

=BOOKS OF THE BIBLE=

Lesson 30

Amos

Objects to have:

Your new sign for this Bible book: AMOS
Israel Shall Be Destroyed
Chalk and chalkboard or posterboard and marking pen
Your Bible.

Introducing the lesson:

(Review the books of the Bible learned thus far.) Today we are going to talk about the book of Amos. (Have the children say that name with you. Show the children the book of Amos in your Bible.) Amos is the name of a man.

Telling the story:

Once there was a shepherd. (Toward the top, and in the middle of the board, draw a picture of a staff.) The shepherd had lots of time to think. He would walk with his sheep to new pasture; he would watch over his sheep while they ate in the pasture and while they walked around in the pasture, and as they lay down to sleep in the pasture.

Amos was a shepherd. The shepherd Amos had lots of time to think. Amos thought about God. Amos thought, "How great God is! He made this whole world. He made the sky, the sun, the moon and the stars." Amos thought, "God made the earth, the grass, the flowers, the trees. God made the sheep, and all the animals. God made people; God made me! God is great," Amos thought. "God is good. He loves all the people; He loves me! I love God," Amos thought.

Then Amos began to think about all the people of his country. His people were called Israelites. They were also called Jews. Amos was sad when he thought of his people. I wonder why Amos was sad when he thought of his people the Jews!

The Jews lived among people who were not Jews. These other people did not know and love God. These other people made statues and bowed down and worshipped them. (Make a sketch under the staff that would represent an idol.) The Jews watched the other people going to big, magnificent buildings called temples. They saw them going in and bowing down in front of those statues. These other people called those statues their gods. They prayed to them. They brought offerings to them.

The Jews thought, "That looks like a fancy thing to do in church." The Jews stopped loving God the way they should. They did not want to obey Him any longer. As they looked at those other people bowing down to statues, they saw that those people drank liquor and smoked and did all kinds of wrong things. The Jews said, "I want to do that, too."

So, the Jews built statues and idols of their own. They bowed down to these false gods. They still pretended to love God; they sang songs about Him. (Draw some musical notes next to the idol.) They brought gifts to God's altar. (Draw an altar and a few coins.)

I wonder if the Jews felt bad about turning away from God, pretending to love Him when they no longer loved Him? I learned from reading the book of Amos that they did not feel bad about this. They thought that they were okay. (Write O.K. on the board.) The further the Jews got away from God, the worse their lives became.

The Jews became lazy. (Draw “z’s” in a line, as is drawn to represent someone sleeping.) They did not want to work hard anymore.

(Draw a mouth next to the “z’s.”) One of the main things the Jews wanted to do was to eat rich foods and to eat and eat and eat. It is sinful to eat too much food and to eat foods that are not good for you. It is sinful not to take good care of our bodies. The Jews began to eat too much; they were gluttons. Each day one of the most important things they did was to think about what they were going to eat and how much they could eat.

(Write “ha-ha” next to the mouth.) As the Jews thought less and less about God, the more they thought that they needed to have fun. All they were interested in was having a good time; they were looking for pleasure. They were not thinking about the work that they were supposed to do; they were not thinking about talking with God and asking Him to guide them everyday. But, when people want to have fun all the time, they are not happy. The harder they look for happiness, the harder it is to find happiness. Nobody can be happy unless he is asking God to guide and to help. Nobody can be happy unless he does the work that he is supposed to do.

(Draw something to represent coins and dollars.) The Jews had plenty; God saw to it that they had enough of everything, but God also wanted them to share what they had with poor people and with friends who needed help. The Jews did not want to share any longer. What they had they wanted to keep for themselves; they became terribly, terribly selfish.

This shepherd Amos, as he sat in the field watching his sheep, was thinking these sad thoughts about how his people were living. Then God talked to Amos, “Amos, I want you to be a preacher. Get someone else to take care of your sheep. You start to go around among the people. Tell them My words. Be a preacher, Amos,” God commanded.

Amos obeyed God. He told God, “You are going to have to help me, dear Lord. You are going to have to tell me what to say to the people.”

God told Amos, “Tell My people that they are doing wrong. Tell them that I see them.” (Draw eyes on the board, at the top, above all the other drawings.) “Tell them, Amos, to come back to Me.” God saw what His people were doing, but God still loved them. God was still good to His people. He tried through His goodness to get them to start loving Him again. God wanted them to tear down those idols that they had built. God wanted them to start talking with Him each day.

Amos obeyed God. He stopped being a shepherd; he became a preacher. He preached all these things to the Jews. The Jews would not listen to Amos, however. They would not be sorry for their sins.

So, God had to punish His people, because His people would not trust and obey Him. God could not bring them back to Himself through His goodness. He had to punish them in order to make them sorry that they had done wrong.

Oftentimes we have been spanked and punished for the wrong that we have done. The reason that our mothers and our daddies have had to spank us is because they want us to become good people. Sometimes we have had to sit on chairs facing the wall or stay in our rooms or stay inside when others are playing outside. That is to help us think about the wrong that we have done, and to be sorry for it so that we won’t do that wrong again. If our parents did not care for us and truly love us, they would not punish us.

God truly loved His people, so He sent some punishment to them. God caused the rain to stop falling. The crops would not grow. The people did not have enough food to eat. They still did not turn to Him and say that they were sorry for their sins. God let His people get more hungry and more hungry, but they still would not turn to Him. Then God let His people get sick. They had awful sicknesses, but they still would not pray to God and say, “Please make us well; we are sorry for our sins.” Then God let enemy nations come in and fight against His people and kill many of them. The Israelites who were left alive still were not sorry for their sins. How sad!

God's heart was broken. He loved His people. God loves us, too. Whenever we do wrong, it causes God to be so very sad. God was very, very sad that His people the Jews did not love Him.

God was watching His people, the Israelites. The Jews would not be sorry for their sins.

God said, "All right; I have had enough now. I will let an enemy nation come and take you away to their country." God did that, and ever since that day the Jews have been scattered all over the world.

This story ends with a sad ending, doesn't it. Let's see if we can decide how it could have ended happily. (Lead the children to tell you that being sorry for sin, asking for forgiveness, and obeying God is the way for any life to have a happy ending.)

We are God's people, too, if we are trusting Him. God watches us. Are we sorry when we sin?

LEARN OUR BIBLE: Amos 5:4, "For thus saith the LORD unto the house of Israel, Seek ye me, and ye shall live."