

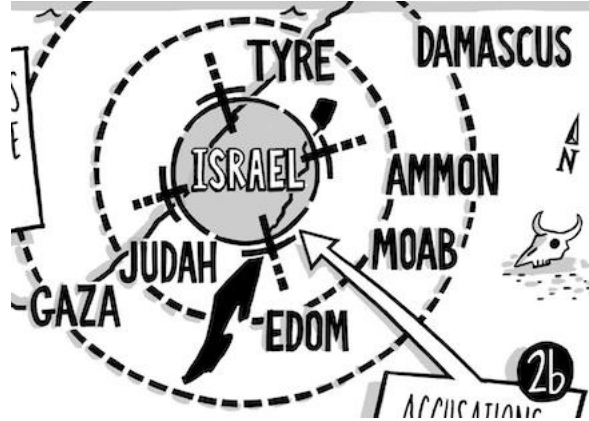
## Discipleship Group Weekly Resources

### Week 2

#### Passage: Amos 2

#### Big Thought:

Amos is a clever one. The prophet spends chapter 1 declaring God's judgement on the nations that surround Israel for the evils they've committed. Amos seems to intentionally create a prophetic circle with his harsh words like so...



Amos' message of warning and judgement on the nations would have been received with cheers from the Ephraimites he spoke to (northern Kingdom of Israel). God speaking a harsh word to people who did not fear God and chose to harm others, create chaos, and destroy God's good world is easy for the people of God to receive.

Not only that, but Amos begins to speak a word to the southern Kingdom of Israel, Judah (2:4-5). Ephraimites and Judahites did not particularly care for each other at the moment of this prophecy so Amos would have received another cheer and applause for the word of judgement on Judah – those self-righteous Judahites thinking they have all the answers about what God's will is and how they can live.

But this is all a set-up designed to catch the Ephraimites and confront their evil and injustice (2:6-16). Amos begins his critique of those doing fine for themselves in the community who take advantage of people who have encountered bad times. It isn't quite clear what he means at the end of verse 7, "Father and son use the same girl and so profane my holy name," but scholars assume it's a reference to abuse of the vulnerable in the community. Amos then calls out the community as a whole for their lack of gratefulness for all that God had done for them in their weakness – instead they have taken advantage of others in their weakness. Additionally, they told the prophets to shut up and gave the Nazirites (a group committed to an extra level of devotion to God) a hard time – persuading them to give up some of their commitments.

And then the judgement (2:13-16). God is going to bring justice on God's own people and everyone is guilty. I have an urge to explain this uncomfortable truth away, but I believe there's a lot to learn here. It seems clear that God is angered by God's people *mistreating the vulnerable, taking advantage of those down on their luck, and ignoring God's repeated generosity to lift up God's people when they are weak by continuing to oppress the weak*. Amos is clear – God will bring justice. Let us learn.

### 3 Questions:

1. God brings justice on his own people for their evil. We also learn in other places that God is slow to anger and loving. How do we hold both of these truths about God's character together?
2. How do you see people today committing the same evils Amos accuses Israel of? (Hint: the accusations are italicized above)
3. God's will is clearly the opposite of the accusations that brought judgement on Israel. What is one way you can work towards treating the vulnerable well, helping those who are in tough times, responding to God's generosity with generosity, and lifting up the weak?