



Faith and Love C.O.G.I.C
Sunday School

Lesson 2 June 8, 2025

JUDGEMENT ON ISRAEL AND
JUDAH

SUNDAY SCHOOL CORE VALUES



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SUNDAY SCHOOL RESPONSIVE READING

Superintendent/Teacher: Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. **Psalm 133:1**

School/Class: But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. **Hebrews 13:16**

Superintendent/Teacher: All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. **2 Timothy 3:16**

School/Class: Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. **Psalm 119:105**

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SUNDAY SCHOOL RESPONSIVE READING

Superintendent/Teacher: Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. **Philippians 2:4**

School/Class: He who has a generous eye will be blessed, for he gives of his bread to the poor. **Proverbs 22:9**

Superintendent/Teacher: Therefore he says: “When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men.” **Ephesians 4:8**

School/Class: As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. **1 Peter 4:10**

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SUNDAY SCHOOL RESPONSIVE READING

Superintendent/Teacher: For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. **1 Corinthians 12:12**

School/Class: For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function. **Romans 12:4**

Superintendent/Teacher: By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another. **John 13:35**

School/Class: For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. **Gal. 5:13**

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SUNDAY SCHOOL RESPONSIVE READING

ALL:

But grow in the grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen. **2 Peter 3:18**

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- Bible Basis: Amos 2:4-8
- Bible Truth: God will not overlook injustice but will punish the unjust.
- Memory Verse: "Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they have despised the law of the LORD, and have not kept his commandments, and their lies caused them to err, after the which their fathers have walked" (Amos 2:4)..
- Lesson Aim: By the end of the lesson, we will: REVIEW God's judgment of Judah and Israel; ENCOURAGE sensitivity toward social injustice; and ADDRESS issues of injustice in their local and global communities.
- Background Scriptures: Amos 2:4-8; Psalm 75-Read and incorporate the insights gained from the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.

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Amos 2:4-8, KJV

4 Thus saith the Lord; For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they have despised the law of the Lord, and have not kept his commandments, and their lies caused them to err, after the which their fathers have walked:

5 But I will send a fire upon Judah, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem.

6 Thus saith the Lord; For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes;

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Amos 2:4-8, KJV

7 That pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor, and turn aside the way of the meek: and a man and his father will go in unto the same maid, to profane my holy name:

8 And they lay themselves down upon clothes laid to pledge by every altar, and they drink the wine of the condemned in the house of their god.

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LIGHT ON THE WORD

The concept of slavery depicted in the Old Testament is not equivalent to the North Atlantic slave trade, although there are certain parallels between the two. Slavery was a customary practice throughout the ancient Near East. Individuals could be sold into slavery to repay a personal debt or a debt to society. In war, citizens of conquered countries were often made slaves.

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LIGHT ON THE WORD

Mosaic Law governed how Israel was to treat slaves, given the practice was already a custom in Near Eastern culture. These laws detailed how masters were to treat slaves humanely, and how slaves could be freed. For example, Exodus 21:2-4 indicates that a Hebrew who sold himself to another Hebrew should be released after six years of service.

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON:

AIM: We will know that even though people know right from wrong, some people treat others unjustly.

INTRODUCTION

The Prophet Amos

The prophet Amos was born in the city of Tekoa. He prophesied in Israel around 750 B.C. He was not the descendant of prophets; rather he was from "among the herdsman of Tekoa" (Amos 1:1). He was a shepherd and tended and gathered sycamore figs. He received his call to ministry while he was out in the pastures, with his sheep (Amos 7:14-15). His career as a shepherd and a common working man informed his view of the world and the way he communicated his prophetic message.

INTRODUCTION

The Prophet Amos

He used images from nature and agriculture in his prophecies. Amos lived during an era of relative peace and prosperity. This prosperity led to an atmosphere of indulgent luxury, corrupt power, and moral depravity in Israel. Many had turned to the worship of idols and other gods. Some religious practices were still maintained; however, these had deteriorated into empty rituals. Israel's religion didn't have the intended impact on how they lived their lives.

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BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: We will learn that God hates injustice and
oppression of the poor.

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I. JUDAH'S SIN AND GOD'S JUDGMENT

Judah's Judgement and Punishment

Amos 2:4-5

Amos delivers his message from the Lord, explaining the sins that Judah has committed. Judah's sin is repetitive; a continual pattern of disobedience. Their sins are numerous and God's patience with Judah has run out. In this regard, Judah is no different than the other nations that God has judged. The same pattern, "for three transgressions ... and for four" used to judge pagan nations, is used here as well. However, Judah's sin is different in that they had received God's laws and chosen not to follow them. Rather than keeping His laws, they have "despised the Law of the LORD." The word translated "despised" in the KJV is the Hebrew word *ma'as* (mah-AHS), also meaning to reject or refuse. **Judah knew what to do but refused to do it.**

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I. JUDAH'S SIN AND GOD'S JUDGMENT

Judah's Judgement and Punishment
Amos 2:4-5

4 Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Judah and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they have despised the law of the LORD, and have not kept his commandments, and their lies caused them to err, after which their fathers have walked.

By moving from neighboring nations on to Judah, Amos begins to zero in on the goal of prophesying against Israel. Judah is condemned for rejecting the Law of God and for idolatry. Although the actual word "idolatry" is not mentioned, we can infer this from the reference to lies (Heb. kazab,kah-ZAHV) making them err. The word "lies" is often used in reference to idols or anything that gives them false hope (Psalm 4:2; Ezekiel 13:6). The idols of the nations only lead people into deception. The sin of idolatry is also alluded to with the phrase "after which their fathers have walked."

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"Walking after" is often used in reference to idol worship or following the commands and statutes of Yahweh (Deuteronomy 8:19; Jeremiah 8:2). It is obvious Amos is referring to the former since he has already stated that Judah has "despised" (Heb. ma'as, mahAHS) God's Law. This oracle against Judah stands out from the prophetic oracles against the other nations because Judah is closest to Israel and Judah's sins are of a covenantal nature, not just crimes against humanity. They are indicted for their breach of covenant with God by going after idols. This is something that God does not take lightly with His covenant people.

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I. JUDAH'S SIN AND GOD'S JUDGMENT

5 But I will send a fire upon Judah, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem.

Judah's Judgement and Punishment
Amos 2:4-5

Amos announced that Judah's sins will not go unpunished. The Lord sent a fire on Judah and the palaces (Heb. 'armon, ar-MONE) of Jerusalem. Most likely, Amos is referring to the citadels and strongholds that made up the king's palace and temple complex, since this word for "palace" can also mean citadel or fortress. The word comes from a root meaning high and lofty. These high and lofty places would be brought down by fire. This happened in 586 B.C. when Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian army defeated Jerusalem through siege.

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LIGHT ON THE WORD

Lying People

Judah chose to follow in the lies and false-hoods of their ancestors. They continued a historical pattern of preferring false teaching over the divine instruction provided to them. For their sin, Judah was judged in the same manner as the surrounding pagan nations: They were destroyed in warfare, consumed by fire.

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II. ISRAEL'S SIN

Injustice and Pain
Amos 2:6-8

Amos completed his message with a stern rebuke of Israel. Israel's spiritual climate had fallen to the point that they resemble the foreign nations around them. Their sin and rejection of God's Law placed them squarely in the company of nations that hadn't even received it. Again, the prophecy indicates an identical pattern of judgement: "For three transgressions ... and for four. "The innocent and the poor are being abused in Israel.

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II. ISRAEL'S SIN

Injustice and Pain
Amos 2:6-8

Though slavery is a customary practice, Amos speaks to the rigged and unjust practice of driving debtors to slavery for the sole purpose of benefiting the powerful and wealthy. Rather than being merciful and allowing them more time to repay, people are driven into slavery. For as little as the cost of a pair of sandals, the poor and innocent are dealt with harshly. Additionally, those sold into slavery are abused within the households of the wealthy. A man and his son lying with the same servant woman is a violation of Moses' Law and profanes God's name (Exodus 20:17). A servant given in marriage to a son is to be treated as a daughter by the master of the house (Exodus 21:9).

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II. ISRAEL'S SIN

Injustice and Pain
Amos 2:6-8

6 Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes.

Now Amos turns his prophetic gaze toward Israel. As Amos prophesied against the other nations like Tyre, Edom, Moab, and Judah, Israel must have savored and enjoyed hearing their neighbors' condemnation. Now it was their turn. The Lord would not be partial but would judge fairly. If the other nations received prophetic pronouncements of judgment, then Israel would receive judgment as well. Amos repeats the same prophetic formula "for three transgressions of Israel and for four."

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II. ISRAEL'S SIN

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This was an acknowledgment of God's patience toward their sin. Adding "for four" showed that God was at His limit and could not restrain His punishment for their wrongdoing. This wrongdoing manifested itself in selling "the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes." The word "righteous" (Heb. tsaddiyq, tsah-DEEK) here may be used in a legal sense, referencing those who are innocent in Israel's law courts but who nevertheless are found guilty by corrupt judges. It could also be referring to those sold into slavery for a debt. Both meanings could be in view here. A pair of sandals could be referring to land transfer (see Ruth 4) or a very small, insignificant debt. Amos was pointing out how the Israelites were devaluing human life.

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II. ISRAEL'S SIN

Injustice and Pain
Amos 2:6-8

7 That pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor, and turn aside the way of the meek: and a man and his father will go in unto the same maid, to profane my holy name.

Israel is accused of having little or no regard for the poor. The word "pant" (Heb. shaap, shah-AHF) is often rendered "swallow up" or "trample." They trample the head of the poor into the earth, meaning they provide no means for the poor to better themselves. Instead, Israel is accused of wanting the poor to remain poor for their own benefit and personal gain. They also push the meek or afflicted out of the way and do not give alms or financial, social, or physical assistance. Their social evils extend into the realm of sexual immorality as well.

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The sexual sin presented breaches proper familial relationship and is condemned (Leviticus 18:15, 20:12). The word used for girl (Heb. na'arah, nah-ah-RAH) can also be rendered female servant. For both father and son to have sexual relations with the same slave girl would be a misuse of power by exploiting those who have no rights to speak up for themselves. This abuse of power made their acts an even greater violation of God's covenant. Such acts profane, defile, or stain the Lord's holy name. The Hebrew word chalal (khih-LEL) expresses the hideous act of desecrating that which belongs to God. It is making unholy that which is deemed holy. The Israelites are particularly accused of defiling the Lord's name through sexual and social sins.

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II. ISRAEL'S SIN

Injustice and Pain
Amos 2:6-8

8 And they lay themselves down upon clothes laid to pledge by every altar, and they drink the wine of the condemned in the house of their god.

Amos continues to show how Israel has sinned. They are accused of "laying themselves down upon clothes laid to pledge by every altar. "Their sexual immorality and injustice (v. 7) was connected to their religious sin and unfaithfulness to their covenant with God. Part of their idolatrous practices was to worship through sexual acts. Their crime is even more serious, as they commit these acts on clothes that have been taken as collateral for a loan. The law stated that these garments (usually the outer garments or cloaks) were to be returned for the night (Exodus 22:26).

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Instead they were kept to be used for shameful acts. The perpetrators also drank wine, which was paid for by "unjust fines" (NLT). It is not clear whether these fines are unjust taxes or part of the tithe to the "house of their god." During this time, ancient Israel had set up shrines and temples to replace the temple of Yahweh at Jerusalem. At these shrines, Yahweh was represented as a bull, which was also the representation of Baal. It is not surprising that because of this syncretistic mix of ideas, their worship was also patterned after the worship of Baal to include orgiastic rituals.

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LIGHT ON THE WORD

Deeply Rooted Sins

Israel's sin is not merely negligent abuse. The innocent are actively being denied justice in the courts and are taken advantage of in the name of power and greed (v. 7). The poor, rather than being helped and protected, are pushed down even further. These practices have become commonplace in Israel. Israel's rejection of God's Law has resulted in horrible abuses against its people. The majority of these involve the powerful using the system to benefit themselves and push down the needy and less powerful. They have perverted legitimate political and legal systems to enrich themselves.

BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: We will know we are called to stand for
justice even though this may necessitate
standing against others.

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BIBLE APPLICATION

The powerful and wealthy in Israel used legitimate political and legal systems to enrich themselves and hold down the less fortunate. A parallel to this type of behavior is the modern-day practice of predatory lending in America. Predatory lending occurs when wealthy banking institutions provide loans under terms that are misleading or abusive. Often the loan terms make it impossible for a borrower to repay the loan or make the required payments. This results in the debtor losing land, money, or property to the bank. The poor and less educated are often the primary targets of such lending practices. Rather than taking advantage of the less fortunate, God calls us to minister to those that need help (Matthew 25:34-35).

STUDENT RESPONSES

AIM: We will discuss how Christians are
involved in corporate injustices.

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STUDENT RESPONSES

As a nation and as the church, when it comes to social injustice, we often point the finger at others. Prayerfully make a list of the ways our nation and the church contribute to social injustice. Commit to practicing justice in these areas of life as an individual.

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Prayer

Dear God,

God of justice, we are sorry for any injustices that we have actively or unknowingly committed in our lives. We seek justice for all and thank You for allowing Your justice to prevail in us.

In Jesus' Name we pray.

Amen.

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Next Sunday
June 15, 2025
Lesson 3
God is Not Fooled
Amos 5