

QT Questions—for Amos

(Here's a short introduction to the book of Amos from my Study Bibles.)

- Amos focuses on God's concern for justice. The nations surrounding Israel are judged and will suffer for their oppressive actions. However, contrary to what the Israelites might have expected, their position as God's chosen people will not protect them from disaster. In fact, their relationship with God sets a higher standard for them (3:1-2). If they persist in their injustice, they will suffer just like the other nations (6:1-3, 11-14).
- Amos also critiques the people of Israel for improper worship. Their rituals are worthless if the worshipers do not also seek justice (faith and deed aligned). In addition, Israel's worship involves improper sacrifices (such as leavened bread) being offered at improper worship sites (such as Bethel and Gilgal; 4:4-5). Amos' warnings of judgment do not merely proclaim disaster; they also invite repentance.
- The message of Amos is a call to reflect on our interactions with other people. Regardless of our place in the world, all of us enjoy some degree of privilege over others, and we need God to help us recognize how our attitudes and behaviors might be unfair, unjust or even oppressive. Without committed action that advances God's justice, anything we do to worship Him will amount to an empty ritual. But when we turn to God in repentance and seek His ways, we will encounter His transforming presence dwelling among us. This is the promise in the closing images of Amos: God will lift up His people give them a beautiful and fruitful future (9:11-15).

Amos 1 (4/30/25)

(*Please answer the questions as best as you can.)

1. What does it mean for three sins, even for four, I will not relent; who are the five nations God speaks against and can you locate them in the map; what catches your attention to what God said; what do you learn?
- Amos is a shepherd from one of the small villages named Tekoa (v. 1). Nothing about his background or occupation points to anything that stands out to be called as a prophet of God. He is not well known. He is not very powerful. He does not have any connection. He does not seem to possess anything praiseworthy. He is just an unknown from a little known town. From a worldly perspective, Amos does not seem to mount up to much, to deserve such a high calling. But, from God's perspective, this little unknown man, is whom God desired to call and use for His glory, to speak His truth, not only to His people, but to many in the surrounding nations. He may not be well known, but his God is. His God is the almighty holy God, and when He speaks, He thunders, for His roar is heard everywhere. Later in the NT, God would speak through Paul and describe His people who spoke about their great God, "But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us" (2Cor 4:7). We don't have to amount to much, like jars of clay, but Who we have, Who we speak of, is the most amazing and precious treasure; therefore, we speak with courage, with boldness, with confidence, with joy, and with love, because the treasure is the most amazing gift the world will ever know, will ever have. Let's prize this treasure highly, higher than anything or anyone we can possibly ever do. It is this treasure that determines the value of the jar of clay.

Amos 2 (5/1/25)

(*Please answer the questions as best as you can.)

1. What sins does God point out for Judah and for Israel; what does God want His people to remember and why; what do you learn?
 - We are told in v. 12, “But you made the Nazirites drink wine and commanded the prophets not to prophesy.” Why would the people act so wickedly, as to make their leaders do what they shouldn’t? I can think of two reasons. First, when we love our sins more than God, then we simply do not want our sins to be exposed (Jn 3:19-20). And the second is, when we are in sin and don’t want to get out of it, then the way to quiet one’s conscience is to make others sin, so that their sinfulness somehow will make it seem ok our own sinfulness. To try to excuse our own sinfulness, we try to make others as sinful or even worse than us. The sinfulness of sin in us is horrible. Left to ourselves, this becomes our way. That is why, we need a Mediator to be sinless, so that in His substitution for us, our sins will not only be paid in full, but we will also see Him, behold Him, learn Him, and grow more like Him, so that we will not repeatedly fall into our sins, but by obeying and following our Lord’s leading, we will wrestle against our sinfulness more, and humbly desire to grow more like Him. That is what sanctification is, to wrestle against our sinfulness and to delight to grow more like our Lord Jesus, the sinless Lamb of God, who willingly became our Substitute to take away our sins and to bless us to grow more into His likeness.

Amos 3 (5/2/25)

(*Please answer the questions as best as you can.)

1. Wow, what does God want His people to hear and why; how will God deliver His people and why in such manner; what do you learn?
 - God says in v. 6, “When disaster comes to a city, has not the Lord caused it?” When we hear this truth on its own, then our conclusion is that our God caused the disaster in our world. And the results of disasters are great misery, suffering, pain, hardships and troubles for many people involved. And judging with the results, we usually conclude that our God is not a very good God, for He created all these miseries in our lives. And with such a bad God, who would want to trust and obey Him. That would be insane. Once again, returning to v. 6, as clear and true it is that our God caused the disaster, if we can learn to read this, not simply on its own, but learn to read God’s word behind His heart, then we will read that the disasters God caused in our lives was not to torment our lives, but they were actions from His deep love for His people. In other words, the disasters we are suffering with, are meant to bless us to learn how much He truly loves us. How can we say that our God loves us when we are suffering greatly with the disaster? Our God lovingly is showing us, what we did were sinful and our sins deserve such miserable consequences. Through the disaster, God wants us to see, that the true reason for the disaster is our sins and not the doing of our God. God caused the disaster because our sins produced our misery. And through the painful afflictions He gives, He desires for His people to clearly see, that our sins are horrible, and there are severe consequences for them, and the only way to be forgiven and cleansed from our sins is what He has done for us, in His Son on the cross. In fact, God not only permits the misery of His Son, but it is He, who volunteered to suffer the misery of our sins, on our behalves. I pray that God will bless us to see His heart behind His actions, so that we may rightly understand His heart and His actions.

Amos 4 (5/3/25)

(*Please answer the questions as best as you can.)

1. What were some of the women doing that displeased God; five times God says, “Yet you have not returned to Me,” declares the Lord”, what did He do to cause His people to return to Him and they didn’t; what do you learn?
- God sees His people love to brag, boast and sin freely with offerings (vv. 4-5). Outwardly, they did godly things, but inwardly, they did them to exalt themselves. How sad to see the disconnect between their outward behavior and their hearts. How real their hypocrisy is. But if we should hold up a mirror, would we also see them in us? It’s sad, I see a little too much of me in them, too much.

Amos 5 (5/5/25)

(*Please answer the questions as best as you can.)

1. Why is God against His people going to Bethel and how were they to seek the Lord (1Kgs 12:26-30); what does God hate and what does God want His people to do and how is this applicable to you (vv. 21-24,); what do you learn?
- Why is God telling the people that the day of the Lord is woeful (v. 18)? For God’s people, the day of the Lord is glorious; it’s the day of redemption and deliverance. It’s a day to lay aside all of our troubles and pain and misery of life forever and ever. It’s a day where we will enter into God’s glory and become glorious like He. So, it should be a glorious day. Yet, God says here, that it is a day of woe. Why? It’s a woeful day, not to His people whom He will welcome, but to the people who are not His people. Probably the most shocked people will be the people who thought they were God’s people, but they really were not. They thought they were God’s people because they did all the religious things God called His people to do. Visibly and audibly, they looked and sounded the part. But, God did not consider them His people, because they only acted the part, but their hearts were not genuine, were not sincere, were not humble, did not do these God desired acts and words in love with God. Thus, they had no humility, no joy, no thankfulness in their worship, in their offerings. They just did it. When we are exercising with Nike shoes, just do it, is ok. But, when we worship our true and eternal and living God, just do it, is wrong. Our worship, our faith, our service, our words, all that we do and say must be done with all of our hearts, for the love of God in us compels us to love Him with all of our hearts, minds, strength and souls. Oh Lord, may we and our love ones truly come genuinely to the saving faith in Jesus’ death and resurrection, so that as Your people, we will find and welcome the day of the Lord as the most glorious day there ever will be.

Amos 6 (5/6/25)

(*Please answer the questions as best as you can.)

1. Why did God say woe to His people and how is that applicable in our churches; what does God abhor and why would that be and what does God want His people to do; what do you learn?

- God shows His people what they are doing, “But you have turned justice into poison and the fruit of righteousness into bitterness” (v. 12). We, not only know how to turn evil as if it was good, like twisting thorns to look like a crown, but we are turning justice into poison and the fruit of righteousness into bitterness. When watching campaign ads, the people who advocate for the protection of the unborn babies are called extremists and women haters. The people who oppose God’s way have turned God’s way into poison, trying to alarm everyone that God’s way is bitter, that God’s way is evil for the freedom of the women. What horrible hearts, and how undiscerning for many people who accept and follow their lead. And sadly, we even find people inside our churches who advocate pro-choice. It’s sad; it’s terrible; it’s wrong. How true God’s word is; how applicable God’s word is to us today. God knows our hearts. May we learn to humbly listen to God’s truth and pray for His grace to bless us to learn to lovingly and wholeheartedly obey His words over what we are taught in our world.

Amos 7 (5/7/25)

(*Please answer the questions as best as you can.)

1. In vv. 1-9, what does God show Amos and how should that have impacted Israel; who is Amaziah and what does he want and what will happen to him and why; what do you learn?
- In v. 13, we hear Amaziah tell Amos, “Don’t prophesy anymore at Bethel, because this is the king’s sanctuary and the temple of the kingdom.” In v. 10, we are told that Amaziah was the priest of Bethel. Therefore, for him, there’s only one temple, and it is in Bethel and not in Jerusalem. The false temple had replaced the true one, and serving and worshiping there, probably deepen his conviction. Many people today, and sadly some people in the church as well, truly believe that abortion is good for a woman, that pro-choice is true freedom for a woman. They are so convinced, that they are willing to destroy the people who oppose them. When God’s word no longer reigns in their hearts and are instead convicted by their reasoning or logic or perspective or study or research or understand or feeling, then like this priest, what’s real for them is what they believe, and not what God has taught us. May I say, just because we believe it, does not make it true. Truth has only one source and that is from the Eternal God, who is the Giver of truth, who alone will judge the truth we believe, and who alone will discern truth from lies. We need to learn, will our truth stand up to God’s truth when He judges us? May we not build our lives on sand. May we stand only on the solid rock of God’s truth, given to us in His revealed word, the Bible.

Amos 8 (5/8/25)

(*Please answer the questions as best as you can.)

1. What was God’s message with the basket of ripe fruit; what kind of famine will the people be experiencing and why and how is it applicable to you (v. 11); what do you learn?
- We live in a time where unisex is widely accepted and applauded. So, men and women are usually seen and treated similarly. But, when we examine the two sexes, it’s clear, we are not the same, not even similar, but very, very different. In v. 13, God makes the distinction in referring the two sexes, “the lovely young women and strong young men.” In other words, women are meant to be lovely and men are meant to be strong. Surely, there will be some

overlapping qualities, but we are meant to be quite different, with different qualities, with different needs, with different perspectives. In other words, a woman should pursue loveliness and a man should pursue becoming stronger, not just physically, but most of all, in our characters. So, while I have no issue women in sports, I do worry that too many women are acting and becoming more like men, tough and competitive and a desire to be stronger than her opponents. On the other hand, many men are now trying to cultivate a more sensitive side, which is not wrong per say, but they do so without training to be stronger in our character and courage and humility. I think many women are trying to make their men very sensitive without cultivating their manliness, which makes men more like women than men. May we prayerfully examine ourselves and others and see if we are more aligned with God's view of our sexes than the worldly view, which some of us have also adopted as ours. Let God be true and every person (man and woman and child) be a liar (Rom 3:4), that is, whenever we should disagree with our right and true God.

Amos 9 (5/9/25)

(*Please answer the questions as best as you can.)

1. In v. 4, when God says, "I will keep My eye on them for harm and not for good," to whom is God speaking and why; though all people are precious to God, how is Israel different to God and how will He treat them; what do you learn?
- God describes the restoration of Israel differently than what Israel's experience is. In v. 13, God says, "The days are coming," declares the Lord, "when the reaper will be overtaken by the plowman and the planter by the one treading grapes." In our world, there are no overlaps as God describes here. The plowman and the reaper do not work at the same time. The reaper follows only after the plowman has sowed, and after the reaper has reaped, there's going to be a time of waiting and sowing and waiting to reap in the future. There's no continuous reaping because the sowing takes time before its time to reap. Yet, God says, His grace is continuous; they will not need to pause and wait in the future to reap God's goodness; they are continuously sowing and reaping. When God's grace flows, it does not follow the timing or the principles of the world. God's grace overflows continuously. How awesomely good is that. Oh Lord, we pray for Your continuous grace to overflow to us, in us, and through us. And we wait to enter home, because there, we do not have to hope for Your continuous grace, because that's how Your kingdom is. What a blessed future home we have and we eagerly wait to come home. Yes, Lord, come quickly. We want to come home!