

AMOS

The Man: A shepherd from Judah (the Southern Kingdom), Amos prophesied in Israel (the Northern Kingdom) about 750 B.C., at the great cult center of Bethel. He describes his call to the prophetic ministry in 7:14-16.

The Times: Israel was at its peak under Jeroboam II and Judah was also prospering. But the social order was oppressive to the poor and social injustices were rampant, violating the Covenant's concept of the brotherhood of all God's people.

The Message: After condemning some foreign lands for their crimes, Amos turned his attention to Israel, warning that the Lord's wrath will strike them for their injustice and idolatry. Disturbed by Amos' prophecy of the overthrow of the sanctuary, the fall of the royal house, and the captivity of the people, the priest of Bethel (Amaziah) expelled him from the shrine. Despite the Lord's dire judgment of Israel's sins, there is the promise of restoration under a Davidic king.

Prophetic Themes in Amos

Authority: This is the Lord's message: [3:1,13]
"Thus says the Lord ..." [1:3,6,9,11,13; 2:1,4,6; & more]
I was called by God: [7:14-16]

Covenant Relationship: the Lord has acted on Israel's behalf: [2:9-11; 3:2]

Specific Sins: infidelity, bribery, oppression of the weak and the poor: [2:4-8,12; 5:2,10-13]

Judgment – defeat, ruination, decimation in battle: [2:13-16; 3:14-15; 5:1-3,16-20]

Call to Repentance – seek the Lord, that you may live: [5:4-6,14-15]

Remnant – the Lord will pity a remnant and restore the land to them: [5:14-15; 9:8-15]

Readings at Mass

7:12-15 – The clash between Amaziah, priest of Bethel, and Amos, during which Amos relates his calling from God. [Year B, 15th Sun. in Ordinary Time]

8:4-7 – The Lord's judgment against those who cheat and abuse the needy and the poor. [Year C, 25th Sun. in Ordinary Time]

6:1,4-7 – Woe to those living in luxurious revelry! [Year C, 26th Sun. in Ordinary Time]

[Weekdays of Year II, 13th Week in Ordinary Time:] Mon: 2:6-10,13-16; Tues: 3:1-8, 4:11-12; Wed: 5:14-15,21-24; Thur: 7:10-17; Fri: 8:4-6,9-12; Sat: 9:11-15