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GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Minor Prophets, Major Messages: Amos - Don't Be a Hypocrite

Use with the full teaching and a Bible. Read or watch first, complete the questions, then discuss and apply. For family study, an adult can select suitable portions and accept spoken answers.

Test the teaching's explanations against the cited passages. Keep the answer key and facilitator notes separate when distributing learner pages.

[Open the full teaching](#)

Teaching summary

This teaching examines Amos's warning against religious hypocrisy. Amos was a sheep breeder, herdsman, and dresser of sycamore figs whom YHWH called to warn the northern kingdom of Israel. Amos 7:14-15 emphasizes his ordinary work and YHWH's call. He confronted idolatry, oppression, and the coming Day of YHWH. His message first announces judgment on surrounding nations, then on Judah and Israel.

Israel's religious leaders maintained outward practices while neglecting justice and righteousness. They offered sacrifices, observed festivals, and sang songs, yet mistreated their neighbors. Amos declares that YHWH hates this religious performance and calls instead for justice to roll down like waters. True worship cannot be used as a mask for unrighteousness. Amos urges the people to seek good, hate evil, love good, and establish justice.

The teaching connects Amos's message with Torah commands protecting the sojourner, fatherless, and widow. YHWH executes justice for vulnerable people and hears their cries. Judgment against Israel therefore reflects his concern for those being abused. Religious observance remains important, but it cannot replace mercy, justice, and practical care. James describes pure religion as caring for orphans and widows and keeping oneself unstained from the world; living faith acts to meet real needs.

Amos's message applies to believers who claim to worship God while ignoring the people around them. The coming Day of YHWH exposes the difference between a religious show and genuine obedience. Repentance means abandoning hypocrisy and practicing justice. God offers grace to the remnant that seeks good, but no religious identity protects people who persist in abusing the vulnerable.

The teaching connects Amos with Isaiah's prophecy of the servant who brings justice to the nations. Yeshua fulfills this mission by confronting hypocritical leaders, healing the needy, and showing that it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath. His healing ministry reveals the true purpose of Sabbath observance rather than the restrictive traditions that prevented help. Matthew identifies these actions with Isaiah's promise that the Messiah would bring justice.

Yeshua will also bring final relief to the oppressed and judgment upon oppressors. Amos's central call therefore remains urgent: drop the act, pursue justice, and practice the religion being claimed.

The Day of YHWH is both warning and hope. Those who repent and love their neighbor can look forward to the Messiah's righteous kingdom, where injustice and oppression have no place.

Summary points

- Amos was called from ordinary work to warn Israel of judgment.
- Israel's outward worship was contradicted by oppression and injustice.
- YHWH rejects religious performance that hides unrighteousness.
- True religion includes justice, righteousness, and care for vulnerable people.
- The Torah warns against mistreating the sojourner, widow, and fatherless.
- The Day of YHWH exposes hypocrisy and brings accountability.
- Repentance means seeking good and establishing justice.
- Yeshua condemned hypocritical leaders and cared for the needy.
- Healing on the Sabbath displayed the true purpose of doing good.
- The Messiah will bring final justice and relief to the oppressed.

Fill in the blank

Use the teaching and the cited Bible passages. Equivalent wording is welcome when it expresses the same meaning.

Basic

1. Amos was a sheep breeder, herdsman, and dresser of _____ figs.
2. Amos condemned Israel for neglecting justice and _____.
3. The teaching calls worship that masks injustice a hypocritical religious _____.
4. James describes pure religion as caring for orphans and _____.
5. Amos tells the people to seek _____ and not evil.
6. Yeshua said it is lawful to do _____ on the Sabbath.

Challenging

1. Amos prophesied to the northern kingdom during the reign of _____ II.
2. Amos says justice should roll down like _____.
3. Deuteronomy 27 pronounces a curse on those who pervert justice for the sojourner, fatherless, and _____.
4. Isaiah's servant brings justice to the _____.
5. Yeshua's Sabbath healing ministry fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah chapter _____.
6. James says faith without _____ is dead.

Group discussion

Discuss respectfully and support answers from the passages. Use these lines for brief notes or a notebook for longer responses.

1. Why did Amos regard Israel's worship as hypocritical rather than acceptable?

2. How do Torah commands concerning vulnerable people clarify Amos's warnings?

3. What is the difference between religious performance and the true religion described by Amos and James?

4. Why does God's concern for oppressed people involve judgment against their oppressors?

5. How did Yeshua's Sabbath healings reveal the true purpose of obedience?

6. What would it look like for your group to seek good and establish justice in practical ways?

Answer key

For the leader or parent. Answers follow the teaching and the passages. Accept equivalent wording that expresses the same meaning.

Basic

1. sycamore (also: sycomore)

Amos 7:14

2. righteousness

Amos 5:24

3. performance (also: show)

Amos 5:21–24; teaching major message

4. widows

James 1:27

5. good

Amos 5:14–15

6. good

Matthew 12:12

Challenging

1. Jeroboam

Amos 1:1; teaching overview

2. waters

Amos 5:24

3. widow

Deuteronomy 27:19

4. nations

Isaiah 42:1–4

5. 42

Isaiah 42:1–4; Matthew 12:15–21

6. works (also: deeds, actions)

James 2:17, 26

Facilitator notes

These responses give direction for discussion. They are not a test of identical wording. Invite participants to explain the passages and consider a faithful practical response.

1. The people combined sacrifices, festivals, and songs with injustice toward their neighbors. YHWH rejects that contradiction and calls for justice and righteousness. The teaching does not abolish the observances: Yeshua says to practice justice, mercy, and faithfulness without neglecting the other duties.

Amos 5:21–24; Matthew 23:23

2. The Torah already forbids perverting justice for the sojourner, fatherless, and widow. It describes YHWH defending vulnerable people and hearing their cries. Amos's warning therefore applies God's existing instruction to Israel's oppression rather than introducing a new ethic detached from Torah.

Deuteronomy 27:19; 10:18; Exodus 22:21–24

3. Religious performance claims devotion while ignoring what YHWH requires. James joins care for distressed widows and orphans with personal holiness, and challenges faith claims that leave a hungry person unaided. True worship brings profession, practical help, and faithful conduct together.

Amos 5:21–24; James 1:27; 2:14–17

4. Protecting those being harmed requires confronting the evil that harms them. The Torah promises that YHWH hears their cries, and Amos warns abusers to change. This calls us to stop oppression and seek appropriate justice; it does not authorize private revenge.

Exodus 22:21–24; Amos 5:14–15; 2 Thessalonians 1:5–10

5. Yeshua declares that doing good on the Sabbath is lawful and restores a suffering person. His action shows that compassion belongs within obedience. Matthew connects his healing ministry with Isaiah's servant bringing justice, while Matthew 23 rejects choosing religious details over mercy.

Matthew 12:9–21; 23:23; Isaiah 42:1–4

6. We can identify a real need, listen to the person affected, and choose a practical response such as food, companionship, fair treatment, or help accessing support. We should also examine unfair practices under our own control. These are examples of application, not additional universal commandments.

Amos 5:14–15, 24; James 1:27; 2:14–17

Facilitator reminders

Justice and mercy are part of faithful obedience. Keep Matthew 23:23 in view so the warning against hypocrisy is not turned into abandonment of Sabbath or festivals.

Make discussion concrete without requiring participants to disclose financial hardship or personal experiences of abuse. Salvation remains YHWH's gift through Messiah; the works discussed are the fruit of living faith.

Put it into practice

Choose one response to the passages. What will we do, and when will we revisit it? Share only what you are comfortable sharing.