

ActNow! (Applying Christ's Teaching NOW) follows the weekly sermon series of TPMC, and challenges us to apply and put into practice the biblical truths we hear each week. It is the recommended Bible discussion material for TPMC's Connect Groups, and leader's notes are available to all Connect Group Leaders and at the Information Counter.

Amos: What Is the Good Life?

Amos 1:1-2

Rev Benjamin Lee

SERMON SYNOPSIS

- **Overview of the Book of Amos:** It is a call to God's People to return to Him in the way they live their lives.

- **What we learn about the Book of Amos:**

The Man

The name Amos means "burden" or "lift a burden" and the prophet Amos was a sheep breeder. Therefore, Amos the prophet was likely to be rich and influential & hence, was a man of affluence denouncing the ungodly affluence in the world.

The Places

Tekoa, mentioned in Amos 1:1, was a military outpost in Israel. It was located south of Jerusalem, near the Judean wilderness, and the silence of the wilderness was a great place for Amos to contemplate and to reflect.

Northern Kingdom of the nation Israel is referred to as "Israel", "Jacob" &/or "Joseph" in the Old Testament – while the *Southern Kingdom* of the nation Israel is referred to as "Judah".

The Times

Reigns of Kings – Amos was written in the reigns of King Uzziah (Judah) & King Jeroboam (Israel) and they reigned 51 years & 40 years respectively. There was much stability and expansion of the kingdom that brought in much wealth and prosperity in both kingdoms. However, much decadence and corruption also crept into the two kingdoms.

Reproach of the Prophets – In the Northern Kingdom, God sent prophets Amos & Hosea while for the Southern Kingdom, God sent Isaiah & Micah to give ample warnings for His people to return to Himself & hence, His ways.

The Themes

TWO themes were raised in the Book of Amos: *Judgment of the Lord* and *The Day of the Lord*. While the themes are weighty & sombre, they are nonetheless evidences that the Lord loves & cares for His People and earnestly desires for them to return to Him & live by His ways with their whole heart.

- **The Good Life** – The Good Life is a life lived in/by the ways of the Lord with justice & righteousness.
- **God's Response** – God will forgive and receive His People back to Himself *IF* they return to Him evidenced by living life the way that pleases God.
- **Response from God's People** – Unfortunately, God's People in both kingdoms refused to return to God & His ways and judgment fell and they were exiled. *What would our response be TODAY?*

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

RELATE

1. What does society today perceive as "the good life"?

REFLECT

2. The Book of Amos is a call to God's People, through ample warnings, to return firstly to Himself & also to His ways. A true wholehearted return is evidenced by the way they live their lives – with justice and righteousness. HOW can each one of us *hear* God's warnings to us today from the Scripture passages appended below?

[Verses to help us go deeper: Jeremiah 17:9-10; Psalm 51:17; Proverbs 1:7]

RESPOND

3. Would you be willing to hear God's warnings to you today? Share with your CG which Scripture text(s) among Jeremiah 17:9-10, Psalm 51:17 & Proverbs 1:7 you have chosen to act on & the reasons for your response.

PRAYER POINTERS

- *Thank* the Lord for His covenantal love, mercy, grace and faithfulness in *still* desiring us to return to Him & His ways and has not brought judgment upon us today.
- *Thank* God for His promise that He will forgive and receive us back to Himself & His ways *IF* we return to Him wholeheartedly.
- *Pray* for yourself, your CG members, TPMC, and the universal Church of Jesus Christ to be willing to *hear* God's warnings and *heed* these warnings before it is too late.

SCRIPTURE TO MEDITATE ON

"For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah, as on the day at Massah in the wilderness, when your fathers put me to the test and put me to the proof, though they had seen my work. For forty years I loathed that generation and said, "They are a people who go astray in their heart, and they have not known my ways." Therefore, I swore in my wrath, "They shall not enter my rest." [Psalm 95:7-11]