



01

AMOS 2:4-16

JUDGMENT DECLARED



THIS WEEK'S **focus**

Deep down, we all know that God deserves honor and that it's wrong to mistreat people, but knowledge alone isn't enough to keep us from doing things that surprise even us. Behavior is a heart issue. We make choices according to what we care about most, not just what we know. If we care more about pleasing ourselves than doing what is right, we are going to make selfish choices. This was certainly true of Judah and Israel in the days of the prophet Amos. The problem is, we can't serve God and make selfish choices at the same time. If we don't respond to God's grace and repent of our selfish ways when He tells us to, sooner or later, we will face judgment like Judah and Israel did.



CENTRAL **truth**

If we ignore God and His truth, sooner or later, we will face His judgment.



EXPLORE

scripture

AMOS 2:4-16

AMOS 2:4-8

4 The LORD says: I will not relent from punishing Judah for three crimes, even four, because they have rejected the instruction of the LORD and have not kept his statutes. The lies that their ancestors followed have led them astray. **5** Therefore, I will send fire against Judah, and it will consume the citadels of Jerusalem. **6** The LORD says: I will not relent from punishing Israel for three crimes, even four, because they sell

a righteous person for silver and a needy person for a pair of sandals. **7** They trample the heads of the poor on the dust of the ground and obstruct the path of the needy. A man and his father have sexual relations with the same girl, profaning my holy name. **8** They stretch out beside every altar on garments taken as collateral, and in the house of their God they drink wine obtained through fines.

AMOS 2:9-11

9 Yet I destroyed the Amorite as Israel advanced; his height was like the cedars, and he was as sturdy as the oaks; I destroyed his fruit above and his roots beneath. **10** And I brought you from the land of Egypt and led you forty years in the

wilderness in order to possess the land of the Amorite. **11** I raised up some of your sons as prophets and some of your young men as Nazirites. Is this not the case, Israelites? This is the LORD's declaration.

AMOS 2:12-16

12 But you made the Nazirites drink wine and commanded the prophets, "Do not prophesy." **13** Look, I am about to crush you in your place as a wagon crushes when full of grain. **14** Escape will fail the swift, the strong one will not maintain his strength, and the warrior will not save his

life. **15** The archer will not stand his ground, the one who is swift of foot will not save himself, and the one riding a horse will not save his life. **16** Even the most courageous of the warriors will flee naked on that day — this is the LORD's declaration.

01

AMOS 2:4-16

CONVERSATION

questions

▶ READ AMOS 2:4-8.

.01 What qualified Amos to prophesy, even though he wasn't a member of the prophet guild? What qualifies you to do what God tells you to do?

.02 How did the behavior of God's people affect His reputation among the nations in Amos's day? How does this still happen today?

.03 Which makes more sense to you, God's judgment of Israel's neighbors and enemies or God's judgment of Judah and Israel? Explain.



HISTORY

The Israelites were showing utter disregard for their fellow human beings by selling people who couldn't pay back their debts into slavery. Those they didn't sell, they manipulated and mistreated for their own purposes. The law allowed Israelites to take the cloak of someone who borrowed money from them as collateral for a debt. However, they were supposed to give that cloak back at night so the debtor didn't freeze (see Exod. 22:25-27), and the Israelites weren't doing this. In addition, some Israelites were charging random fines that the poor couldn't contest and then collecting wine from them as payment. Then they got drunk on that wine in places of worship during festivals meant to honor God.

We have new animated videos! Check out video 1 on why Amos and Jonah matter in the lives of students at goexplorethebible.com/students.

READ AMOS 2:9-11.

.04 What kinds of things can cause God's people to forget His faithfulness? Why is it wrong for people to use these things as an excuse for rebellion?

.05 How did God show grace to Judah and Israel even in their rebellion? How does God show grace to His people now?

READ AMOS 2:12-16.

.06 What makes people think they can treat people poorly and worship God at the same time? What do we need to understand?

.07 What do you think life was like for Nazirites and prophets in Amos's day? Can you relate?

.08 How do we sometimes behave similarly to Judah and Israel of Amos's day?



CULTURE

Nazirites were people who took a vow to set themselves apart for God by abstaining from certain worldly things (see Num. 6:1-8). Anyone—rich or poor, male or female—could become a Nazirite for a specified period of time, usually thirty days. Samson, Samuel, and John the Baptist were Nazirites for life. Likewise, anyone who puts their faith in Jesus for salvation becomes a Christian. God adopts us into His family and sets us apart for His own glory. He sends the Holy Spirit to live in us and help us live holy lives. The more intentionally we cooperate with the Holy Spirit, the more we stand out. Like the Nazirites, we proclaim God worthy of our worship and utter devotion.

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01

AMOS 2:4-16

NOW

what?



CENTRAL truth

If we ignore God and His truth, sooner or later, we will face His judgment.

.09 What can we learn from Amos's example? How can we imitate his faithfulness in our own setting?

.10 What can we do to make sure we don't fall into the trap of relying on ourselves like Israel and Judah did? How does relying on ourselves often lead to sin?

.11 What can we do to impact the world around us in a way that honors God?

.12 What can we do to make sure that everyone is treated with the dignity and respect they deserve as bearers of God's image?

DAILY devotions

MEMORIZE AMOS 1:2

7 ARROWS FOR BIBLE READING



What does this passage say?



What does this passage tell us about God?



What did this passage mean to its original audience?



How does this passage change the way I relate to people?



What does this passage tell us about man?



How does this passage prompt me to pray?



What does this passage demand of me?

day 1

AMOS 1:1-5

DWELL

Amos began his prophecies by telling the Israelites about the judgments God was preparing to send against various Gentile nations. Because the Israelites knew they were God's people, they thought of themselves as superior to the nations around them. Not only that, but these nations frequently were at war with Israel. Amos's listeners were probably excited to hear that God was going to punish their enemies! However, they were about to learn that Amos had a difficult message for them, too.



What does the imagery Amos used in verse 2 teach us about God?



Why should we be slow to judge others who commit sins that we have also committed?

MEMORIZE

Add reminders to your phone, computer, or calendar to read Amos 1:2 every morning and night this week.

PRAY

Ask God to show you any areas where you are judging others rather than paying attention to your own sin and disobedience. Ask Him to forgive you.

day 2

AMOS 2:4-8

DWELL

If Amos's listeners were excited to hear that God was planning to punish their neighbors, they were in for a rude awakening—they were going to be judged, as well. Just like their ancestors, the Israelites hadn't been following God's clear instructions to them. They were oppressing the poor to improve their own lives. They were also dishonoring God with sexual immorality. They were making a mockery of God and their covenant with Him, and soon they would experience the consequences of their disobedience.

← Why do you think Amos prophesied against the Gentile nations first, and then prophesied against Israel? What was he trying to show his listeners?

↔ Re-read verse 7a. What are some ways that you see people in need in your community being mistreated like this? How should God's people act instead?

MEMORIZE

Write Amos 1:2 on a sticky note and place it on your bathroom mirror. Read it to yourself each time you brush your teeth or wash your hands.

PRAY

Pray that God would show you opportunities to pursue justice and compassion for those in need in your communities.

day 3

AMOS 2:9-11

DWELL

↑ What was God reminding the Israelites about in these verses? Why was He reminding them?

↪ What is the connection between remembering, gratitude, and obedience? How can you live these out in your own life?

In contrast to their stubborn and unjust disobedience, God reminded Israel of the ways He had cared for them and built up their nation. He had destroyed the Amorites so Israel could live in the land He had promised them. He had led them safely out of slavery in Egypt and through the wilderness. He had even honored many of them by calling them to serve Him. Yet, despite His loving care, they had still turned their backs on Him. Instead of thanking God for providing for them, they sought to provide for themselves, sinning against God as well as their fellow Israelites in the process.

MEMORIZE

Pick a song you enjoy and read or sing Amos 1:2 aloud to the beat of that song. Read the verse this way throughout the week, trying to recite more of it from memory each time.

PRAY

Thank God for His love, mercy, and faithfulness, and ask Him to show you people you can show that same love and mercy to this week.

day 4

AMOS 2:12-16

DWELL



What kind of people does Amos list in verses 14-16? Why do you think he specifically mentioned these people?



Why was the Israelites' treatment of the prophets and Nazirites such a big deal? How do we sometimes act like this today?

Not only had the Israelites forgotten about God's love for them, but they showed further disrespect for Him by disrespecting the men and women He had chosen to serve Him. One of the vows Nazirites made was to abstain from drinking alcohol (see Num. 6:1-3). The job of a prophet was to prophesy. By making the Nazirites drink wine and telling the prophets to not prophesy, God's people were doing more than just ignoring Him—they were piling on the insults. In return, God was not going to hold back with His punishments.

MEMORIZE

Write Amos 1:2 on the center of a sheet of paper, then add drawings or doodles around the edges that relate to the verse. Hang it somewhere you will see it every day.

PRAY

Pray that He would give you ears to hear when He uses other people to speak to you, and ask Him to forgive you for any times you didn't listen because you didn't like what they had to say.

day 5

ROMANS 2:1-5

DWELL

If we judge others for sin, then we have no excuse for our own disobedience, because we have shown that we're aware of the commands we ourselves are supposed to be following. In fact, the very same sins we judge others for are often the very sins that we ourselves are guilty of! As Paul points out, God's judgment is based on His truth, not our own judgments about ourselves and others. So instead of pointing fingers at other people, we should examine our own lives and make sure that we are following God faithfully.



Re-read the devotion from day 1. How were the Israelites guilty of the kind of hypocrisy Paul warns against here?



How can we encourage one another when we are tempted to judge others for the way they are acting?

MEMORIZE

Write each word of Amos 1:2 on a separate note card. Shuffle the cards and try to put them in the correct order. Do this throughout the week until you can do it from memory.

PRAY

Thank God for the riches of His kindness and mercy. Thank Him that He is slow to anger and that His discipline is not cruel, but meant to lead us to repentance—to turn back to Him.

