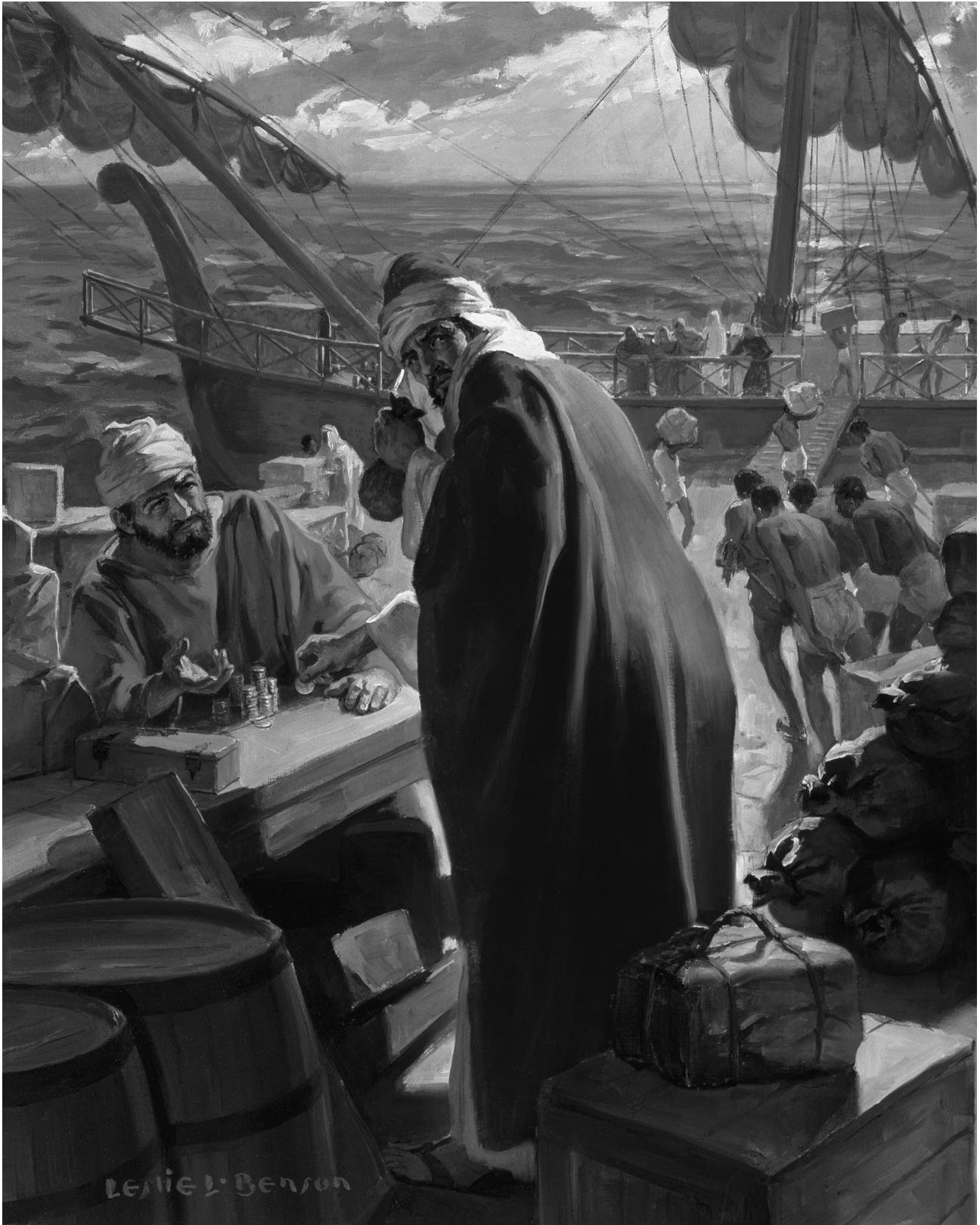


Study Guide





LifeLight Expands

LifeLight

Available NOW!

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|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|--|
| * The Bible: An Overview | **Selected Psalms | John, Pt. 1 | * Galatians/Philippians/
Colossians |
| Genesis, Pt. 1 | * Proverbs | John, Pt. 2 | **Ephesians/
1 & 2 Thessalonians |
| Genesis, Pt. 2 | Isaiah, Pt. 1 | Acts, Pt. 1 | Hebrews |
| Exodus, Pt. 1 | Isaiah, Pt. 2 | Acts, Pt. 2 | * James/Jude |
| Exodus, Pt. 2 | * Minor Prophets | Romans, Pt. 1 | * 1 & 2 Peter |
| * Joshua | **Daniel | Romans, Pt. 2 | 1 John |
| * Judges | Matthew, Pt. 1 | 1 Corinthians | * Revelation |
| * Ruth/Esther | Matthew, Pt. 2 | 2 Corinthians | |
| **Life of David | Luke, Pt. 1 | * Timothy/Titus/Philemon | |
| Minor Prophets | Luke, Pt. 2 | | |

LifeLight Foundations

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|----------------|----------------|-----------|--------------|
| * Prophecy | * Miracles | * Baptism | * Triune God |
| * Bible Feasts | * Law & Gospel | * Worship | |

* all-new LifeLight material ** does not include the Enrichment Magazine

LifeLight Release Schedule

2009 RELEASES

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------|
| LifeLight—Daniel | April |
| * LifeLight—Mark | July |
| * LifeLight Foundations—Ministry | October |

2010 RELEASES

- | | |
|---|---------|
| LifeLight—Life of David | January |
| LifeLight—Selected Psalms | April |
| * LifeLight—Ecclesiastes/Song of Songs | July |
| * LifeLight Foundations—Creation/
New Creation | October |

Other Future Studies:

- 1, 2 & 3 John
- Job
- Wilderness Wanderings (Lev., Num. & Deut.)
- Ezra, Nehemiah

This helpful resource is available now:

- Intro Kit

Judgment on the Nations

*Distribute before session 1 for use in session 1.
Use enrichment magazine pp. 2–7.*

Amos 1:1–2:5

Resources for Worship

Use these resources for your daily study at home and at the week's assembly.

Hymn

The day is surely drawing near
When Jesus, God's anointed,
In all His power shall appear
As judge whom God appointed.
Then fright shall banish idle mirth,
And flames on flames shall ravage earth
As Scripture long has warned us.

The final trumpet then shall sound
And all the earth be shaken,
And all who rest beneath the ground
Shall from their sleep awaken.
But all who live will in that hour,
By God's almighty, boundless pow'r,
Be changed at His commanding.

May Christ our intercessor be
And through His blood and merit
Read from His book that we are free
With all who life inherit.
Then we shall see Him face to face,
With all His saints in that blest place
Which He has purchased for us.

O Jesus Christ, do not delay,
But hasten our salvation;
We often tremble on our way
In fear and tribulation.
O, hear and grant our fervent plea:
Come, mighty judge, and set us free
From death and ev'ry evil.

Bartholomäus Ringwaldt, 1532–99; tr. Philip A. Peter, 1832–1919, alt.
(LSB 508, LW 462, TLH 611, LBW 321, CW 207, ELH 538)

Prayer

O Lord and Ruler of all, open my ears to the message of the prophet Amos. Through him, speak to me of nations deserving Your punishment, and of my own nation. Lead me to accept accountability for injustices, and make me truly repentant before You. Lift me up, O Lord, by the Good News of my Savior, Jesus Christ, who lived and died for me and rose again. In His Name. Amen.

Digging Deep

My Personal Study for Week 1

Day 1 • Read Amos 1:1

Note: In this course's study questions, whenever you see a chapter and verse reference specifying no book of the Bible (as in question 1 below), the book is the minor prophet being treated that week. This week, it is Amos.

1. What do we know about Amos (1:1; 7:14–15)?

2. It was a time of great prosperity—and of great idolatry—for both Israel and Judah. They had rejected what God considered important. What was God's message through Amos? See 3:2; 5:4, 24.

3. Although his home was in Judah, Amos was sent to the Northern Kingdom.

(a) What advantages might an outsider have?

(b) What disadvantages might an outsider have? Consider 7:12–13.

4. (a) Amos is quoted twice in the New Testament, in Acts 7:42–43 and Acts 15:16–17. Summarize the content of each passage.

(b) Why are these passages important for us today?

8. Damascus was the capital of Aram (Syria), Israel's neighbor and rival to the north. Gilead, a region that lay on Israel's border with Aram, would have felt the full impact of Syrian aggression. Read Amos 1:3, which describes Aram's actions against Gilead in a poetic way, and 2 Kings 8:12, which refers to Aram's actions against Israel in literal terms. How would you describe Aram's behavior toward Israel?

9. Think of the expression "for three transgressions . . . and for four" (1:3) this way: "for their many sins—especially for the one sin I am now going to state . . ." While all sins offend God, some are especially offensive. Name a sin that is common in our time and state why it might be especially offensive to God.

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Day 2 • Read Amos 1:2–5

5. Notice that the Lord's pronouncement comes with a roar (1:2). What does this tell you about the message God had for His people?

6. Since the Lord had roared, what would Amos do? See 3:7–8.

7. What do these "roaring" passages tell you about the power of the prophetic Word? See Jeremiah 23:29.

10. How would God's punishment for their sins affect

(a) the ruling house of Aram (sons of Hazael and his son Ben-hadad), 1:4, 5b?

(b) The city of Damascus, verse 5a?

(c) The people of Syria, verse 5c?

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Day 3 • Read Amos 1:6–10

11. Now the prophet turns to two other neighboring nations who had abused Israel. In verses 6–8, Amos pronounces an oracle (a pronouncement of what will happen as revealed by God) concerning the Philistines. Prominent Philistine cities are mentioned—Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, and Ekron. In verses 9–10 the oracle concerns Tyre, a major city-state of Phoenicia. There is a pattern to these doom or judgment oracles. Each accusation is followed by a message of doom and destruction and delivered with the Lord’s authority. What were the sins of the people of Philistia and Phoenicia (1:6, 9)? (Note: Edom was located southeast of the Dead Sea.)

12. What punishments would come upon these nations (1:7–8, 10)?

13. Read 1 Kings 5:1–12. What cooperative effort led to the “covenant of brotherhood” (1:9) established between Phoenicia and Israel?

14. Recall your knowledge of history. (a) Do governments have difficulty in keeping their word? Perhaps you can cite an example or two.

(b) What promises have been difficult for you as an individual to keep?

15. Read Titus 1:1–3 (especially verse 2) and 2 Corinthians 1:20. How can we be sure that God will keep His promises to us?

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Day 4 • Read Amos 1:11–15

16. Amos turns to two more neighboring nations. Both Edom and Ammon were to the east and south-east of Israel. Teman and Bozrah were important cities in Edom, and Rabbah was an important city of the Ammonites. (Gilead was an area in Israel, east of the Sea of Galilee.)

(a) Compare the crimes of Edom and Ammon. What evidence is provided regarding their brutality and cruelty (1:11, 13)?

(b) How would God punish each nation (1:12, 15)?

17. The Edomites were descendants of Esau, the brother of Jacob, from whom Israel was descended. Read Genesis 25:21–34 and 27:30–40. Describe the differences between Esau and Jacob.

18. **Challenge Question.** “The grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many” (Romans 5:15). How does an awareness of the sins of people in the Bible and of your own sin help you to appreciate God’s grace in Christ?

21. Although their crimes were different, what similarities do you find among the sins of Aram, Philistia, Phoenicia, Edom, Ammon, Moab, and Judah?

22. As the Bible shows, God can and does use one nation to punish another. How can Christians live in situations where their nations might be punished by God? Consider Genesis 18:22–25 and Romans 8:1.

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Day 5 • Read Amos 2:1–5

19. Moab was also a nation to the southeast of Israel. Amos mentions its principal city, Kerioth. What was Moab’s crime (2:1)?

20. The last of Israel’s neighbors mentioned by Amos is Judah. Judah and Israel were once one nation, but after the reign of Solomon, Judah and Israel split and went their separate ways. The capital of Judah (sometimes called the Southern Kingdom) was Jerusalem. The capital of Israel (the Northern Kingdom) was Samaria. How did Judah’s crime differ from the sins of the other nations Amos had previously mentioned (2:4)?

Judgment on Israel

*Distribute before session 2 for use in session 2.
Use enrichment magazine pp. 11–13.*

Amos 2:6–3:15

Resources for Worship

Use these resources for your daily study at home and at the week's assembly.

Hymn

Lord of glory, You have bought us
With Your lifeblood as the price,
Never grudging for the lost ones
That tremendous sacrifice;
And with that have freely given
Blessings countless as the sand
To the unthankful and the evil
With Your own unsparing hand.

Wondrous honor You have given
To our humblest charity
In Your own mysterious sentence,
"You have done it all to Me."
Can it be, O gracious Master,
That You deign for alms to sue,
Saying by Your poor and needy,
"Give as I have giv'n to you"?

Lord of glory, You have bought us
With Your lifeblood as the price,
Never grudging for the lost ones
That tremendous sacrifice.
Give us faith to trust You boldly,
Hope, to stay our souls on You;
But, oh, best of all Your graces,
With Your love our love renew.

Eliza S. Alderson, 1818–89, alt.
(LSB 851, LW 402, TLH 442, ELW 707, LBW 424, CW 486, ELH 459, EVaS disk 9, track 9)

Prayer

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that

the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen. (Martin Luther's Morning Prayer, LSC, p. 33)

Digging Deep

My Personal Study for Week 2

Day 1 • Read Amos 2:6–8

1. Imagine Israel listening to Amos's denunciation of foreign nations. When he came to Judah, what might have caused Israel to feel he was hitting closer to home? (Reread 2:4–5.)

2. (a) Read Deuteronomy 15:1, 7–11. How were God's people to treat the needy?

(b) What did God say in Leviticus 25:39–43 about those sold as payment for debts?

(c) Read Exodus 23:6–8. How were the poor to be treated by the courts?

(d) Read Amos 2:8 and Exodus 22:26–27 about taking a person’s cloak as collateral for a loan. What would be particularly heartless about this practice?

(c) Verse 11 (Also read Numbers 6:1–5 for information about Nazirites.)

3. The rich and prosperous people of Israel not only exploited the poor, they also profaned God’s name in another way, 2:7b. How did this one constitute a double offense? See Genesis 2:24, Exodus 20:14, and Leviticus 18:6–8.

6. How did the Israelites show their disregard for these blessings (2:12; 7:16)?

4. Amos accused the Israelites of offending God by using their wrongly-obtained goods even in areas they considered holy (v. 8). When might our offerings to God offend rather than please Him?

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Day 3 • Read Amos 2:13–16

7. Amos graphically pictures Israel’s punishment. Describe the image in verse 13 in your own words.

8. (a) Verses 14–16 describe what would occur when Israel faced enemies in battle. What would happen to various army units: infantry, archers, and mounted cavalry?

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Day 2 • Read Amos 2:9–12

5. The Lord had blessed Israel in the past, vv. 9–11. What were these blessings?

(a) Verse 9

(b) Why might the bravest flee naked (2:16)?

(b) Verse 10

(c) Compare this scene with previous battles (Exodus 17:8–13 and 1 Samuel 7:7–14). What accounts for the different outcome?

9. Read 2 Kings 15:27–31 and 17:1–6, 18–23 to see how Amos’s prophecy was fulfilled. Second Kings 17:7–23 reviews why God’s judgment fell. As you reflect on God’s warnings to Israel, its rejection of His call to repent, and the eventual judgment, what similarities do you see in the world and in the Church today?

(b) The questions in verse 4 picture God as a lion. What point do they make about God?

(c) The questions in verse 5 refer to the disaster threatening Israel. Do they suggest that this disaster will come by chance or by design?

(d) The question in verse 6a suggests Israel’s appropriate response to the disaster that is imminent. What is it?

(e) What point is made by the last question (v. 6b) concerning the cause of the disaster Amos is threatening?

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Day 4 • Read Amos 3:1–8

10. Israel had been “chosen” (v. 2 NIV). Yet now it was being punished. Read Luke 12:48b. How is responsibility related to privilege?

11. How does God bless Christians on our spiritual journey? How do these blessings flow from our lives into the lives of others?

13. Consider a time you found a fabulous recipe or a wonderful bargain and couldn’t help but share it. Or think about a time when you almost automatically blurted out words like “Watch out! There’s a car coming.” Such times can help us relate to what drove Amos (v. 8). Note the mood of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 20:8–9); Peter and John (Acts 4:19–20); and Paul (1 Corinthians 9:16), as they were impelled by God’s Spirit to speak Law and Gospel to the people of their day. How does the Lord move Christians to tell the Good News today?

12. Amos addresses Israel’s position in a series of questions asked, not for information but to make a point.

(a) What point is made by the first question (vv. 2–3)?

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Day 5 • Read Amos 3:9–15

14. (a) Two contemporary powers—Ashdod (Philistia) and Egypt—are summoned. For what purpose (vv. 9, 13)?

(b) Why should believing Christians never fear God's punishment? See Romans 8:1; 2 Corinthians 5:21; and Hebrews 12:3–11.

(b) Why would this be particularly humiliating for Israel?

15. Verses 11–12 prophesy disaster. The scant remains of Israel (v. 12a) might be seen as a glimmer of hope, but not necessarily. See Exodus 22:10–13. How do you interpret the meaning of Amos 3:12a?

16. (a) Two types of structures are mentioned in verses 14–15: The “altars of Bethel” were built to worship golden calves (1 Kings 12:26–33). The horns of an altar ordinarily offered protection to condemned people. Altars, horns, and houses of the wealthy—all would be destroyed. Why would this destruction be particularly appropriate in the light of Israel's specific sins? (See Exodus 21:12–14; 1 Kings 1:50–53; 2:28.)