

Dr. Marv Wilson, Prophets, Session 12, Amos, Part 2 Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Wilson, Prophets, Session 12, Amos, Part 2, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Marv Wilson's teaching on the Prophet Amos, specifically Part 2 of Session 12, **explores Amos's pronouncements against social injustice.** The lecture examines Amos's background and his condemnation of the wealthy's corruption and disregard for the poor. It discusses Amos's indictment of foreign nations for inhuman acts, including cruelties and civil rights violations, as well as his focus on the moral responsibilities of all people, not just God's chosen people. Wilson unpacks the prophet's messages against Damascus, Gaza, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, Moab, Judah and Israel, highlighting their sins and impending judgment, paying particular attention to God's mercy and his call to treat each other with kindness.

**2. 16 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Wilson, Prophets, Session 12 – Double click icon to play in
Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL]
Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament →
Major Prophets → Prophetic Literature).**



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ession12.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Wilson, Prophets, Session 12, Amos, Part 2

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided excerpts of Dr. Marv Wilson's lecture on Amos:

Briefing Document: Dr. Marv Wilson on Amos (Session 12, Part 2)

Overview:

This session of Dr. Wilson's lecture focuses on the prophet Amos, emphasizing his role as a messenger of social justice and his indictments against the nations, particularly Israel and Judah. Wilson explores Amos's historical context, his specific charges, and the implications of his prophecies. The lecture uses vivid imagery and draws connections between the ancient world and modern-day issues.

Key Themes and Ideas:

1. Amos as the Prophet of Social Justice:

- Amos is characterized as someone who, though a shepherd, was deeply concerned with the injustices of his time. He was "very disgusted with the rich becoming richer and all kinds of religious activity going on around him, and yet society was corrupt."
- Wilson emphasizes Amos's distinction between "outward religion and ceremonial ritual" and "people who lived life in the inward spiritual capacity, caring for others around them."

1. God's International Morality:

- Wilson highlights that Amos's prophecies against foreign nations demonstrate that "God has an international morality." It's not just his covenant people who are expected to live ethically, but also other nations.
- This theme ties into the book of Jonah, suggesting a broader divine concern for justice and righteousness in the region and the world.

1. Indictment of Foreign Nations:

- Amos's prophecies follow a pattern of "three transgressions, yes for four," indicating a culmination of sin before divine judgment. This is applied to several nations before indicting Israel and Judah. The pattern used is 'crime upon crime, saturation, the increase' and then fire as a symbol of divine judgement.

- **Damascus:** Condemned for threshing Gilead with "threshing sledges of iron," used to rip open the bodies of captives, a cruel form of torture. The idea was that the cart wheels that would normally break up grain to prepare it for threshing were instead used on human bodies.
- **Gaza:** Indicted for "wholesale traffic in slavery" involving men, women, and children. The city's commerce is implicated in the dehumanization of people.
- **Tyre:** Similar to Gaza, condemned for being a middleman in slave trading. The Phoenician city is a commercial powerhouse engaged in the trade of humans.
- **Edom:** Accused of "pursuing his brother, that is Israel, without pity," referencing the ongoing conflict that started with Esau and Jacob, and the Edomites refusal to allow passage through their land. This lack of "brotherliness" is heavily critiqued.
- **Ammon:** Charged with "declaring war on the unborn," specifically "ripping up the wombs of women who are pregnant" for territorial expansion.
- **Moab:** Condemned for "burning the bones of the king of Edom to lime," considered a desecration of the body.
- Wilson highlights the cultural significance of respecting the dead in the ancient world to give context to why this was an abomination.

1. **Indictment of Judah:**

- Judah is rebuked for religious apostasy, rejecting "the Torah or Torah Adonai" and going after false gods. The sin of Judah is not adhering to the lofty spiritual and ethical teachings of the Torah. This reinforces the idea that the role of the prophet is to not introduce new teaching but to bring people back to established tradition.

1. **Indictment of Israel (Northern Kingdom):**

- The indictment of Israel is more detailed, highlighting specific social and economic injustices:
- **Selling the righteous for silver** and the needy for a pair of sandals: Undermining the value of human life in favor of profit. The worth of a human was diminished.
- **Trampling upon the poor:** Exploiting those with no power, self-aggrandizement of the wealthy.
- **Denying justice to the oppressed:** Justice is for sale to the highest bidder.

- **Temple prostitution:** Corruption within the religious context, including men using the same girl.
- **Lying down on garments taken in pledge:** Violating the law of Moses regarding collateral and showing a lack of consideration for the poor.
- Wilson reads from Exodus 22:26-27 to highlight the ways in which the rich were breaking the Torah regarding pledges and proper behavior toward the poor.
- They were also drinking "wine taken as fines," demonstrating corruption in leadership.

1. **Recalling God's Gifts and History:**

- Amos emphasizes God's past mercy to Israel (deliverance from Egypt, guidance in the wilderness, the land of Canaan) to underscore their ingratitude. "You should never treat your neighbor this way because God has been very gracious to you, and you better never forget His gifts."
- He highlights that God's grace was not just to the nation of Israel as a whole but also to special people within that community like the prophets, and Nazarites.
- The people's treatment of the prophets and the Nazarites highlights their overall lack of respect for God's gifts to them and their mistreatment of their neighbors.

1. **Prophecy of Imminent Destruction:**

- The Northern Kingdom is facing "complete destruction" symbolized by the number 7. Amos used 7 literary devices to make the point of complete destruction.
- "The swift will not escape. The strong will not muster their strength. The warrior will not save his life. The archer will not stand his ground. The fleet-footed soldier will not get away. The horseman will not save his life. And then number 7, The bravest warrior, will flee naked on that day."
- The prophet indicates that 721 AD will be the end of the Northern Kingdom.
- Wilson also references the "ten lost tribes of Israel" that were the result of this destruction.

1. **The "Shema" Structure:**

- The second part of the book is structured around the word *Shema* (Hear, Listen), indicating a crucial message against Israel. This is repeated in chapters 3, 4, and 5.

1. Rhetorical Questions & Divine Authority:

- Amos uses rhetorical questions to emphasize the cause and effect of divine judgment. "Do two walk together unless they've agreed to do so?" These questions suggest that every event has a cause.
- He asserts his prophetic authority by saying "Surely, the sovereign Lord does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants, the prophets." He argues that his presence is because God sent him as his spokesperson.

1. Symbolic Language and Imagery:

- Wilson describes how Amos uses the natural world and imagery of his shepherd's life to connect with his audience and drive his point home. He uses images from nature to describe the coming destruction.
- He explains the symbolism of the "horns of the altar" and how they will be cut off, signifying the end of their religious system. He references how the horns were also areas of asylum.
- Wilson explains how women were addressed as 'cows of Bashan' as a demeaning image of their luxury, ease, and disregard for the poor.
- The prophet's metaphor that women will be led away with fish hooks is seen through historical accounts on Assyrian monuments.

Quotes:

- "Amos, the guy who chaperoned sheep all day long and was very disgusted with the rich becoming richer and all kinds of religious activity going on around him, and yet society was corrupt."
- "God has an international morality, and it's not just his own covenant people who are to live ethically and responsibly, but God desires those in the whole region in which Israel lived to live the same way."
- "For three sins of Yisrael... the northern kingdom. ...selling the righteous for silver...trampling upon the poor... denied justice to the oppressed."
- "You should never treat your neighbor this way because God has been very gracious to you, and you better never forget His gifts."
- "Surely, the sovereign Lord does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants, the prophets."

Conclusion:

Dr. Wilson's lecture on Amos provides a rich context for understanding the prophet's message of social justice and divine judgment. The lecture connects ancient injustices with contemporary issues and highlights the importance of a balanced religious practice that emphasizes both spiritual devotion and ethical behavior. The lecture also gives important context to the literary devices used by Amos in his writing. Amos's message remains relevant, challenging us to reflect on the ways in which we, as individuals and communities, are living in the world.

4. Study Guide: Wilson, Prophets, Session 12, Amos, Part 2

Amos: Prophet of Social Justice - Study Guide

Quiz

Instructions: Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each.

1. According to Dr. Wilson, what is the central theme of the book of Amos?
2. What is the significance of the "fire" mentioned in Amos' prophecies against various nations?
3. What specific crime does Amos accuse the people of Damascus of committing?
4. What is the crime that the people of Gaza are accused of?
5. What was the source of the Tyrian's wealth, and what was their ethical infraction?
6. What is the relationship between the Edomites and the Israelites?
7. How does Amos describe the actions of the Ammonites, and what is the specific cruelty he mentions?
8. Why does Amos condemn the Moabites' actions regarding the king of Edom?
9. What does Amos identify as the specific sin of Judah?
10. What does Amos mean when he uses the metaphor of a cart crushing grain in his prophecy against the Northern Kingdom of Israel?

Quiz Answer Key

1. The central theme of the book of Amos is social justice, with a focus on condemning crimes against humanity, the corruption of the wealthy, and the disparity between outward religious practice and inner spiritual reality.
2. The "fire" mentioned in Amos' prophecies is a symbol of God's judgment and is also likely a symbol of war. It represents the destruction that will come upon these nations for their transgressions.
3. Amos accuses the people of Damascus of brutally threshing the people of Gilead with iron sledges, a cruel practice used to rip open the bodies of captives. This symbolizes civil rights violations and inhumanity.

4. The people of Gaza are accused of engaging in wholesale traffic in slavery, selling men, women, and children for profit. They did not spare the helpless and were solely interested in revenue from the sale of human beings.
5. The Tyrians were a commercial city and middle men in the slave trade, selling captured people as slaves for profit. Their infraction was the inhumanity of treating people as commodities.
6. The Edomites and Israelites are seen as brothers, with a lineage tied to Esau and Jacob. There was constant conflict between them, stemming from Genesis and characterized by a lack of brotherly compassion.
7. Amos describes the actions of the Ammonites as territorial greed taken to extreme cruelty, specifically ripping open the wombs of pregnant women in Gilead to expand their borders.
8. Amos condemns the Moabites because burning the bones of the king of Edom to lime was a desecration of the body, a great sacrilege in the ancient world. This showed disrespect for the deceased and is part of an indictment of cruelty.
9. Amos identifies Judah's specific sin as religious apostasy. He says that they have rejected the Torah or law of the Lord, not keeping its decrees, and going after false gods.
10. When Amos uses the metaphor of a cart crushing grain, he is speaking to a complete destruction of the Northern Kingdom. His prophecy indicates a thorough and inescapable judgment that will reduce their strength.

Essay Questions

Instructions: Answer the following essay questions in well-organized and thoughtful responses.

1. Analyze the relationship between social injustice and religious hypocrisy as depicted in Amos's prophecies. How does the prophet connect outward religious observance with moral conduct?
2. Compare and contrast the indictments against the foreign nations and the indictments against Judah and Israel. What does this reveal about God's standards of morality and judgment?
3. Discuss the significance of the historical context in understanding Amos' prophecies. How does Amos use historical events to shape his message and challenge his audience?
4. Explain the use of rhetorical questions, metaphors, and vivid imagery that Amos uses to convey his message of judgment. Give specific examples.
5. How does Amos' use of "remnant" create a message of both judgment and hope? Is the prophet solely focused on condemnation?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Social Justice:** Fairness in the distribution of resources, opportunities, and privileges within a society, which Amos emphasizes.
- **Torah:** The first five books of the Hebrew Bible (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy), containing the law and teachings of God, which the prophet claims Israel had neglected.
- **Apostasy:** The abandonment or renunciation of a religious belief or practice, seen as the main sin of Judah in Amos.
- **Prophet:** A messenger of God, often speaking out against injustice and calling people back to righteousness. Amos is an example of this.
- **The Northern Kingdom (Israel):** The separate kingdom formed after the division of the united monarchy, whose corruption and fall are a main concern in Amos.
- **The Southern Kingdom (Judah):** The smaller kingdom in the southern region, with its capital in Jerusalem, whose religious apostasy is also condemned.

- **Bethel:** A religious site in the Northern Kingdom where the altars and idolatry were condemned by Amos.
- **Gilead:** A region east of the Jordan River, known for its balm and also a target for attacks, as noted by Amos.
- **Edom:** A nation southeast of the Dead Sea, often in conflict with Israel, whose actions were condemned by the prophet.
- **Ammon:** A nation east of the Jordan River, whose aggression and cruelty against the unborn are condemned by Amos.
- **Moab:** A nation east of the Dead Sea whose desecration of the dead is condemned by Amos.
- **Nazarite:** An individual consecrated to God, following a specific vow, whose vows are violated by the people according to Amos.
- **Yom HaHu:** Hebrew for "that day," often referring to a day of judgment or the day of the Lord.
- **Shema:** Hebrew for "hear," "listen," which introduces the second section of the book of Amos.
- **Bashan:** An area east of the Sea of Galilee, known for its fertile land and sleek cattle, which Amos uses as a metaphor for the wealthy women of Samaria.
- **A Fortiori:** An argument "from the stronger," a type of argument that moves from the lesser to the greater.

5. FAQs on Wilson, Prophets, Session 12, Amos, Part 2, Biblealearning.org (BeL)

FAQ on the Prophet Amos based on Dr. Marv Wilson's Lecture

- **What is the primary focus of Amos's prophetic message?** Amos is primarily concerned with social justice and the disparity between outward religious practices and genuine inward spirituality. He denounces the wealthy elite who engage in religious rituals while simultaneously exploiting the poor and vulnerable. Amos emphasizes that true devotion to God requires ethical living, compassion, and justice for all, not just religious observances.
- **What are the "crimes against humanity" that Amos condemns?** Amos specifically calls out several nations for their inhumane actions, including the threshing of people with iron sledges, the wholesale trafficking of slaves (including women and children), the relentless pursuit of brother nations without pity, the tearing open of pregnant women to expand territory, and the desecration of corpses by burning them to lime. He is particularly concerned with cruelty and injustice towards vulnerable populations.
- **How does Amos portray God's justice toward both Israel and surrounding nations?** Amos portrays God as having an international morality that applies not only to Israel but to all nations in the region. God holds all nations accountable for their ethical conduct, and he judges them based on their actions, not just their covenant status. The prophet uses the phrase "for three transgressions, yes, for four," to indicate a saturation point where a nation's crimes have reached a limit and judgment is imminent, often symbolized by fire.
- **What is the significance of the historical context of Amos's prophecies?** Amos's prophecies are delivered a few decades before the fall of the Northern Kingdom of Israel in 722-721 BC. His messages are warnings to the people, emphasizing the consequences of their corruption and mistreatment of others. He reminds them of God's previous acts of mercy and deliverance in their history and rebukes them for forgetting these gifts and behaving unethically. He calls them back to the ethical teachings of the Torah.

- **How does Amos critique the religious practices of his time?** Amos critiques the religious practices of his time because there was a disconnect between outward religious practice and the ethical implications of the covenant. People were engaging in temple prostitution, ritualistic observances, while mistreating the poor, denying justice, and acting with cruelty. The prophet emphasizes that God desires genuine righteousness, compassion, and justice from His people more than mere religious formalities. This is true for both Judah and the Northern Kingdom, though their sins are slightly different. For Judah, it is a rejection of the Torah, while for the North it is ethical corruption.
- **What are the specific sins of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, according to Amos?** The Northern Kingdom of Israel is condemned for a multitude of sins, including selling the righteous into slavery for trivial amounts of money, trampling on the heads of the poor, denying justice to the oppressed, engaging in temple prostitution, using garments taken as collateral for bedding instead of returning them at sunset, and drinking wine bought with money obtained illegally through corruption and exploitative practices. Furthermore, the people are indicted for mistreating special gifts like prophets and Nazarites, as well as ignoring the great gifts God had already given.
- **What role do rhetorical questions play in Amos's prophecies?** Amos uses rhetorical questions to draw attention to the cause-and-effect relationship between behavior and its consequences. These questions (like the examples of lions roaring and birds falling into traps) highlight the obvious connection between ethical action and divine judgment. Amos uses rhetorical questions to underscore that his prophetic ministry has a cause; he is speaking because God has commanded him to.
- **How does Amos use imagery from nature and everyday life to convey his messages?** Amos draws upon his background as a shepherd to use imagery from nature, employing animal metaphors, such as lions and lambs, and examples such as the way a cart crushes grain when loaded. He speaks of "cows of Bashan" as a way to rebuke the wealthy women and also the "fish hooks" they will be dragged away by. This vivid imagery makes his messages more relatable and demonstrates the consequences that the people can understand, based on their shared experience of life and work in that time.