

# Amos

**Authorship:** Amos, a shepherd (1:1; 7:14-15) from Tekoa, a small hilltop town overlooking the Dead Sea, 10 miles south of Jerusalem.

**Date and Location:** 1:1 states that Amos prophesied during the reign of Jeroboam II (793-753 B.C.) and the southern king Uzziah (Azariah, 790-740), and that God's message came to him "two years before the earthquake." Josephus dates this earthquake at the time of Uzziah's apostasy, c. 750. Amos prophesied at Bethel, where Jeroboam had erected one of his golden calves. He may have ministered at the north's capital city of Samaria as well. His prophecies were probably compiled and recorded at Bethel, Jerusalem, or Tekoa, perhaps shortly after the earthquake.

**Background:** The reign of Jeroboam II in Israel's northern kingdom had been the "golden age" of the north, with great military successes and a thriving economy. Spiritually, however, the nation did not do so well. Toward the end of Jeroboam's reign, God called Amos, from the southern kingdom, to head north with a message of exhortation and judgment for Israel. As a southerner, Amos was not very welcome in the north (see 7:12-13), yet he stood his ground, knowing that God had called him. Although there is no evidence that the two men ever met, Amos would have been a contemporary of Hosea, another prophet to the northern kingdom.

**Recipients:** Although Amos was concerned about the whole house of Jacob (3:1, 13), his message was mainly for the northern kingdom, especially those associated with its idol worship at Bethel (7).

**Purpose:** To call Israel to repent of:

- (1) Outward actions such as violence, social injustice, and idolatry;
- (2) Inward attitudes such as pride and heartless worship.

Amid his denunciations, Amos proclaimed the coming messianic age.

**Unique Features:** (1) Amos is the only Old Testament called from one part of the divided kingdom to prophesy in the other part; (2) Perhaps more than any other Old Testament prophet, Amos shows that an effective minister of God does not need any prescribed level of education or social status; he or she needs only a call from God (7:14-15).

## Meaning of Name

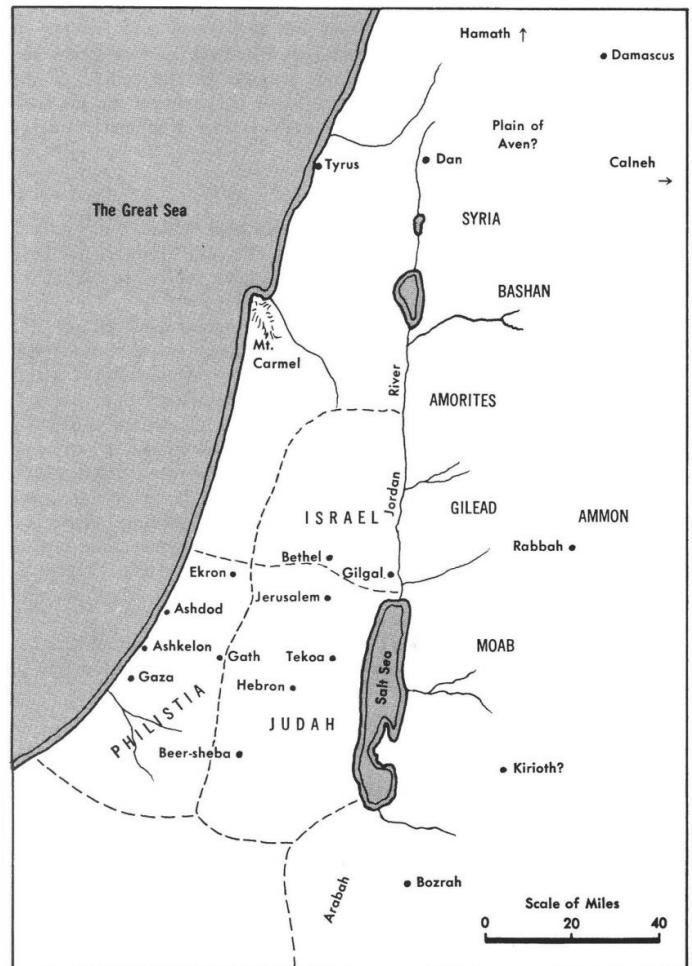
Amos, the eighth-century prophet from Judah to the northern kingdom of Israel, has given his name to this book as its composer. His name means: "Burden Bearer" in Hebrew.

## Key Verse

"I will plant them on their land,  
and they shall never again be uprooted  
out of the land that I have given them,"  
says the LORD your God" (Amos 9:15 ESV).

## Key Term: "Injustice"

Amos proclaimed God's disgust with both the pagan nations and the people of Israel because of their many acts of injustice. God holds all people everywhere, even those who do not recognize him, responsible for practicing social justice.



**Outline:**

- I. Introduction (1:1-2)
- II. The Vigilance of the Prophet (1:3-2:16)
  - A. Lands Near to God's People (1:3-2:3)
    - 1) Those Always Considered as Gentile Foreigners by Israel (1:3:10)
      - a. Damascus (1:3-5)
      - b. Gaza (1:6-8)
      - c. Tyre (1:9-10)
    - 2) Those Always Considered as Genetic Family by Israel (1:11-2:3)
      - a. Edom (1:11-12)
      - b. Ammon (1:13-15)
      - c. Moab (2:1-3)
  - B. Lands Native to God's People (2:4-16)
    - 1) The Doom of Royal Judah (2:4-5)
    - 2) The Doom of Rebellious Israel (2:6-16)
      - a. The Formula (2:6a)
      - b. The Facts (2:6b-12)
      - c. The Future (2:13-16)
- III. The Voice of the Prophet (3:1-6:14)
  - A. As to the Present (3:1-15)
    - 1) The Lord's Questions to Israel (3:1-9)
    - 2) The Lord's Quarrel with Israel (3:10-15)
  - B. As to the Past (4:1-13)
    - 1) The Lord's Scorn (4:1-5)
    - 2) The Lord's Scourge (4:6-13)
  - C. As to the Prospect (5:1-6:14)
    - 1) The Distress of the Lord (5:1-15)
    - 2) The Day of the Lord (5:16-20)
    - 3) The Disgust of the Lord (5:21-27)
    - 4) The Determination of the Lord (6:1-14)
- IV. The Visions of the Prophet (7:1-9:10)
  - A. Judgment Restrained (7:1-6)
    - 1) The Devouring Locust (7:1-3)
    - 2) The Devouring Flame (7:4-6)
  - B. Judgment Required (7:7-17)
    - 1) The Plumbline (7:7-9)
    - 2) The Priest (7:10-17)
  - C. Judgment Restored (8:1-9:10)
    - 1) The Solemn Sign (8:1-3)
    - 2) The Sobering Sermon (8:4-14)
    - 3) The Startling Sight (9:1-4)
    - 4) The Sudden Stroke (9:5-6)
    - 5) The Sifting Sieve (9:7-10)
- V. The Vindication of the Prophet (9:11-15)
  - A. Israel's Privileges Restored (9:11-12)
  - B. Israel's Prosperity Restored (9:13-14)
  - C. Israel's Protection Restored (9:15)

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