

"On the Way" 365 Bible Reading Plan

Amos 1

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Amos chapter one introduces us to a character like no other among the prophets. Amos says he was not a prophet as others, but an ordinary man doing what a working man does. He was a "bi-vocational" prophet. He worked at a trade, but that was not his life. His life was to follow the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He was called to go the "House of Israel" and proclaim God's message to a backslidden people. **"Then Amos answered and said to Amaziah: "I was no prophet, nor was I a son of a prophet, but I was a sheep breeder and a tender of sycamore fruit. Then the Lord took me as I followed the flock, and the Lord said to me, 'Go, prophesy to My people Israel.'"** (Amos 7:14-15) He was from the town of Tekoa, just a few miles from Jerusalem and very near Bethlehem. For those who have been to Israel and have visited Herodium, also called Herodian, you were very near the town of Tekoa. In the days of Amos, as in the days of David, this was an ideal place to graze sheep, but grazing was not always available year-round and so the shepherds would go to where the sheep could find pasture. Many times, this would lead them to the

lowlands closer to the Jordan valley, near the Galilee or Jericho. This is also where Sycamore fig trees grew. The Sycamore fig, unlike others, produces hundreds of smaller figs. One of the differences in the figs from others is the Sycamore figs must be pierced to ripen to produce a sweeter fruit. This must be done by hand to each piece of fruit. The limbs are very low and easy to climb and reach the fruit. The shepherds would many times do this tedious work for someone who owned the land where the sheep could graze, while the shepherd kept watch over the sheep, but could be a "tender of Sycamore fruit" at the same time. This tells us Amos was a common man and was not wealthy, or otherwise he would hire someone to "tend the fruit" or simply pay for the pasture.

Prayer and Action Steps

God uses all kinds of people in his service. Amos was a man who "worked" at an occupation but also was one of the great prophets of the Bible. Remember your job is not your life.

Date _____ Scripture _____

- Read the chapter. If you have time, read it again.
- Highlight, underline or circle the Key Verse or Verses of the chapter.
- Ask yourself these questions as you read through the chapter.

Is this historical narrative, analogy, metaphor, allegory, or some other element of speech or communicating truth?

What is the Context? Old Testament? New Testament? What is the writer speaking or writing about? To whom is he writing?

Is this a clear passage of Scripture (can only be interpreted one way)? Or could the passage be interpreted legitimately, in two or more ways, according to grammar and context?

Does the passage teach a Biblical Precept; that is, tells you something to be, do or act?

Are there principles in this chapter that if followed, would require me to change my attitudes or actions?

Does the passage give a Biblical Pattern that is followed here and other places in the Bible?
