

Handout 7-G

## ..... *Reading the Prophet Amos* .....

The prophet Amos is one of the minor prophets who preached in the Northern Kingdom of Israel about 750 BC. His prophesying was rather direct: after getting the Israelites' attention, he pointed out the inconsistency between what they believed and the way they lived. Read the suggested chapters below and respond to the questions that follow.

*Read Amos 3.*

In this chapter the prophet asks several rhetorical questions.

1. What is the answer he is looking for?
2. Verse 7 mentions "God's plan." What plan is revealed in the ensuing verses?

*Read Amos 4.*

This chapter begins to list Amos's charges against the Israelites.

3. To whom does the prophet address his words in verses 1–3?
4. What will be the fate of those who oppress the needy?
5. In verses 4–6, Amos condemns the formalism of their worship. He specifically condemns what two religious rituals?
6. Verses 7–11 reveal the ways God used to try and win back the people of Israel. What were these?

*Read Amos 5.*

In chapter 5 Amos says that on the “day of the Lord” Israel’s enemies would be destroyed, but Israel too would be punished. It would be a day of darkness, not of light. Worship in the time of the prophet had become an empty ritual because it was not lived out.

7. Who has been hurt?
  
8. Who is “he” referring to in verse 8?
  
9. List the sins enumerated in verses 7–17.
  
10. Verse 21 says that God doesn’t like the way they are worshipping. What, specifically, does he dislike? (See *NABRE footnote*.)
  
11. Verse 18 refers to the “day of the Lord.” How does Amos view this day?

*Read Amos 9.*

In this chapter the tone of the prophet changes beginning in verse 8. His harsh words point to the fact that not all will be punished; indeed, the remnant would be saved.

12. What does the footnote state about the symbolism of the opening verses of the chapter?
  
13. What does the Lord promise in verse 8b?
  
14. What does the Lord promise in verse 11 about the house of David?
  
15. What does the Lord promise in verse 14?
  
16. According to the footnote, how does the Apostle James interpret verses 11–15 in the New Testament?