



# International Bible Lessons Commentary

Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series

L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

**Amos 7:10-17**  
**New Revised Standard Version**  
**July 30, 2017**

The [International Bible Lesson](#) (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, July 30, 2017**, is from **Amos 7:10-17**. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lesson Commentary*. **Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further** will help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion: these hints are available on the [International Bible Lessons Commentary](#) website along with the *International Bible Lesson* that you may want to read to your class as part of your Bible study. You can discuss each week's commentary and lesson at the [International Bible Lesson Forum](#).

**(Amos 7:10) Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent to King Jeroboam of Israel, saying, "Amos has conspired against you in the very center of the house of Israel; the land is not able to bear all his words.**

Jacob founded Bethel as the "House of God" when he had a dream and the LORD spoke to him for the first time (see Genesis 28:10-22). King Jeroboam I erected a golden calf

in Bethel and another golden calf in Dan for the people to worship so they would not go to Jerusalem to worship following the death of King Solomon and Jeroboam's establishment of the Kingdom of Israel from ten of the twelve tribes of Israel (see 1 Kings 12:26-29). Amaziah sent a message to Jeroboam II. Amos prophesied during the reign of Jeroboam II around 760 BC (the year of a major earthquake in Israel). Amaziah was an Israelite priest for the idol in Bethel that Jeroboam I said was the LORD that led the Hebrews out of Egypt. Amos was preaching God's judgment against the kingdom of Israel for their many injustices, immoralities, and idolatrous practices.

**(Amos 7:11) For thus Amos has said, 'Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel must go into exile away from his land.'**"

What Amos foretold happened in 722 BC when the Assyrians destroyed the Northern Kingdom and dispersed the ten tribes of Israel that we now label "the ten lost tribes of Israel." Amos' preaching of judgment seemed unlikely at that time because Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon were weak and both the Kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of Judah were enjoying prosperity and independence, but their leaders and the elite used their prosperity and power to oppress the poor and practice immoralities and violence that naturally followed their turning away from the true God. Amos denounced these practices as the LORD instructed him.

**(Amos 7:12) And Amaziah said to Amos, “O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah, earn your bread there, and prophesy there;**

A “seer” was another name for a prophet. Amos was seeing into the future and preaching the future as God revealed it to him. Amaziah accused Amos of preaching as a professional prophet who made his living foretelling the future or telling king’s what they wanted to hear. Amos was from Tekoa, about 11 miles south of Jerusalem, but God told him to preach at Bethel in the Kingdom of Israel. Amaziah accused Amos of preaching just for the money and not because Amos was a true prophet of God. Amaziah commanded Amos to go back to the Kingdom of Judah and preach there for his money.

**(Amos 7:13) but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king’s sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom.”**

As the priest for the king and sanctuary at Bethel, Amaziah commanded Amos to stop preaching because he was being effective among the people. Notice, Amaziah called Bethel “the king’s sanctuary” not “the LORD’s sanctuary” or “the House of God.” Presumably, the sanctuary was for the elite in the Kingdom of Israel where many immoral practices were presided over and permitted by the priests. The temple was “the temple of the kingdom,” and not “the temple of the LORD,” so God would show that He did not approve of the injustices and idolatry of the Kingdom of

Israel by bringing about the total destruction of the temples in Bethel and Dan and the kingdom.

**(Amos 7:14) Then Amos answered Amaziah, “I am no prophet, nor a prophet’s son; but I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees,**

Amos answered that he was not a paid prophet or part of a group of prophets or the son of a prophet. God had called him to be His prophet, and God had called him while he was a shepherd and a farmer. Furthermore, God had given him His message for the Kingdom of Israel. The fruit from the sycamore-fig tree was mostly eaten by the poor. Amos’ preaching shows God’s and his deep concern for the poor and injustices to them.

**(Amos 7:15) and the LORD took me from following the flock, and the LORD said to me, ‘Go, prophesy to my people Israel.’**

Just as God called Moses while he was working as a shepherd, and King David as he was working as a shepherd, so God called Amos while he was working as a shepherd; and later, Jesus came as the Good Shepherd. No matter what our job might be, God can call us to serve Him in a variety of ways at any time. Most Bible teachers are not professional Bible teachers, and neither was Amos, but God used him to serve His people.

**(Amos 7:16) “Now therefore hear the word of the LORD. You say, ‘Do not prophesy against Israel, and do not preach against the house of Isaac.’**

Amos was doing what God wanted him to do, and if Amaziah were a true priest of the true God, then he would have recognized the words of God in what Amos was preaching. He, too, would have been concerned about the injustices of the rich and powerful and their oppression of the poor and the idolatry of the temple in the Kingdom of Israel. Instead, he commanded Amos to stop doing what God had commanded him to do.

**(Amos 7:17) Therefore thus says the LORD: ‘Your wife shall become a prostitute in the city, and your sons and your daughters shall fall by the sword, and your land shall be parceled out by line; you yourself shall die in an unclean land, and Israel shall surely go into exile away from its land.’”**

The Spirit of the LORD gave Amos these words of God’s judgment on Amaziah, and his words basically describe what would happen when the Kingdom of Israel was destroyed in 722 BC. Amaziah would be carried into exile when the Israelites were deported and dispersed into various kingdoms that the Assyrians had also conquered. Therefore, to survive his wife would turn to prostitution. His sons and daughters would die defending their possessions, so they could not help their mother. The land would be given to others; those from other nations would

be given the land that God had formerly given to the Kingdom of Israel. All of Amos' prophecies happened, and should have served as a warning to the Kingdom of Judah, but the Judeans did not learn any lessons from God's destruction of the Kingdom of Israel even as later prophets tried to apply these lessons.

### **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further**

1. Why did God send Amos, from the Kingdom of Judah, to preach in Bethel?
2. Why did Amaziah accuse Amos of preaching a conspiracy against Jeroboam II?
3. Compared to other prophets, what kind of a prophet was Amos?
4. What did Amaziah tell Amos to do?
5. What did Amos say would happen to Amaziah and his family?

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Begin or close your class by reading the short weekly  
*International Bible Lesson.*

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