Amos, the Courageous Prophet

Amos 1:1; 2:11-12; 3:7-8; 7:10-15
SS Lesson for 06/28/2026

Devotional Scriptures: Ezek 2:1-8

OUTLINE

LESSON BACKGROUND AND KEY VERSE

Background from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary
Key Verse: Amos 7:15

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  - A shepherd that feeds the flock out of love (John 21:15-17)
  - A shepherd that seeks and abides by God's counsel (Jer 23:22)
  - A shepherd that participates in the making disciples of others (Matt 28:19-20)
  - A shepherd that is a watchman and who is accountable for the flock (Ezek 33:7-9)
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Lesson Background and Key Verse

Background from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

The book of Amos is one of 12 entries in the section of the Bible known as the Minor Prophets. These books are not "minor" in message; they are "minor" only in length when compared with the "major" prophets of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. Amos preached in the northern kingdom of Israel in about 755 BC (see more on Amos 1:1). He ministered during a period of economic prosperity (3:15; 6:4-6). The national borders had been extended significantly through military campaigns (2 Kings 14:23-28). All this resulted in excessive pride and injustice among the people (Amos 6:8, 12-13). Despite material wealth, the kingdom was in spiritual decline. The people practiced idolatrous worship at national shrines in the cities of Dan, Bethel, and Gilgal (Amos 4:4; 5:5, 26; 8:14; compare 1 Kings 12:28-30). The people silenced voices that challenged their practices (Amos 2:11). Again, the question is: Whose words will be heeded?

Key Verse: Amos 7:15

Then the Lord took me as I followed the flock, and the Lord said to me, 'Go, prophesy to My people Israel.'

Major Theme Analysis

(Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV)

Amos Identified (Amos 1:1)

1 The words of Amos, who was among the sheepbreeders of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake.

A shepherd (1)

A shepherd that acts as an example and as an overseer willingly (1 Peter 5:2-4)

2 Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers — not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; 3 not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. 4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

A shepherd that feeds the flock out of love (John 21:15-17)

15 When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." 16 Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep." 17 The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep.

A shepherd that seeks and abides by God's counsel (Jer 23:22)

22 But if they had stood in my council, they would have proclaimed my words to my people and would have turned them from their evil ways and from their evil deeds.

A shepherd that participates in the making disciples of others (Matt 28:19-20)

> 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

A shepherd that is a watchman and who is accountable for the flock (Ezek 33:7-9)

> 7 "Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; so hear the word I speak and give them warning from me. 8 When I say to the wicked, 'O wicked man, you will surely die,' and you do not speak out to dissuade him from his ways, that wicked man will die for his sin, and I will hold you accountable for his blood. 9 But if you do warn the wicked man to turn from his ways and he does not do so, he will die for his sin, but you will have saved yourself.

Current services (1)

Serving wholeheartedly (Eph 6:7)

> 7 Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men,

Serving with gifts that God has given (1 Peter 4:10)

> 10 Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.

Serving as a servant (Mark 10:43)

> 43 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant,

Serving to please and build up others (Rom 15:2)

> 2 Each of us should please his neighbor for his good, to build him up.

Serving prompted by love and faith (1 Thess 1:3)

> 3 We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Assignment of Prophets (Amos 2:11-12)

11 I raised up some of your sons as prophets, and some of your young men as Nazirites. Is it not so, O you children of Israel?" Says the Lord.
12 'But you gave the Nazirites wine to drink, and commanded the prophets saying, 'Do not prophesy!'

God raised up prophets (11)

Prophets that are anointed (1 Kings 19:16)

> 16 Also, anoint Jehu son of Nimshi king over Israel, and anoint Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel Meholah to succeed you as prophet.

Prophets that inquire from God (1 Kings 22:8)

> 8 The king of Israel answered Jehoshaphat, "There is still one man through whom we can inquire of the Lord, but I hate him because he never prophesies anything good about me, but always bad. He is Micaiah son of Imlah." "The king should not say that," Jehoshaphat replied.

Prophets that delivers God's word to people (2 Kings 17:13)

> 13 The Lord warned Israel and Judah through all his prophets and seers: "Turn from your evil ways. Observe my commands and decrees, in accordance with the entire Law that I commanded your fathers to obey and that I delivered to you through my servants the prophets."

Prophets that are recognized that they are from God (1 Sam 3:20)

20 And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba recognized that Samuel was attested as a prophet of the Lord.

God's assignment to prophesy (12)

Prophesy through being used by God (Hos 12:13)

13 The Lord used a prophet to bring Israel up from Egypt, by a prophet he cared for him.

Prophesy about the revelations of God (Amos 3:7)

7 Surely the Sovereign Lord does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets.

Prophesy about God's promises (Acts 3:21-22)

21 He must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets. 22 For Moses said, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you.

Prophesy about all nations will come to God (Mic 4:2)

2 Many nations will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

God Seeking Servants (Amos 3:7-8)

7 Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.
8 A lion has roared! Who will not fear? The Lord God has spoken! Who can but prophesy?

God's Divine plan (7)

God's plans will endure forever (Ps 33:11)

11 But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.

God's plans conform to His Will and must happen (Eph 1:11)

11 In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will,

God's plans cannot be added to or taken from (Eccl 3:14)

14 I know that everything God does will endure forever; nothing can be added to it and nothing taken from it. God does it so that men will revere him.

God's plans for us to be made perfect (Heb 11:40)

40 God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.

God's empowerment (8)

Empowerment for unity (Rom 15:5)

Rom 15:55 May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus,

Empowerment to witness (Acts 1:8)

8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Empowerment to stand firm (2 Cor 1:21-22)

> 21 Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, 22 set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

Empowerment to endure (James 1:2-4)

> 2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. 4 Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

Struggles of Amos (Amos 7:10-15)

10 Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, "Amos has conspired against you in the midst of the house of Israel. The land is not able to bear all his words.
11 For thus Amos has said: 'Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall surely be led away captive From their own land.'"
12 Then Amaziah said to Amos: "Go, you seer! Flee to the land of Judah. There eat bread, and there prophesy.
13 But never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is the royal residence."
14 Then Amos answered, and said to Amaziah: "I was no prophet, nor was I a son of a prophet, but I was a sheepbreeder and a tender of sycamore fruit.
15 Then the Lord took me as I followed the flock, and the Lord said to me, 'Go, prophesy to My people Israel.'

Conspiracy (10-11)

Conspiracy can depend on persuasion of a crowd (Matt 27:20)

> 20 But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus executed.

Conspiracy is strengthened when a few win others over to their ideas (Acts 14:19)

> 19 Then some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and won the crowd over. They stoned Paul and dragged him outside the city, thinking he was dead.

Conspiracy that approves and agrees with those who carry out the actions (Rom 1:32)

> 32 Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

Conspiracy that has been prophesied (2 Tim 3:1-5)

> 1 But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. 2 People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, 4 treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.

Worldly advice (12-13)

Worldly advice from friends (1 King 12:8)

> 8 But Rehoboam rejected the advice the elders gave him and consulted the young men who had grown up with him and were serving him.

Worldly advice from those who gossip (Prov 20:19)

> 19 A gossip betrays a confidence; so avoid a man who talks too much.

Worldly advice from those whose desire it is to cause division (Rom 16:17)

> 17 I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them.

Worldly advice from those whose desire it is to deceive (Eph 5:6)

> 6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient.

God's calling (14-15)

A calling because the Law required it (Num 18:5-7)

> 5 "You are to be responsible for the care of the sanctuary and the altar, so that wrath will not fall on the Israelites again. 6 I myself have selected your fellow Levites from among the Israelites as a gift to you, dedicated to the Lord to do the work at the Tent of Meeting. 7 But only you and your sons may serve as priests in connection with everything at the altar and inside the curtain. I am giving you the service of the priesthood as a gift. Anyone else who comes near the sanctuary must be put to death."

A calling that God provided to Jesus (John 8:54)

> 54 Jesus replied, "If I glorify myself, my glory means nothing. My Father, whom you claim as your God, is the one who glorifies me.

A calling to be like Melchizedek (Heb 7:14-16)

> 14 For it is clear that our Lord descended from Judah, and in regard to that tribe Moses said nothing about priests. 15 And what we have said is even more clear if another priest like Melchizedek appears, 16 one who has become a priest not on the basis of a regulation as to his ancestry but on the basis of the power of an indestructible life.

A calling that came from heaven (John 3:27)

> 27 To this John replied, "A man can receive only what is given him from heaven.

Conclusion and Other Thoughts

Commentary Thoughts from Thomas Constable

Amos next recorded five visions that he received from the Lord that described the results of the coming judgment of Israel, plus one historical incident (Amos 7:10-17). Throughout this section of the book two phrases stand out: "sovereign Yahweh" (Amos 7:1-2; Amos 7:4 [twice], 5-6; Amos 8:1; Amos 8:3; Amos 8:9; Amos 8:11; Amos 9:8) and "my people" (Amos 7:8; Amos 7:15; Amos 8:2; Amos 9:10). They are constant reminders that Yahweh has authority over all nations and individuals and that He still recognized Israel's special covenant relationship with Himself. The whole section builds to a terrifying climax of inevitable judgment for Israel. Some scholars believe these visions formed Amos' call. [Note: E.g., Ellison, p. 65.]

Verse 1

Sovereign Yahweh showed Amos a mass of locusts swarming in the springtime after the first harvest and before the second. The Lord was forming this swarm of locusts. Ideally the very first crops harvested in the spring went to feed the king's household and animals (cf. 1 Kings 18:5). The crops that the people harvested later in the spring fed their animals and themselves. If anything happened to prevent that second harvesting, the people would have little to eat until the next harvest in the fall. The summer months were very dry and the Israelites had nothing to harvest during that season of the year.

Locusts swarming indicated that they were about to sweep through an area and destroy all the crops. There was no way to prevent this in Amos' day. Locust invasions were a perennial threat, and they were a method of discipline that God had said He might use if His people proved unfaithful to His covenant with them (Deuteronomy 28:38; Deuteronomy 28:42; cf. Joel 1:1-7; Amos 4:9).

The three visions in this section are similar and may have followed one another in quick succession. The first two describe methods of divine judgment from which Amos persuaded God to turn aside, and the last one the method He would not abandon to judge Israel.

Verse 2

In his vision Amos saw the locusts strip the land of its vegetation. Then he prayed and asked the sovereign Lord to pardon Jacob (Israel) for its covenant unfaithfulness. Jacob was only a small nation and could not survive such a devastating judgment if the Lord allowed it to happen as Amos had seen in his vision.

Amos' view of Israel as small and weak stands in contrast to that of Israel's leaders who believed it was strong and invincible (cf. Amos 6:1-3; Amos 6:8; Amos 6:13; Amos 9:10). Israel occupied a large territory under Jeroboam II, second only in its history to what Solomon controlled, but it was still small in relation to the larger empires of the ancient Near East. Amos may have meant that Israel was small in the sense of helpless. God had promised to take care of Jacob when that patriarch encountered Yahweh at Bethel, now a center of apostate worship in Israel (cf. Genesis 28:10-22). Perhaps that is why Amos appealed to God with the name of Jacob (cf. Amos 3:13; Amos 6:8; Amos 7:5; Amos 8:7; Amos 9:8).

Verse 3

In response to Amos' prayer, the Lord relented and said He would not bring a completely devastating judgment on Israel, at least then. He would be merciful and patient and would grant Israel more grace (cf. Exodus 32:14).

The prayers of righteous individuals, like Amos, can alter the events of history (cf. James 5:16-18). Some things that God intends to do are not firmly determined by Him; He is open to changing His mind about these things. However, He has decreed other things and no amount of praying will change His mind about those things (cf. Jeremiah 7:16; Jeremiah 11:14; Jeremiah 14:11-12; Acts 1:11; Revelation 22:20). It is important, therefore, that we understand, from Scripture, what aspects of His will are fixed and which are negotiable. The same distinction between determined choices and optional choices is observable in human interpersonal relations. Good parents, for example, will not permit their children to do certain things no matter how much the children may beg, but they do allow their children to influence their decisions in other matters. [Note: For further discussion of this issue, see Thomas L. Constable, Talking to God: What the Bible Teaches about Prayer, pp. 149-52; idem, "What Prayer Will and Will Not Change," in Essays in Honor of J. Dwight Pentecost, pp. 99-113; John Munro, "Prayer to a Sovereign God," Interest 56:2 (February 1990):20-21; and Robert B. Chisholm Jr., "Does God 'Change His Mind'?" Bibliotheca Sacra 152:608 (October-December 1995):387-99.]

Verse 4

Sovereign Yahweh also showed Amos a vision of a great fire that was burning up everything. Like a great drought it consumed all the water and all the farmland (or people) in Israel (cf. Amos 1:9-10). What he saw may have been a scorching heat wave that resulted in a drought.

The "great deep" is a phrase that refers to subterranean waters that feed springs (cf. Genesis 1:2; Genesis 7:11; Genesis 8:2; Genesis 49:25; Deuteronomy 8:7; Ezekiel 31:4). So intense was the fire that Amos saw that it dried up even these underground water reservoirs. Great heat with consequent drought was another of the punishments that the Lord warned of for covenant unfaithfulness (Deuteronomy 28:22).

Verses 5-6

Amos prayed virtually the same prayer again asking the sovereign Lord not to send such a judgment because Jacob was small (cf. Amos 7:2). Again the Lord relented and determined that it would not come then (cf. Amos 7:3). He would not discipline Israel with a locust plague or with a raging "fire."

Verse 7

Amos saw a third vision. The Lord was standing beside a vertical wall with a plumb line in His hand. The wall was probably a city wall rather than the wall of a house. [Note: George Adam Smith, The Book of the Twelve Prophets Commonly Called the Minor, 1:114; Ellison, p. 66.] Niehaus believed Amos saw a wall of tin, symbolic of Assyria's power, and the Lord standing above the wall judging it. [Note: Niehaus, p. 456. See also Chisholm, Handbook on . . ., pp. 397-98.] A plumb line was a string with a weight on the end. People used it, and still use it, to determine if a vertical structure is completely straight. God was testing something by a true standard; His judgment is not arbitrary.

Verse 8

The Lord asked the prophet what he saw, and Amos replied that he saw a plumb line. Then the Lord explained that He was about to test Israel as a builder uses a plumb line. The true standard by which He would judge Israel was undoubtedly the Mosaic Law, the covenant that He had given her by which God measured her uprightness (cf. Exodus 19:6). The Lord further announced that He would not spare the Israelites from His judgment any

longer; Amos' prayers for Israel would not turn away His punishment as earlier (Amos 7:3; Amos 7:6). The nation was so far out of plumb that God would tear it down.

Verse 9

The method of judgment God would use would not be locust invasion or fire but the sword. An enemy would invade Israel (cf. Deuteronomy 28:49-50). This enemy, as Yahweh's agent, would destroy the outdoor high places on hilltops and the temple sanctuaries at Dan and Bethel where the people worshipped God and idols, namely, all their worship centers.

Amos probably used "Isaac" simply as a synonym for "Jacob" and "Israel." Another view follows.

"Amos seems to have in mind the special veneration for Isaac which members of the Northern Kingdom displayed in making pilgrimages south to Beersheba (cf. Amos 5:5; Amos 8:14), Isaac's birthplace." [Note: Hubbard, p. 210.]

The "house of Jeroboam" probably refers to the dynasty of Jeroboam II, but it could refer to the nation of Israel as headed by Jeroboam I. Jeroboam II's dynasty came to an end with the assassination of his son and successor Zechariah (2 Kings 15:8-10).

These three visions appear to have come to Amos in close succession. The final compiler of Amos' prophecies, probably Amos himself, undoubtedly grouped them because of their similarity. They are obviously alike and together present a picture of judgment mercifully deferred twice but finally brought on Israel. They clarify the method of Israel's punishment, namely, defeat by an enemy's invading army, and they show that judgment would come after God's patience with the nation had been exhausted.

Verse 10

Amaziah, who was one of the apostate priests who served at the Bethel sanctuary (cf. 1 Kings 12:26-33), felt that Amos was being unpatriotic in what he was prophesying. So Amaziah sent a message to King Jeroboam II charging Amos with conspiring against the king within the land. He felt that Israel could not afford to endure Amos' prophesying any longer. Previously internal revolt against a king had sometimes followed a prophet's pronouncements (cf. 1 Samuel 16:1-13; 1 Kings 11:29-39; 1 Kings 16:1-13; 1 Kings 19:15-17; 2 Kings 8:7-15; 2 Kings 9:1-28; 2 Kings 10:9).

The event described in this pericope evidently followed and grew out of the preceding visions that Amos announced (Amos 7:1-9). Certain key words occur in both sections of the book but not elsewhere in it: Isaac (Amos 7:9; Amos 7:16) and sanctuary (Amos 7:9-11). Also the historical incident is a concrete example of God's plumb line in operation, but here it judged individuals. The prophet Amos passed the test, but one of the priests of Bethel, Amaziah, failed the test.

Verse 11

Amaziah reported that Amos was saying that the king would die by the sword and that the Israelites would definitely go into exile. While we have no record that Amos said these exact words, they do represent fairly the message that Amos was announcing (cf. Amos 7:8-9). By claiming that Amos was predicting Jeroboam's death, the priest was personalizing the danger of Amos' ministry to the king and was emotionally inciting him to take action against the prophet. Amaziah regarded Amos' prophecies as simply the prophet's own words. He had no respect for them as messages from Israel's God but viewed them only as a challenge to the status quo.

Verses 12-13

Amaziah then approached Amos and told him to move back to Judah and to earn his living in his home country (cf. Amos 1:1). By referring to Amos as a seer (another term for a prophet, cf. 1 Samuel 9:9; 2 Samuel 24:11; Isaiah 29:10), Amaziah was probably disparaging the visions that Amos said he saw (Amos 7:1-9). [Note: See Stuart, p. 376; and E. Hammershaimb, The Book of Amos: A Commentary, p. 116.] By telling him to eat (earn) his bread in Judah, he was hinting that Amos needed to get a "legitimate" job rather than living off the contributions he received for prophesying (cf. Genesis 3:19; 2 Kings 4:8; Ezekiel 13:17-20; Micah 3:5; Micah 3:11). Amaziah told Amos to stop prophesying in Bethel (emphatic in the Hebrew text) because it was one of the king's sanctuaries (places of worship) as well as one of the king's residences (places of living). Bethel, of all places, was an inappropriate town in which Amos should utter messages of doom against Israel, from Amaziah's perspective. Amos had become an embarrassment to the political and religious establishment in Israel.

Verse 14

Amos replied that he was not a prophet by his own choosing; he did not decide to pursue prophesying as a career. Neither had he become a prophet because his father had been one. In Amos' culture it was common and expected for sons to follow in their father's line of work, though this was not true of genuine prophets. It is possible that Amos meant that he was not the son of a prophet in the sense that he had not been trained in one of the schools of the prophets under the tutelage of a fatherly mentor (cf. 2 Kings 2:1-15; 2 Kings 4:1; 2 Kings 4:38; 2 Kings 5:22; 2 Kings 6:1-7; 2 Kings 9:1). [Note: B. Smith, p. 139, n. 56.] Rather Amos had previously earned his living in a totally unrelated occupation. He had been a herdsman and a nipper of sycamore figs. The term "herdsman" refers to someone who bred livestock, not just a shepherd who looked after animals.

A nipper of sycamore figs was one who pierced sycamore figs so they would be edible.

"The fruit is infested with an insect (the Sycophaga crassipes), and till the 'eye' or top has been punctured, so that the insects may escape, it is not eatable." [Note: W. R. Smith, cited in Samuel R. Driver, The Books of Joel and Amos, p. 212.]

"Or, the term may refer to the practice of slitting the sycamore-fig before it ripens-a process that ensures that it will turn sweet." [Note: Niehaus, p. 463. Cf. Wolff, p. 314.]

Thus Amos had a respectable agricultural business background before he moved to Israel to prophesy. He had not been a "professional" prophet like many of the false prophets. He had not always made his living by being a prophet but only functioned as a "called" prophet. Therefore, Amaziah should not think that Amos came to Israel to prophesy because that was the only work that he could do or to make money.

Verse 15

Amos had come to Israel having been sent there by Yahweh to prophesy (cf, Numbers 18:6; 2 Samuel 7:8; Psalms 78:70). The Hebrew text repeated the words "the LORD" for emphasis. God had given him a definite commission, and Amos had left his former occupation to obey that divine calling (cf. Acts 5:27-29). Amos' ministry and his location were God's choosing.

Verses 16-17

Amos then announced a prophecy from the Lord for Amaziah. Because the priest had told the prophet to stop doing what Yahweh had commanded him to do (cf. Amos 2:12), Amaziah's wife would become a harlot in Bethel. She would have to stoop to this to earn a living because she would have no husband or sons to support her. Her children would die by the sword. This may also imply the end of Amaziah's family line. Amaziah's land would become the property of others, presumably the Assyrians, and he himself would die in a foreign, pagan land. All these things would evidently happen when the foreign enemy destroyed Israel. Stifling the word of God proved disastrous for Amaziah, as it still does today. Finally, Amos repeated that Israel would indeed go into exile, the message that Amaziah had reported that Amos was preaching (cf. Amos 7:11).

Amaziah had told Amos to stop prophesying, namely, to stop preaching (Amos 7:16). "Preaching" is from a verbal root meaning "drip" (Heb. natap), as the heavens drip rain (Judges 5:4; cf. Amos 9:13). The idea is that Amos should stop raining down messages from heaven on his hearers. True prophets were people who spoke fervently for Yahweh. [Note: Leon J. Wood, The Prophets of Israel, p. 63.]

"Amaziah's loyalty was to Jeroboam, who probably appointed him as priest at Bethel. Amos's loyalty was to God, who sent him to prophesy against Israel. Conflict between Amaziah and Amos was inevitable since their loyalties were in conflict. Primary loyalty to God in their service to Israel would have eliminated conflict between the king, the priest, and the prophet. The answer to conflict among God's people is always to place loyalty to God above all else." [Note: B. Smith, p. 136.]

Adapted from URL:https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/eng/dcc/amos-7.html)

Concluding Thoughts from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

The message of Amos went unheeded. Soon after his ministry ended, Assyria began to make incursions into the territory of Israel and its neighboring regions. Less than 40 years later, in 722 BC, northern Israel would fall and be exiled (2 Kings 17). As with the message of other prophets, the choice was between only two courses: either repent or die. Nearly all the prophets had their message rejected, the prominent exception being Jonah (see Jonah 3). Because of their nation's relative prosperity and religious fervor, Jeroboam and Amaziah assumed that God was on their side. Amos challenged this assumption, warned of judgment, encouraged repentance, and offered hope for the future. To say that we read the words of God in the book of Amos seems obvious. After all, we read the prophecies with the advantage of hindsight; we see the prophecies fulfilled. But at the time the prophecies were given, it was a challenge to determine who was speaking the truth. That challenge still exists today, which is why Jesus warns his followers against false teachers (Matthew 7:15; 24:24). We do well to examine the teaching we hear in light of what Scripture says (compare Revelation 22:18-19). The book of Amos offers another method for distinguishing a teacher of truth from a teacher of fiction. That method is to examine motivation—what's in it for the teacher? When we compare Amos's motivations with those of Amaziah, we see polar opposites. When Amos spoke against the religious, economic, and political status quo, he was risking his life by questioning Israel's assumption that God was happy with their behaviors and beliefs. To speak against a holy place in antiquity was to invite the death penalty (example: Jeremiah 26:1-15). On the other hand, Amaziah's perceived risk was an upset of the status quo, in which he had a vested interest. The New Testament witnesses to the same concern (2 Corinthians 2:17; 4:1-2). For modern readers, the account of Amos also encourages us to reflect on how we hear the word of God today. Are we willing to listen? Will we accept God's challenge? Are we so committed to our religious, economic, and political status quo that we become unwilling to give an ear to anything that questions it? The fact that God speaks is a sign of God's grace. He wants to communicate with us. Will we have ears to hear?