

**SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON**

**AMOS CONDEMNS SOCIAL INJUSTICE**

International Sunday School Lesson for June 6, 1954.

Memory Selection: "Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live; and so the Lord God of hosts, will be with you."—Amos 5:14.

Lesson Text: Amos 7:10-17; 8:4-9

About twenty-six centuries ago, Amos wrote one of the earliest books of prophecy. It was just about a century after the time of Elijah. As you probably know, the prophetic works of the Old Testament are divided into four major prophets and twelve minor prophets. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel constitute the first group, and, of the latter, Amos, Hosea and Micah, with Isaiah, constituted the four great prophets of the Eighth century B.C. This distinction between the "major" and "minor" prophets is purely arbitrary, based on the volume of writings.

Amos was a shepherd and farmer, living at Tekoa, a little village six miles south of Bethlehem. He was not trained as a prophet and belongs to that select company of great men in the Bible who were humble workers. Amos cared for a special variety of sheep and was also a dresser of sycamore trees, which bore a small fig. This was pinched to hasten its ripening. Hence, Amos was known as a "fig-pincher."

The Book of Amos is not very long but it is our first literary monument of its kind. The Book, according to Rev. George L. Petrie, "has not the charm of poetry, but it has the fascinating power of oratory; an oratory, not of the schools, but of nature; not ornate, but rugged. The illustrations of the Book are objects of nature and scenes familiar to plainest country life. Of all the prophetic Books, this is the one which the plain, unlettered laborer on the farm, in the field or forest, may most easily read."

The author of the Book was an able writer, however. Professor Bernhard Duhm says: "Amos speaks with unpolished plainness. But he can handle his language with a master's skill; every sentence is full of meaning, and every word strikes the mark. This reforming soul belongs among the classic writers of Israelite literature."

Although Amos lived in the country he understood the life of his age. He saw the wickedness of the cities when he carried his products to market, and he also saw many other evils, as Rev. Bernard C. Clausen enumerated them: "Unscrupulous judges condemned the innocent for paltry bribes. The rich grasped the small possessions of the poor. Prices were fraudulently increased and measures were fraudulently diminished, and bad grain was sold as good."

"The most shameful licentiousness was practiced. Idolatry, with its bestial immoralities, was rampant. Everywhere Amos saw wasteful luxury and extravagance, the more disgraceful in contrast with the wretched poverty of the people among whom he lived."

Amos spoke out for social justice and he uttered a plea which the world has not yet heeded. He tells those who have become rich by taking advantage of their fellowmen that, although they build fine houses, they shall not dwell in them. He condemns without fear the social evils of his day.

"The passion of Amos' soul is for the establishment of social justice," according to Prof. J. E. McFayden, "and as his denunciations and threats fell upon the heads of those who frustrate that, whether by incidental cruelty, or as here, by deliberate violation of the principles of equity in the courts of justice. The worst offenders were those who poisoned justice at its source, those who, by their venal decisions, made it a bitter thing for the poor man when it ought to have been sweet, and who laid righteousness prostrate upon the ground when she ought to have been erect and smiling."

Amos sought to make the religion of Israel a sincere one. Speaking for Jehovah, he told the people to "seek good and not evil" and, with emphasis, "hate the evil and love the good." As for the formal religious ceremonies he points out that these mean nothing to God unless the people live righteously. Outward formal worship will not be acceptable to God and he appealed to his hearers to "let justice roll down as waters and righteousness as a mighty stream." The preaching of Amos was not appreciated by the kind and the priests of Israel and they sent Amos back home where he wrote his immortal little book.

The writings of Amos are immortal words, says J. E. McFayden: "They express in imperishable form the essence of religion, the simple demands of God upon men. The justice, the righteousness for which Amos here pleads, is a social thing; it is tender regard for the poor, hatred of the evil

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**LEFT ALONE?**

Two little girls left alone! It sounds like the beginning of a sad story.

But look again. There are certainly no tears. There is a comfortable home; and pretty clothes.

But these children have been given a great deal more than the ordinary comforts of life. There in the older child's hand is a book, "The Story of Jesus."

How reassuring to see that they have been given the advantages of a Christian training. Somehow all doubt has been removed from our minds. We feel that these little girls will be safe—not only during this one evening, but through their entire lives.

All of us want our children to be shielded from life's hardships and temptations, but we can guarantee no such protection. Our surest course is that we rear them in a Christian atmosphere, sending them to Daily Vacation Church School and taking them to the services of the Church regularly. Then, and then only, will we know that we have done everything in our power for their future success, happiness and salvation.

**THE CHURCH FOR ALL . . . ALL FOR THE CHURCH**

The Church is the greatest factor on earth for the building of character and good citizenship. It is a storehouse of spiritual values. Without a strong Church, neither democracy nor civilization can survive. There are four sound reasons why every person should attend services regularly and support the Church. They are: (1) For his own sake. (2) For his children's sake. (3) For the sake of his community and nation. (4) For the sake of the Church itself, which needs his moral and material support. Plan to go to church regularly and read your Bible daily.

Sunday	Book	Chapter	Verses
Monday	Deuteronomy	6	4-19
Tuesday	Isaiah	41	8-16
Wednesday	Matthew	5	19-34
Thursday	Luke	5	1-11
Friday	11 Corinthians	4	16-18
Saturday	Titus	3	1-11
	Psalms	23	1-4

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**Perquimans Church Services**

**HERTFORD BAPTIST CHURCH**  
C. W. Duling, Pastor  
Sunday School, 9:45 A. M.  
Morning Worship, 11:00 o'clock.  
Evening Worship, 8 o'clock.  
Mid-week Services, Wednesday at 8 P. M.

**BETHLEHEM CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
Joe Brickhouse, Pastor  
First Sunday  
11 A. M. and 8 P. M.

**BURGESS BAPTIST CHURCH**  
W. E. Thompson, Pastor  
Church services second and fourth Sundays at 11 A. M.  
Sunday School at 10:00 A. M.

**PERQUIMANS CHARGE CHURCHES**  
H. M. Jameson, Pastor  
First Sunday:  
New Hope Church, 11:00 A. M.  
Oak Grove Church, 7:00 P. M.  
Second Sunday  
Winfall Church, 11:00 A. M.  
Cedar Grove Church, 10 A. M.  
Woodland Church, 7:00 P. M.  
Third Sunday  
Oak Grove Church, 11:00 A. M.  
New Hope Church, 7:00 P. M.  
Fourth Sunday  
Cedar Grove Church, 11:00 A. M.  
Woodland Church, 10 A. M.  
Winfall Church, 7:00 P. M.  
Fifth Sunday  
Woodland Church, 11:00 A. M.  
Prayer Meeting each Wednesday at Winfall Church, 7:00 P. M.

**ANDERSON'S METHODIST CHURCH**  
C. H. Beale, Pastor  
Church School, 10:00 A. M.  
Morning Worship, 11:00 A. M., second and fourth Sundays.

**WOODVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH**  
Hugh Ross Williams, Pastor  
Church Services on second and fourth Sundays at 11 A. M.  
First and Third Sundays at 7.45 P. M.  
Sunday School 9:45 A. M.

**UP RIVER FRIENDS CHURCH**  
James Rahenkamp, Pastor  
Sunday School, 9:45 A. M.  
Church Services 11 A. M. - 7:30 P. M.  
Christian Endeavor, 6:30 P. M.  
Prayer Service, Wednesday 7:30 P. M.

**BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH**  
Rev. J. D. Stoner, Pastor  
Sunday School 10 A. M.  
Morning Worship 11 A. M.  
Evening service 8 P. M.

**PINEY WOODS FRIENDS CHURCH**  
D. Virgil Pike, Pastor  
Church School 10 A. M.  
Morning Worship 11 A. M.  
Young People's Meeting 7 P. M.

**WHITEVILLE GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH**  
Caleb Goodwin, Jr., Pastor  
Sunday School, 10:30 A. M., every Sunday except third Sunday.  
Church services every third Sunday at 8 P. M.

**HERTFORD METHODIST CHURCH**  
A. L. Chaplin, Pastor  
Church School, 9:45 A. M.  
Morning Worship, 11:00 o'clock.  
Youth Fellowship, 6:45 P. M.  
Evening Worship, 7:30 P. M.  
Mid-week Fellowship, Wednesday at 7:30 P. M.

**BAGLEY SWAMP PILGRIM**  
Coy S. Saunders, Pastor  
Sunday School, 10:00 A. M.  
Morning Worship, 11:00 o'clock.  
Young People's Meeting, 6:30 P. M.  
Evening Worship, 7:30 o'clock.  
Mid-week Services, Thursday at 7:30 P. M.

**HOLY TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
Rev. Charles F. Wulf, Rector.  
9:45 A. M., Church School, every Sunday.  
9:00 A. M., Holy Communion, 1st Sunday.  
8:30 A. M., Holy Communion, 2nd, 4th, 5th Sundays.  
11:00 A. M., Holy Communion, 3rd Sunday.  
11:00 A. M., Morning Prayer, 2nd, 4th, 5th Sundays.  
10:00 A. M., Holy Communion, Fridays and Saints' Days.

**BEREA CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
Walker Perry, Pastor  
2nd and 4th Sunday at 10:30 A. M.  
Morning worship on first and third Sundays at 11 A. M.  
Evening worship first and third Sundays at 7:30 P. M.

**CHAPPELL HILL BAPTIST CHURCH**  
Rev. Vivian Evans, Pastor  
Sunday School every first and third Sunday at 10:30 A. M. Preaching service at 11:15 A. M.  
Sunday School every second and fourth Sunday at 11:00 A. M.

**Go To Church Your Church Any Church But Do Go**