

1. Justice.
 - a. When I think of justice, I see pictures of police officers and courtrooms.
 - i. I remember getting pulled over coming into Post.
 - ii. I had set the cruise control to 74 mph (the speed limit at the time was 70 during the daytime and 65 at night).
 - iii. I thought I would not get pulled over for only going four mph over the limit.
 - iv. I didn't see the consecutive speed limit signs from 75 to 55 as I entered the city of Post.
 - v. I did see the 45-mph sign and immediately slammed on the brakes, so as I passed the sign, I was only doing 45. But it was too late.
 - vi. The officer approaches the car and asks me, "Do you know how fast you were going?"
 - b. Society has changed the idea of justice, so everyone should have equal pay, power, and status.
 - c. God's idea of justice is entirely different.
2. The LORD roars.
 - a. Jeroboam II.
 - i. Jeroboam II was a great military leader, and God used him to save Israel.
 - ii. "From the limited information given in the Bible, it seems that Jeroboam II was a gifted commander and an able organizer who succeeded in elevating the kingdom of Israel to a last climax before its fall." ¹
 - iii. Jeroboam won new territory and generated wealth.
 - iv. 2 Kings 14:25–28: "He restored the border of Israel from Lebo-hamath as far as the Sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the Lord, the God of Israel, which he spoke by his servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet, who was from Gath-hepher. For the Lord saw that the affliction of Israel was very bitter, for there was none left, bond or free, and there was none to help Israel. But the Lord had not said that he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven, so he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash. Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam and all that he did, and his might, how he fought, and how he restored Damascus and Hamath to Judah in Israel, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?"
 - v. This wealth led to a lack of concern, extravagance, corruption, and idolatry, which in turn led to injustice.
 - vi. God calls Amos to remind Israel of His justice.
 - b. Amos starts with a reminder of the Mountain of God.
 - i. Amos 1:1: "The words of Amos, who was among the shepherds of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake."
 - ii. Amos 1:2: "And he said: "The LORD roars from Zion and utters his voice from Jerusalem; the pastures of the shepherds mourn, and the top of Carmel withers."
 - c. God's judgments against the nations.

¹ Jeroboam II, www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jeroboam-ii. Accessed 30 May 2024.

- i. Even though Amos says this is a vision concerning Israel, he starts with judgments against the surrounding nations.
- ii. Looking at a map, we can see that Amos creates a circle with Israel in the middle, like a target in the crosshairs (of God's judgment).
- d. God's judgment against Israel.
 - i. When he finally gets to Israel, he declares a much harsher judgment three times as long as any of the judgments that He declared on the surrounding nations.
 - 1. Each of the judgments on the surrounding nations is 2-3 verses long.
 - 2. Amos' first declaration against Israel is 11 verses long.
 - 3. Amos 2:6–16.
 - ii. Pay close attention to God's accusations.
 - 1. Slavery. "The first "sin" named in Israel's indictment involved selling human beings for a price. Who did the selling or buying is left unanswered. More than one practice may be in view: (1) corrupt judges/jurors who accepted bribes to decide cases against the righteous or (2) the righteous who were sold into slavery for failure to pay a debt. "The righteous" may be a legal term designating the innocent. These persons should have been declared not guilty, or innocent of the charge(s) brought against them. For such people to be counted guilty would be sinful indeed."²
 - 2. Perverting Justice. "The powerful, rich landowners stepped on the poor by using the courts to pervert justice. Thus they revealed their contempt for those less fortunate, treating the poor like dirt. A literal rendering of the third line of v. 7 reveals the emphasis of the speaker: "And the way of the afflicted they turn aside." Needy ones were pushed off the road, "bullied and oppressed by the wealthy," pushed aside as they sought justice at the gate."³
 - a. Exodus 23:6: "You shall not pervert the justice due to your poor in his lawsuit."
 - b. Proverbs 17:23: "The wicked accepts a bribe in secret to pervert the ways of justice."
 - 3. Sexual perversion.
 - a. Many texts deal with Sexual perversion.
 - b. Exodus 21, Leviticus 18, 19, 20, and 22.
 - 4. Oppression.
 - a. The lender was supposed to return the garment taken in pledge before nightfall.
 - b. Exodus 22:26–27: "If ever you take your neighbor's cloak in pledge, you shall return it to him before the sun goes down, for that is his only covering, and it is his cloak for his body; in what else shall he sleep? And if he cries to me, I will hear, for I am compassionate."
 - c. They were not supposed to take a widow's cloak in pledge.
 - d. Deuteronomy 24:17: "You shall not pervert the justice due to the sojourner or to the fatherless, or take a widow's garment in pledge,"

² Billy K. Smith and Franklin S. Page, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, vol. 19B, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 62.

³ Ibid, 63.

- e. "While the consumption of wine was a common practice, the source of the wine was the problem. It may have been directly or indirectly a fine for misconduct, a tax on the people, or a payment on a debt. The point may be that the fines were unjust. Whatever the nature of the payment, Amos considered the exaction of it an oppressive act. Drinking such wine instead of that produced by the worshiper was especially odious to the oppressed. Fines for misconduct (cf. Exod 21:22; Deut 22:19) were aimed at compensation for damages, not promotion of drunkenness."⁴
- iii. These are not crimes we see codified into law (except slavery).
 - 1. It was common for an Israelite to sell himself into slavery to pay off a debt.
 - 2. Exodus 21:2: "When you buy a Hebrew slave, he shall serve six years, and in the seventh he shall go out free, for nothing."
 - 3. Deuteronomy 15:12: "If your brother, a Hebrew man or a Hebrew woman, is sold to you, he shall serve you six years, and in the seventh year you shall let him go free from you."
- e. God rescued Israel from oppression, slavery, and injustice.
 - i. Amos 2:9–11: "Yet it was I who destroyed the Amorite before them, whose height was like the height of the cedars and who was as strong as the oaks; I destroyed his fruit above and his roots beneath. Also it was I who brought you up out of the land of Egypt and led you forty years in the wilderness, to possess the land of the Amorite. And I raised up some of your sons for prophets, and some of your young men for Nazirites. Is it not indeed so, O people of Israel?" declares the Lord."
 - ii. Israel had become Egypt!
- 3. God's Justice.
 - a. God's justice is formed around how we treat one another.
 - b. Israel's leaders were conducting their worship services and sacrifices while oppressing the poor, selling them into slavery, and corrupting justice.
 - c. Amos 5:24: "But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream."
 - d. Righteousness.
 - i. A right relationship with God and each other.
 - ii. 1 John 1:7: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin."
 - iii. Equality despite our social and economic differences.
 - 1. This is not the equality of income or material things that today's society pushes.
 - 2. We are all equal in Christ. We all have the same worth to Jesus.
 - 3. A one-talent person is just as important in the Kingdom as a five-talent person.
 - e. Justice.
 - i. Actions taken to correct injustice.
 - ii. In this case, oppression, sexual perversion, slavery, and corruption.
 - iii. We can identify with these injustices today.
 - f. Justice and righteousness are supposed to permeate our lives just like a rushing river would a dry riverbed. (Bible Project)
 - i. God requires justice and righteousness from His people.

⁴ Ibid, 64.

- ii. Amos 5:21–23: "I hate, I despise your feasts, 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 peace offerings of your fattened animals, I will not look upon them. Take away from me the noise of your songs; to the melody of your harps I will not listen."
 - iii. "True worship of the Creator, God of Israel, is synonymous with doing good, with generosity, and with justice." (Bible Project)
 - iv. Acceptable worship of God is tied to our treatment of each other: family, friends, and neighbors (even enemies).
 - v. Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan is a perfect illustration of justice and righteousness.
 - 1. The Samaritan acted in the injustice.
 - 2. He provided first aid, travel, room and board, and anything else the Samaritan needed.
 - 3. Would you spend two days' wages (more actually) on someone you didn't know?
 - 4. Most people would slow down long enough to take pictures; most would not even stop to assess the injuries.
 - 5. Society's cry today is, "Don't get involved," and "It is not my problem" (the Priest and the Levite).
 - 6. We must get involved!
4. Roll down like waters.
- a. Walking in the light means fellowship with one another.
 - b. Fellowship with one another means treating each other with God's justice and righteousness.
 - c. Let justice and righteousness permeate our lives.
 - d. Amos 5:24: "But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream."