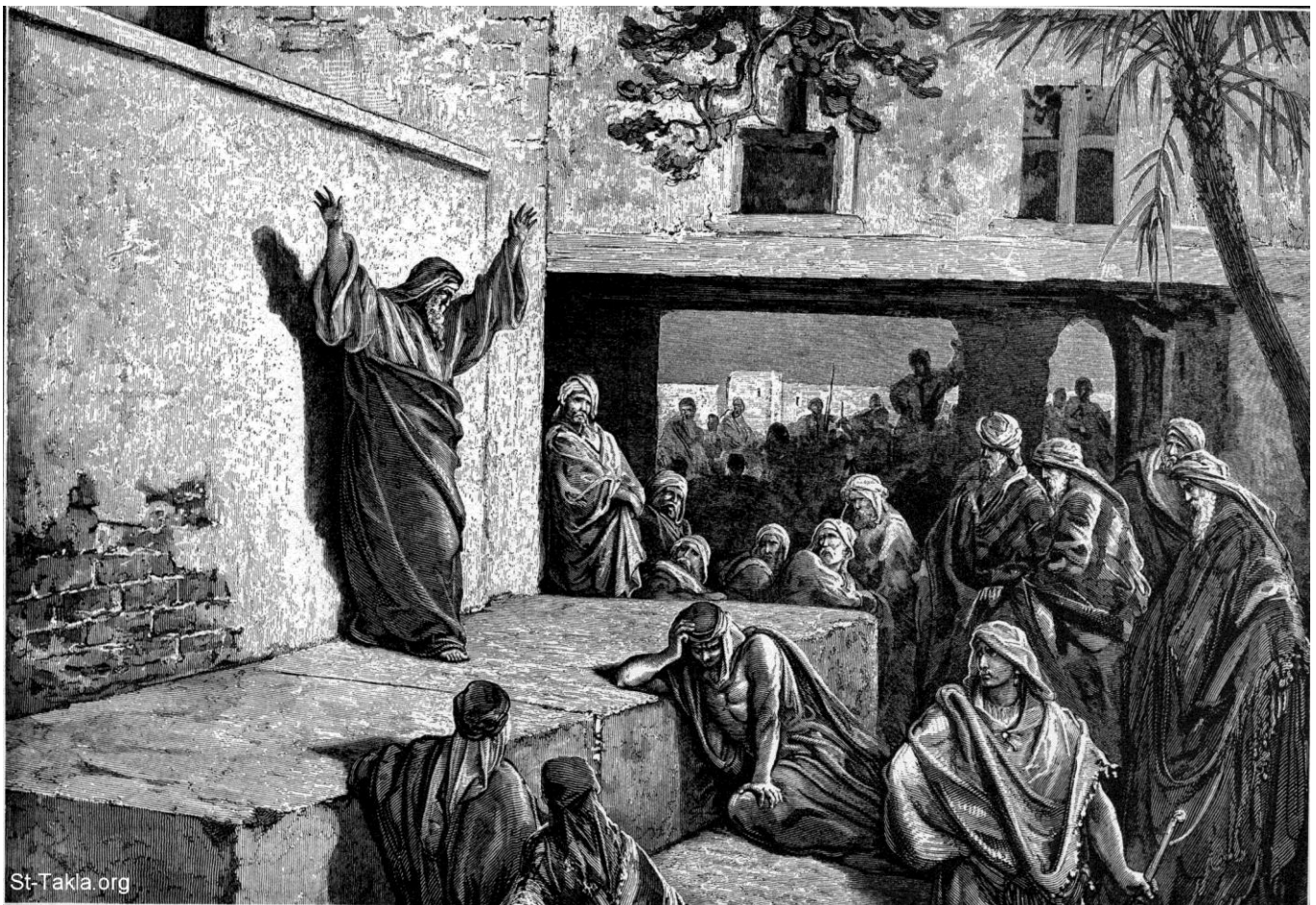


# HOSEA & AMOS



Embry Hills church of Christ



# Hosea and Amos

## Lesson 1

### Introduction and Background

Readings: Hosea 1:1; Amos 1:1, 7:14-17; II Kings 14:23-29

#### Introduction:

Hosea and Amos have been classified with several other prophets as the minor prophets. This term refers more to the quantity of their writings than to the nature of their message, for both of these men left us moving passages about the love and justice of God. They wrote during the time of Jeroboam II, one of the last kings of the northern kingdom, Israel. It was a time of prosperity and wickedness, and, unknown to the people, it preceded a period of chaos and eventual destruction. The voices of Amos and Hosea were unwelcomed ones which warned the people of their certain doom. We'll examine the events that led to this time period and then look at the characters of Hosea and Amos.

#### Historical Background:

The Northern Kingdom: The first Jeroboam separated the northern ten tribes from their southern brethren following the death of Solomon. To ensure a complete separation, Jeroboam established new places of worship at Dan and Bethel, where golden calves were set up. Every king that followed Jeroboam continued this idolatrous practice. Ahab and Jezebel compounded the wickedness by introducing the worship of Baal during their reign. Jeroboam II began to reign in Samaria, the capital city of Israel, during the early part of the eighth century B.C. and ruled for 41 years until approximately 750 B.C. (II Kings 14:23-29). God allowed the people during Jeroboam's time to expand their borders and restored some of their glory. It was but a temporary relief for to the north a mighty nation was being prepared for their destruction.

Assyria: Assyria was the most powerful nation in the world during the days of Hosea and Amos. The Assyrians had enjoyed a highly advanced culture for several centuries but were most renowned for their cruelty to conquered nations. Hosea specifically named the Assyrians as the eventual conquerors of Israel (11:5-7) as did his contemporary Isaiah (Is. 10:5-11). The following kings were instrumental in the downfall of Israel:

Tilgath-Pileser	745-727 B.C.
Shalmaneser V	727-722 B.C.
Sargon II	721-705 B.C.

The fear of these kings in the days following Jeroboam II would lead the northern kingdom into disastrous alliances and eventual despair, but not the repentance for which Hosea and Amos pleaded.

Hosea: Hosea appears to have been a man of some prominence whom God selected specifically to be his messenger. God prepared Hosea for his task by directing him into a marriage that through its failure would teach him of the sadness of God toward the rebellion of His children. Hosea's message emphasizes the love that God felt for the nation and the judgment this love demanded. For example, the actions of Israel are reportedly characterized as "whoredom." The people were committing adultery against God by their idolatrous behavior. The severest rebukes of Hosea centered around this practice. However, he also describes the overall moral decay of the people in their daily activities.

Amos: Amos was very much different from Hosea in his background and emphasis. He was a herdsman whom God called to prophesy to Israel (7:14-14). Evidently, he was diligent in his duty as word was sent to Jeroboam of his message of doom, and Amos was commanded to cease prophesying in Israel (7:10-12). More than Hosea, Amos appears to stress the coming judgment of God. He speaks against the corruption of the people's religion, the luxury many enjoyed at the expense of others and describes their end as a day of darkness (5:20-21) and death (6:9). But, like Hosea, Amos stresses the greatness of God. Clearly seen are his omnipresence and omnipotence (9:2-6).

As we study the books of Hosea and Amos, we will emphasize not only the story of Israel but the revelation through these men of the character of God. Frequently, God is the speaker in these books and we are given a deep view into His love, kindness, judgment, and power as we examine them.

Questions:

- a. What is a prophet? Ex. 4:16; Deut. 18:9-22
- b. What makes these two books "minor?"
- c. What were the approximate dates of writing? Hosea: \_\_\_\_\_ Amos: \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Look at Hosea 1:1 and Amos 1:1. Who were the kings of Israel and Judah at the time of these books? Israel: \_\_\_\_\_ Judah: \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Read some of these passages: II Kings 14:23-29; 15:1-4; 15:32-38; 6:1-18. II Chron. 26:6-21; 27:1-6; 28:1-25. How would you describe the nature of the times in terms of obedience to God, political and social conditions, etc?

Obedience to God:

Political conditions:

Social conditions:

- f. Based on the above conditions, what would you expect the message from Hosea and Amos to be?
- g. What other prophets wrote during this time? What was their message likely to be?
- h. Who were the political powers of the day? Who are the powers on the horizon?
- i. Contrast the situation in Judah with that in Israel:

Judah:

Israel:

## Hosea and Amos

### Lesson 2

#### The Preparation of Hosea

Reading: Hosea 1:1-3:5

Introduction:

The family life of Hosea is used as an illustration of the type of relationship which existed between God and his people.

Marriage to Gomer: 1:2-2:1

1. In verse 2, Hosea is commanded to take a wife of whoredom, which he did in marrying Gomer. Consider the following possibilities listed below and be prepared to take one of the positions (or one of your own) and explain why.

A. The story of Hosea and Gomer is purely allegorical

B. Hosea married a woman already in whoredom and with children

C. Hosea married a woman of Israel whom God knew would eventually be unfaithful.

2. What were the names of Gomer's children and what did they mean?

3. Read II Kings 10:1-3, 7-11, 18, 29-31. Who was Jehu?

What was the significance of Jezreel?

4. Read I Pet. 2:10 and Ro. 9:26. Be prepared to explain the fulfillment of Hosea 1:10-2:1.

Jehovah addresses the nation: 2:2-23

5. Who is speaking in this section (vs. 13)?
6. Compare the attitude of God toward Israel in vs. 2-7 to the circumstance of Hosea.
7. What was the irony of Israel serving Baal according to vs. 8-13?
8. What would Israel learn to call God?

Instead of what name?

9. Under the new covenant the people would be betrothed to God in:
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
  - d.
  - e.

10. Vs. 21-23 refer to the Christian age when God draws His people together. Note how the promises here are exactly the opposite meaning of the names of Gomer's children. List these promises.

Reunion of Hosea and Gomer: 3:1-5

To keep consistent with the parallel between Hosea's marriage and God's relationship with Israel, it would appear that the woman here is Gomer.

11. Think carefully of the emotions Hosea would feel regarding Gomer. Which of these emotions would Jehovah feel toward Israel? Also consider how Israel would possess many of the emotions of Gomer.

## Hosea and Amos

### Lesson 3

#### Jehovah's Controversy with Israel

Readings: Hosea Ch. 4

Introduction:

In this chapter God begins to explain the reasons for the contentions he has against the people of Israel. The sins of the people are described in detail along with the things that caused them to drift away from God.

Description of God's controversy: 4:1-5

1. What did the land (i.e. the people) lack?
2. What did the people possess in abundance?
3. Read Lev. 20:10-12. What did the people deserve for their sins?
4. Read Deut. 17:8-12. How were the people to respect the priests?

How did the people of Hosea's age react toward the priests?

Ignorance and Idolatry: 4:6-14

5. Why were the people destroyed?

Whose fault was it?

6. Read Eph. 1:17-19 and Col. 1:9-11. Be prepared to discuss the value of knowledge.

7. What group does Hosea single out for rebuke?

8. Describe the religion of the Israelites.

Warning to Judah: 4:15-18

9. What does God warn Judah against?

10. Israel had acted as what animal?

How would God treat them?

Ephraim is a term used to describe Israel. Note in the following chapters the frequency of its use.

11. What might be described by “the wind hath wrapped her up in its wings?”



## Hosea and Amos

### Lesson 4

#### Further Rebuke

Readings: Hosea Ch. 5 & 6

Introduction:

Hosea begins here by calling the priests, the king and the people to pay close attention to his previous warning. He continues by stressing the doom that is certain in turning from God.

Israel's wicked spirit: 5:1-7

1. To whom does God's judgment pertain?
2. What type of spirit had Israel developed?  
How would this make repentance difficult?  
Compare to Eph. 2:1-3 and Rom. 1:28-32.
3. Why would they be unable to find God?
4. Use the example of Gomer to explain the meaning of "strange children" in vs. 7.

Destruction of Israel: 5:8-15

5. Try to locate Gibeah and Ramah on a map.
6. Why was Ephraim crushed and oppressed?  
Use I Kings 12:28-33 to explain what the passage may have in mind.
7. To whom did Ephraim turn when in trouble?
8. God would become as what to Ephraim and Judah?

Desire for goodness and knowledge: 6:1-11

9. Whether vs. 1-3 are the appeal of Hosea or the insincere sayings of the people, they reflect the true nature of God.
10. Contrast the image of water in 5:10 to 6:3.
11. Describe the goodness of Ephraim and Israel.
12. What did God truly desire?
13. How were the people like Adam?
14. To what depth had the priests sunk?

## Hosea and Amos

### Lesson 5

#### Sowing the Wind, Reaping the Whirlwind

Readings: Hosea Ch. 7 & 8

Introduction:

God accuses Israel of seeking help from other nations in vain. Through a series of comparisons, he explains that Israel will receive exactly what it deserves. Note how graphic the language is as Jehovah calls upon one image after another to describe the decay of Israel.

Wickedness in high places: 7:1-7

1. What had Israel failed to consider?
2. What pleased the king and princes?
3. Vs. 4-7 is admittedly a difficult passage; however it may help to consider this a picture of a king and his princes. Remember our discussion from II Kings 15 regarding the days after Jeroboam II. Try to explain this passage from the context of II Kings 15.

Images of wickedness: 7:8-16

4. In this section, Israel is referred to as a cake, hair, a dove, and a bow. Find each image and be prepared to explain its meaning.
  - a. Cake
  - b. Hair
  - c. Dove
  - d. Bow
5. Where had Israel sought help?
6. Note the irony in vs. 13 of God's willingness to help and the rejection of the people.

7. Use vs. 14-15 to compare the attitude of God to the action of the people.
  
8. Israel eventually was carried to Assyria. However, frequently Hosea says they would be carried to Egypt. Why? Use 9:3, 10:6 in your answer.

Israel maintains its innocence: 8:1-7

9. Did Israel recognize its guilt?
  
10. What actions of Israel indicated they did not care to be led by God?
  
11. Find a New Testament passage with the same thought as vs. 7.

Israel loses its distinctiveness: 8:8-14

12. What statement of Hosea indicates that Israel was no longer special?
  
13. Describe the relationship between altars and sinning.
  
14. Why didn't God accept their sacrifices?

## Hosea and Amos

### Lesson 6

#### God's Compassion and Justice

Readings: Hosea Chapters 9-11

Introduction:

Hosea uses both examples from Israel's history and forewarnings about the coming of Assyria to urge the people to awake. Once again, we are given a picture of a contented people willing to listen to the false prophets, but unwilling to return to God. Note the turmoil God felt in being forced to punish His people (11:8), and the promise He makes to keep from fully destroying them.

Contrast of Israel's present and future: Chapter 9

1. Where did the focus of Israel appear to be (9:1-2)?
2. Contrast the happiness of Israel to its future (vs. 6-7).

Also, contrast the attitude of Israel to those of Heb. 10:32-26.

3. Read judges 19:22-20:35 to learn about the days of Gibeah. List some details.
4. Read Num. 25:1-9 to learn about Baal-peor. List some details.
5. Find at least three phrases in vs. 11-17 to describe how God will treat Israel.

The guilt of Israel: Chapter 10

6. How will the people feel towards their king?
7. What will be the fate of Israel's religion?

8. Use Luke 23:30 and Rev. 6:14-16 to explain verse 8.
  
9. What should Israel do instead of plowing wickedness and reaping iniquity?

The broken heart of God: Chapter 11

10. List all that God had done for Israel from vs. 1-4.
  
11. Give two reasons why Israel would be taken to Assyria (vs. 7, 9).
  
12. Describe the heart of God. What is meant by “He is the Holy One and not a man?”
  
13. Describe Israel as they leave Assyria.

## Hosea and Amos

### Lesson 7

#### A Final Plea to Israel

Readings: Hosea Chapters 12-14

Introduction:

Hosea's focus has tended to be almost exclusively on the people of his day. Once more he stresses that they have provoked God to anger and that their idolatry has sealed their death (11:1). But here in the final remarks of his book, he looks towards a day when Israel will return to God, asking that all its iniquities be removed (14:2). Only the wise will truly appreciate the message of his book. (14:9).

Reminder of Jacob: Chapter 12

1. Similar to 8:7, Israel is said to seek the wind; here the east wind, a hot, destructive wind from the desert. Read vs. 2-5 carefully. Based on your knowledge of the story of Jacob, explain why it should produce the response God desired in vs. 6.
2. Note the attitude of Israel in vs. 8 is exactly the opposite of what God expects of us (I Cor. 10:12; II Cor. 13:5; Pro. 16:18).
3. Why was Ephraim's blood upon him?

Death and destruction of Israel: Chapter 13

4. When did Israel die?
5. Read Is. 44:9-20 to explain the foolishness of vs. 2.
6. Read Jas. 4:13-17 in connection with vs. 3. Describe the connection.
7. Contrast what God was to the people to what He will be.

8. Verse 9 is an excellent summary thought. Find at least one other place in the book where this idea is expressed. (see ch. 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, or 13)

9. Describe the graphic description of the coming destruction at the end of the chapter.

Future restoration: Chapter 14

10. Why would Israel need to take words (vs. 2)?

11. How is the restoration pictured?

12. What will be the attitude of Ephraim in that day?

13. Why is vs. 9 such an appropriate closing to the book?



## Hosea and Amos

### Lesson 8

#### Condemnation of the Nations

Readings: Amos 1 & 2

Introduction:

We have completed our study of the book of Hosea and now turn our attention to Amos the herdsman. Remember that Hosea and Amos were contemporaries. Thus the condition of Israel was the same as in our previous study, a nation withdrawn from God and doomed to a terrifying destruction. However, while the subject of Amos' book is similar to Hosea's, the style is much different.

Fate of three unrelated people: 1:1-10

1. Review lesson one and be prepared to discuss:
  - a) the condition of Israel
  
  - b) the background of Amos
  
2. Before condemning Israel, Amos addresses six foreign people. What were the nations and how did each condemnation begin?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Damascus was the capital of Syria, located about 135 miles northeast of Jerusalem.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Read II Kings 8:7-15; 13:3, 22-25 to learn of Hazael and Benhadad. List some details.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Locate Gaza on a map. What was the specific sin noted of Gaza?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Tyre is the next nation condemned. Read Ezek. 16:1-14 for a more complete prophecy of its destruction. Summarize Tyre's destruction.

Fate of three related people: 1:11-2:3

7. What was the origin of the:
  - a. Edomites
  - b. Ammonites
  - c. Moabites
  
8. What was the specific sin mentioned of each of these people:
  - a. Edomites
  - b. Ammonites
  - c. Moabites

Fate of Judah and Israel: 2:4-16

9. Only two verses are devoted to Judah whereas several are devoted to discuss Israel, perhaps an indication of the emphasis of the book. How was the sin of Judah different from the sins of the previous six people?
  
10. List the sins of Israel.
  
11. List the blessings God had given Israel.
  
12. What would be unable to save Israel (vs. 14-16)?

## Hosea and Amos

### Lesson 9

#### Past and Future Punishment

Readings: Amos Ch. 3 & 4

Introduction:

Amos began his prophesying by listing heathen people that God intended to punish. Now that his attention is focused on Israel, he begins to explain the purpose of a prophet; it is to warn the people. Amos explains that God had tried many methods to awaken Israel, but all had failed. He concludes this section by encouraging Israel to prepare to meet its God.

A lesson of common sense: 3:1-8

1. Note that Amos establishes early he is speaking the word of God, not his own.
2. Describe the special relationship Israel had with God.
3. Read vs. 3-6 carefully. These are points of common sense, but what is the lesson that Amos is teaching?

Point out at least two lessons using vs. 7-8.

The coming oppression: 3:9-15

4. Ashdod was a city of the Philistines. Why might God call upon Ashdod and Egypt to look upon Samaria?
5. What would the adversary of vs. 11 do?
6. In what manner would Israel be rescued?

False worship: 4:1-5

7. What is a kine (KJV)?

Where was Bashan?

What would be the fate of the kine of Bashan?

8. What is the irony of sins being multiplied at Bethel and Gilgal?

9. Read Col. 2:20-23. Consider how this passage applies to the Israelites described in vs. 5.

Former chastisements: 4:6-12

10. What does it mean to give clean teeth?

11. How had God used rain to punish Israel?

12. What was done to the crops of Israel?

To the horses and young men?

To the cities?

Did these woes have the desired effect?

13. How does Amos describe the God Israel is to prepare to meet?

## Hosea and Amos

### Lesson 10

#### Seek God and Live

Readings: Amos 5 & 6

Introduction:

Amos begins to issue a lamentation for Israel. A lamentation is an expression of grief in a time of death; the death of Israel was near. He pleads with them to accept their only hope, to seek God and live. Two groups are specifically rebuked; those that desire the day of Jehovah (5:18) and those that are at ease in Zion (6:1)

The lamentation of Amos: 5:1-13

1. In your words, what does it mean to seek God and live?
2. What are Pleiades and Orion?

Be prepared to explain each phrase in vs. 8-9.

3. Why would a prudent man keep silent?

Was Amos prudent?

The day of Jehovah: 5:14-20

4. According to vs. 14-15, what are the negative and positive aspects of serving God?
5. How does vs. 9 explain the mistake of the man who desires the day of Jehovah?

Formal worship: 5:21-25

6. Since God had asked for burnt offerings, meal offerings, etc., why was he so upset with them?

7. How does God feel toward the music of Israel?
8. Verse 24 is one of the most eloquent in all of the Bible. Be prepared to discuss.

Those at ease in Zion: 6:1-14

9. What is the point in vs. 2 of discussing the borders of other peoples?
10. List the characteristics of those at ease in Zion.
11. How severe would be the destruction of Israel (vs. 9-10)?
12. What is the meaning of vs. 12?

## Hosea and Amos

### Lesson 11

#### Amos and Amaziah

Readings: Amos 7 & 8

Introduction:

The prophesies of Amos had such an effect that Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, was compelled to complain to king Jeroboam. Amos explained that Jehovah had called him to speak, and as we have already learned, “when Jehovah hath spoken; who can but prophesy” (4:8). Amos continues his prophecy by noting the greed expressed in their worship (8:5), and how their feasts would become mourning (8:10).

The land is unable to bear his words: 7:1-17

1. What two things did Jehovah show Amos which he decided not to do?
2. What did God declare He would set in the midst of the people?
3. What was the charge of Amaziah?

How much of it was true?

4. What was Amos’ defense against Amaziah?
5. What does Amos explain will happen to Amaziah and Israel?

The end is near: 8:1-14

6. How would the basket of fruit signify the end of Israel?
7. Why were the people anxious for the new moon and Sabbath to be over? Is there a lesson here for us?

8. Using vs. 7 and other passages you may know, be prepared to discuss God's knowledge of our actions.
  
9. Read Isaiah 13:1, 10, and Mark 13:24. What does the darkening of the sun and moon in vs. 9 mean?
  
10. Describe the eventual mourning of Israel.
  
11. What would be the fate of Israel according to vs. 12-14?



## Hosea and Amos

### Lesson 12

#### Israel Sifted Among the Nations

Readings: Amos 9,  
II Kings 14:17-31; 17:1-23

Introduction:

In his last chapter, Amos repeats many of the themes emphasized by Hosea and himself: the sure destruction of Israel, the judgment of Jehovah, and the eventual saving of a remnant of the people. As we can read from II Kings, all of the warnings of Hosea and Amos came to pass. But we need to remember that none of this had to occur. The Israelites chose to drift away from God, and they reaped the whirlwind. Wrapped up in our humanness is the ability to make a decision about God. Let us look carefully at the fate of Israel to avoid making their mistake.

Nowhere to hide: 9:1-15

1. What did Amos see?
2. Read Jonah 1:17-2:9. How does the story of Jonah illustrate the principle being taught in vs. 2-4?
3. Based on your knowledge of the coming days of Israel, what does it mean that they will be sifted as grain?
4. What would the sinners say?
5. Be prepared to discuss how vs. 11-15 are fulfilled in the Christian age.



## Hosea and Amos

### Lesson 13

#### Review

Readings: Scan the books of Hosea and Amos and reread sections you remember as particularly interesting or instructive in addition to the ones necessary to answer the questions below.

Introduction: We will examine one question from each of our previous lessons as a means of review.

The book of Hosea:

1. Reread lesson 1 regarding the background to both books.
2. Describe the marriage of Hosea and Gomer, including their reunion.

What were the names of Gomer's children and the meanings of their names?

3. According to Hosea 4, why were the people destroyed and whose fault was it?
4. What type of spirit did Israel develop (Hos. 5:4)?

How did this make repentance difficult? Compare to Ro. 1:28-32.

5. In Hosea 7:8-16, Israel is described as a cake, hair, a dove, and a bow. Find each image and be prepared to explain its meaning:
  - a. Cake
  - b. Hair
  - c. Dove
  - d. Bow

6. List all that God had done for Israel from 11:1-4. Read also 11:8-9.
  
7. When did Israel die (13:1)? Use Is. 44:9-20 to explain the foolishness of idolatry.

The book of Amos:

8. How were the sins of Judah different from the sins of the other nations? (2:4)
  
9. Read Amos 3:3-6 carefully. These are points of common sense, but what is the lesson Amos is teaching? Point out at least two lessons using 3:7, 8.
  
10. List the characteristics of those in ease at Zion.
  
11. Why were the people anxious for the New Moon and Sabbath to be over? (Amos 8:5,6)

What is the lesson for us today?

12. Describe how Amos 9:11-15 is fulfilled today.