



June 9, 2024

**The Lion Roars:  
Week 6 – The Persecuted Prophet**

**Big Idea:** Amos becomes a persecuted prophet, faced with the choice to flee in fear or respond in obedience.

**Overview:** The leaders of Israel have had it. After Amos critiques the religious leaders, Amaziah, the High Priest in Bethel confronts Amos. He first appeals to the King of Israel, misrepresenting Amos and his message, to send him back to the south. After misrepresenting Amos, Amaziah tells Amos to leave and not return and tempts him to leave to better ministry success in the south. Amos simply is not wanted anymore. How does Amos respond? He settles into his vocation of being a prophet sent by God. He retells the story of God's intervention in his life and his commission to Israel to speak this hard message. Instead of relenting he responds with more judgment on Amaziah. Amos presents a model for how we are to think about being persecuted and how we are to engage our culture with a prophetic presence. We conclude this weekend by walking to the Lord's Supper where we think of Jesus as the persecuted and murdered prophet, who with grace and truth, dies for the ones who reject Him.

**Housekeeping note:** We will not provide Life Group material through the summer as the majority of Life Groups stop meeting. The first weekend without Life Group material will be June 30<sup>th</sup>. We will start providing this guide on September 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Life Group Objectives:**

Remember why you exist as a group! Life Groups are to:

1. Reflect on this past week's message and passage or dig into the series you are going through as a group. We desire for you to have the Bible play a key role in your time together.
2. Pray together and provide encouragement for other group members. How can you build one another up this week?
3. With a series on biblical justice, think intently on how your group can play a part in being active in your neighborhood through a serve project, or to engage with agencies in our city doing their part to bring lift to marginalized people.

**Conversation starters:**

- What has been the peach (highlight) and pit (challenge) of your week? (This is how the Throness family frames their dinner time conversations!)
- Have you ever been persecuted for your faith?

**Learning from God's Word: Bible Study Discussion**

**Read Scripture:** Amos 7:10-17

**Questions for Discussion:**

1. **Persecution vs. 10-13**
  - What is the connection between Amos' vision of the plumb line (vs. 7-9) and Amaziah's rebuke of Amos?
  - Have you ever been misrepresented before because of your faith? What was this like?
  - Why do we get angry and defensive instead of humble and curious when we are presented with feedback?
  - What opportunities do we miss when we shy away from listening to the Holy Spirit's conviction in our lives?
  - What does persecution look like in our context right now? How do we process this in light of what other Christians are facing in the world?
2. **Vocation vs. 14-17**

- What is the difference between a job and a vocation? (Hint: job is often what we get paid to do, vocation is a deeper sense of call. The best outcome is when our jobs are our vocation).
- How did Amos process his vocation considering the rejection from Amaziah?
- What mechanisms (people, processes) do you have in your life that are able to speak freely to you about what they see in your life (both encouraging and concerning)?
- Pastor Chris outlined what it looks like to have a prophetic presence like Amos in our current moment. We do this through:
  - Life-giving personal practices – Sabbath, generosity etc.
  - Selfless church commitment – passion instead of apathy
  - Disruptive Cultural participation – strong critique of culture and boundless love for people
    - Which one of these three stand out to you the most?
    - Which one can you pray and be open to engage with this week?

**Listening to God:**

- How has God been present in our discussion so far? What themes have emerged?
- Brainstorm how your life group can be more than just a conversational prayer group, and a group that is committed to justice and righteousness.

**Prayer Prompts and Application:**

- Be sensitive to the group as this can be a heavy discussion. Give people space to process their thoughts and emotions. Create safety and openness to share and pray. Remember, you are not there to fix all the difficulties or places of dissonance, but simply to point them to Jesus!
- Invite members of the group to share prayer requests. Gently nudge people to go a few levels deeper by being specific and vulnerable.
- Pray for clarity as each person thinks about the sphere of influence they have been sent into. Where is God asking you to engage in, being sanctified and sent to do so?