses about? Also ask about the word study and cross-references.

Israel as the Northern Kingdom fell, not to rise again as a separate kingdom from Judah.

God will raise up the fallen booth of David, house of David—the royal line of Judah's kings.
booth—"booth (rude or temporary shelter)"²; "dwelling place, shelter, i.e.,
housing of various shapes and sizes"³

¹J. Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Hebrew (Old Testament)* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

²James Strong, *Enhanced Strong's Lexicon* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2001), H5521

³James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Hebrew (Old Testament)* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

Acts 15:14-18

This interprets verse 11 to mean that there will be a tabernacle, temple, rebuilt so that the rest of mankind can seek the Lord.

2 Samuel 7:8-13; 2 Chronicles 13:4-5 and Acts 2:29-36

God had promised David that He would establish the throne of David and his sons forever. And the Lord Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of that promise.

Jeremiah 33:14-26

The return of Christ, the Messiah, the righteous Branch of David, will be the fulfillment. God will fulfill His covenant with Israel.

Now lead the discussion back to Amos 9. What else did God say in verses 12-15?

Some people in the nations, Gentiles, will even be called by God's name.

Verse 13 shows that the harvest will be so great that the plowman will still be at work when it is time for the reaper. Amos, like Joel 3:18, says that the mountains will flow with sweet wine, perhaps a reference to such an abundance of grapes.

Verses 14-15 speak of restoration and rebuilding in Israel.

The end of Amos's prophecy says that Israel will not again be rooted (ESV—never again be uprooted) out of their land. And because of that statement, he could not have been speaking of the restoration after the Babylonian captivity as Israel was again rooted out of their land by the Romans in A.D. 70.

So that restoration is future.

What is the theme of this last chapter?

Not totally destroy; raise David; restore land

If there is time, let them share what studying Amos has meant to them.