

November 10, 2013

Lesson 10: Amos

Amos 1:1-2; 5:14-15, 21-24

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

And he said:

The Lord roars from Zion,
and utters his voice from Jerusalem;
the pastures of the shepherds wither,
and the top of Carmel dries up.

Seek good and not evil,
that you may live;
and so the Lord, the God of hosts, will be with you,
just as you have said.
Hate evil and love good,
and establish justice in the gate;
it may be that the Lord, the God of hosts,
will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.

I hate, I despise your festivals,
and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.
Even though you offer me your burnt-offerings and grain-offerings,
I will not accept them;
and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals
I will not look upon.
Take away from me the noise of your songs;
I will not listen to the melody of your harps.
But let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.



Amos

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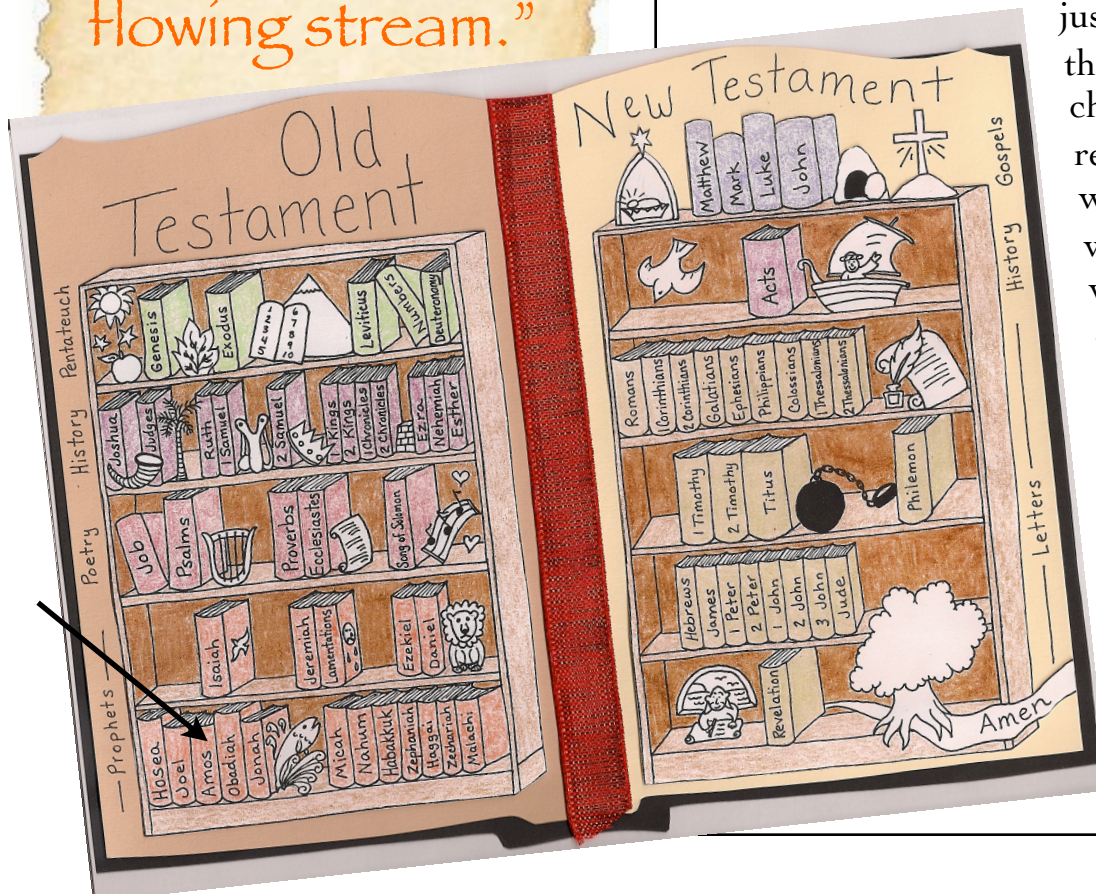
The Big Story Truth: God calls us to holy living. Justice is an essential part of how we are to live as people of God. God will use whatever means necessary to call us back to right living and right relationship with God and each other.

About This Scripture Passage: This is a small section of what the prophet Amos preached during a time in history when the northern kingdom of Israel was enjoying a time of wealth and comfortability. Except, that Amos' whole sermon was that the northern kingdom of Israel was about to die.

It was a dangerous time for the kingdom, according to Amos. Society was tremendously out of whack. True worship of God involves an attention to justice and living out of faith that was lacking in Israel. The poor were not being cared for. Justice was being perverted. “The gates” mentioned here were the town gates where something like a court system took place.

Hate and love were not just feelings to Amos, they were actions like choosing and renouncing. Action was involved. Action was needed. Action was required.

Society could not stand the way that it was. And it didn't. Amos was right. Assyria came and took over Israel. They too were exiled.



Making the Connection: The promise that God is with us is important for us to know and to remember, but so is the promise that God is with our neighbor. God commands us to love and to care for one another, not in word only but also in deed. God's desire is for us to live in right relationship with God and with each other. What that looks like is justice, mercy, caring for each other. Worship and living out faith are connected and cannot be separated. Kids need to hear this from the adults in their lives. Even more than that, they need to see it. Today's lesson is an opportunity to start the conversation with kids about how faith and daily life are connected and how our faith has an impact on our actions... and when we've screwed up, which we all do and will again, the importance of repenting - confessing our sin to God and asking for forgiveness. When we as adults model this for our kids, what a powerful image that is for their own life and faith!

Where in the World Are We?

Amos was originally from Tekoa, a town about 10 miles from Jerusalem. In his preaching and his ministry, though, he is working in Northern Israel. Since he talks about worship, it is possible that he was prophesying in Bethel, which was a main place of worship for the northern kingdom.

For Your Reflection:

How is your faith reflected in your actions?

When you fail to live out your faith, how do you go about fixing that? What assures you of God's forgiveness?

What stories or experiences might you share with your kids this week about life, faith, choices and forgiveness?

