

Amos (760 BC)

(Amos is not Isaiah's father in Isaiah 1:1. The names are more different in Hebrew.)

1. Amos was from Tekoa 5 miles south of Bethlehem or about 10 miles south of Jerusalem.
 - a. Tekoa sits on the edge of the central hill country which was cultivated and on the edge of the Desert of Tekoa (2 Chron. 20:20) to the east which led down into the rift valley where the Jordan River and the Dead Sea are located.
2. Amos was:
 - a. NOT a professional prophet as is fiercely defended in Amos 7:14.
 - b. Amos was a "shepherd" (as in *noqedim* or *noqed*), but not a shepherd (as in *roeh*) which merely kept the sheep. In 2 Kings 3:4 *noqed* is a sheep-breeder which was how King Mesa of Moab produced large amounts of tribute to pay Ahab of Israel. Large amounts of sheep and goat wool was produced.
 - c. Amos also identifies himself as a herdsman (*boqer*) in 7:14 which means a cattle-herder.
 - d. Amos also identifies himself as a "dresser of sycamore trees" in 7:14. But, sycamore trees were only grown in the western foothills (towards the Mediterranean Sea) and in the Jordan Valley. Amos would have had to be a migrant worker or own land/business to make this occupation work while still breeding sheep, watching over cattle and living in Tekoa. The sycamore trees would have their figs pierced or scraped to hasten maturity and repel insects.
 - e. Amos was not an uneducated shepherd, but was likely a wealthy landowner who lived in the city of Tekoa where he would have had a place in the gate as a leader and elder.
 - f. Amos likely traveled to purchase sheep and tend to his sycamore trees.
3. Amos was the first prophet to record and preserve his message in written form.
4. Amos was from Judah, but God sent him to the northern kingdom of Israel.
5. The dating of Amos ministry could be:
 - a. 752 BC, two years before a 750 BC earthquake
 - b. 760 BC, two years before a 758 BC earthquake and one year before Jonah was called to Nineveh. 760 BC is the year Josephus assigns to King Uzziah's illness. Also, Jeroboam II had restore Israel's boundaries (Amos 6:14) which was right around 760 BC as in 2 Kings 13:23-25.
6. Assyria had defeated Syria in 805 BC. Weak kings provided Assyria with power leadership causing Assyria to decline and withdraw in all directions. Egypt was harassed from the south by Sudan and the west by Libya. Israel and Jeroboam II's only rival was King Uzziah of Judah.
7. Israel was prospering and living easy:
 - a. Jeroboam controlled the trade routes along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, across the Jordan along the Kings Highway and through the Jezreel Valley
 - i. Amos 8:5-6
 - ii. Amos 4:1—2
 - b. Religion was a profitable business in the land of Israel as is seen at Bethel
 - i. Amos meets Amaziah the chief priest of the Golden Calf at Bethel in 7:10-17. Amaziah thought Amos was looking for better prophet pay in Israel than he was getting in Judah
 - ii. It is clear that Amos was not prophesying after 750 BC when Jotham would have been reigning with his father Uzziah in Judah due to leprosy. And, there is no mention of Jeroboam's successor who would have begun reigning in 746 BC.
 - iii. School of the prophets
 1. Prophets in Judah compensated by donations and the government:
2 Kings 5:16-23 and 1 Kings 18:19

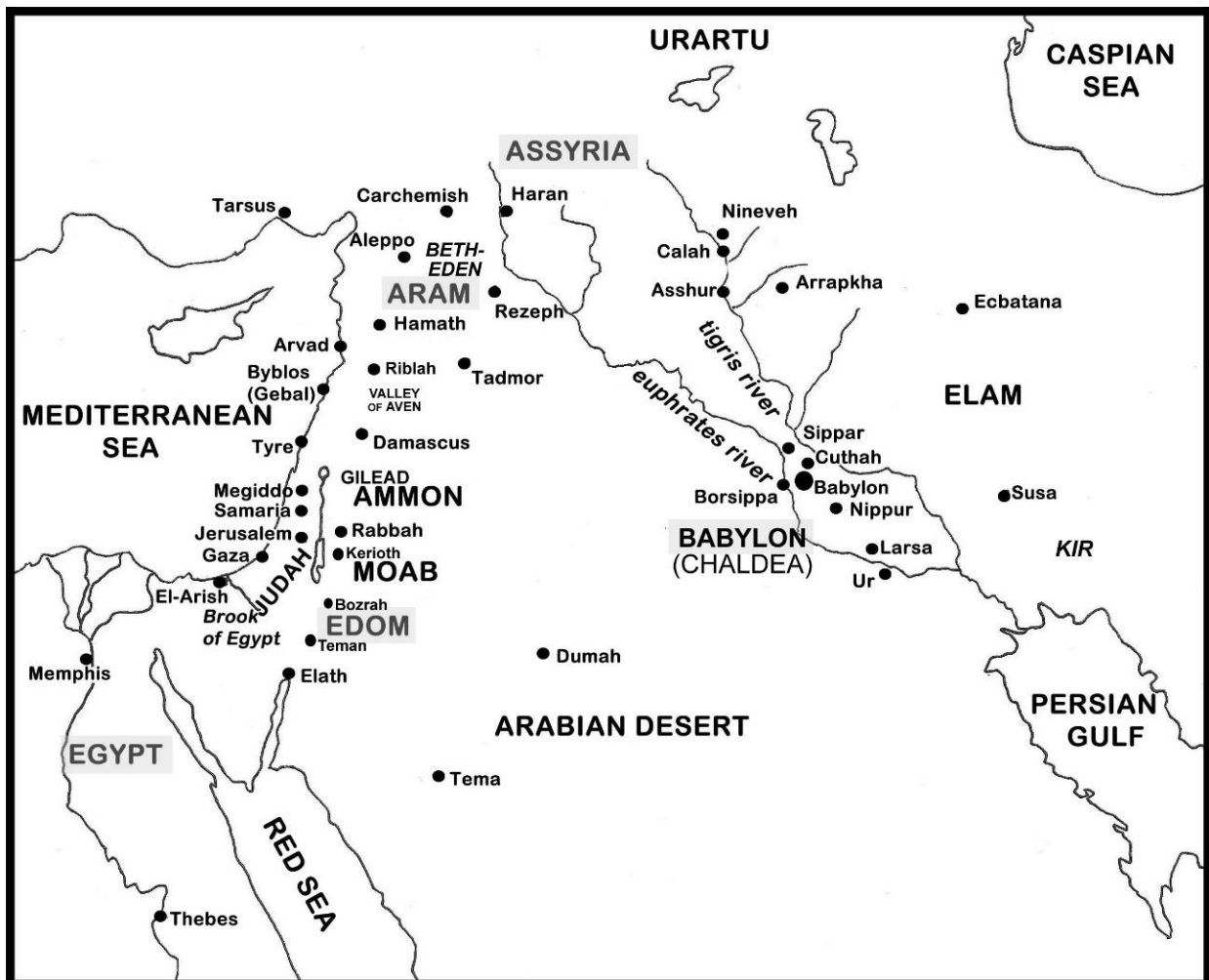
2. there was a “school of the prophets” known as the sons of the prophets at that time (1 Kings 20:35; 2 Kings 2:3–15; 2 Kings 4:1; 2 Kings 4:38).
8. Amos 8:12 – there would be a famine of the Word of God
9. Amos 4:12 – Prepare to meet your God
10. Contemporaries:
 - a. Hosea ministry would have begun in Israel very shortly after Amos
 - b. Jonah may have went to Nineveh within months of Amos’ visit to Bethel
 - c. Isaiah would have begun ministry during the life of Amos.

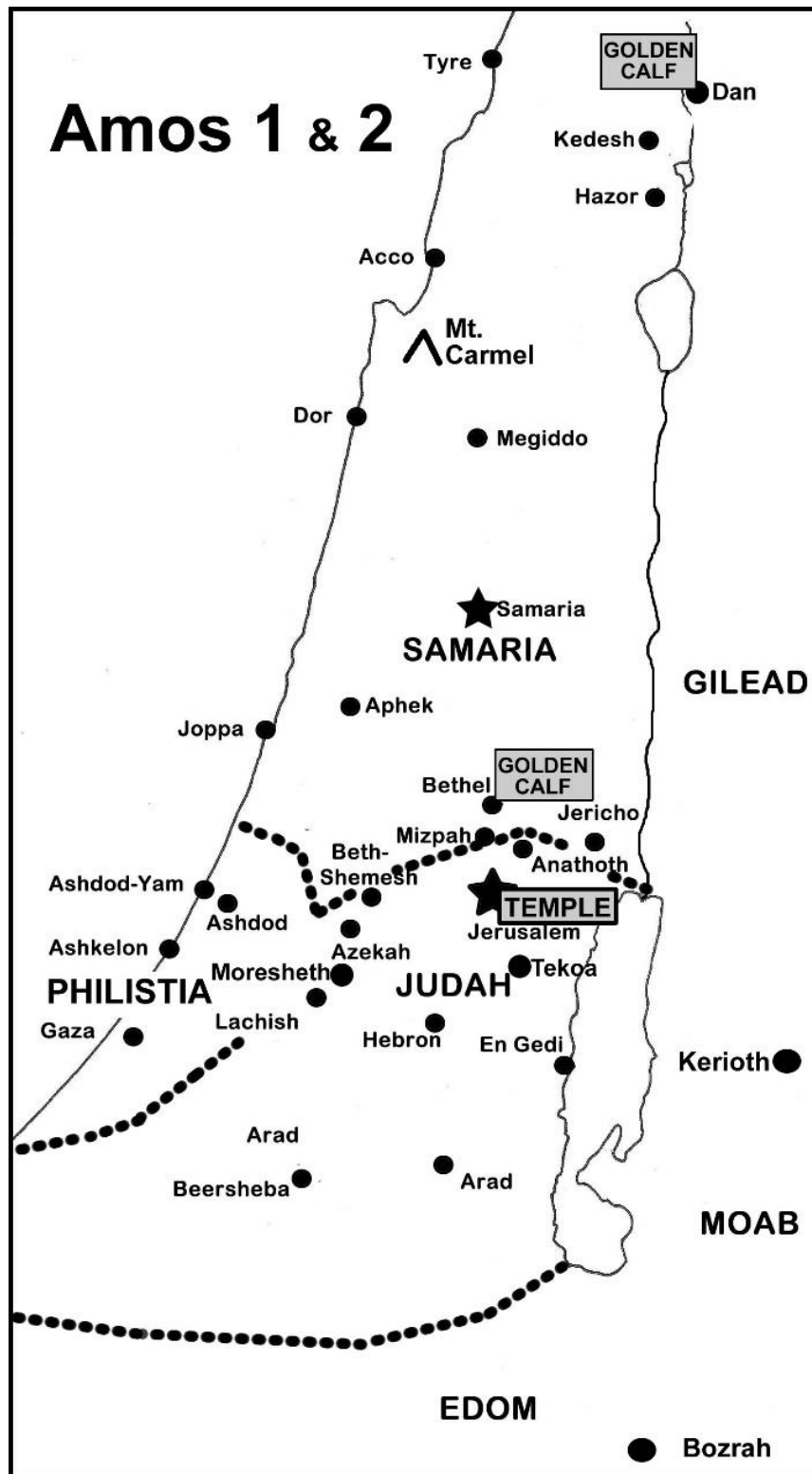
Locations in Amos chapters 1 and 2:

1. Personal
 - a. Tekoa
2. Introduction
 - a. Zion
 - b. Jerusalem
 - c. Carmel
3. Syria
 - a. Damascus
 - b. Gilead
 - c. Valley of Aven - applies to the valley of Coele-Syria or the Beqaa Valley, between Lebanon and Anti-Libanus, noted for the idolatrous worship of the sun at the temple of Baalbek. The valley is now called "Beka'a"
 - d. Beth-eden - an Aramaean state that existed as an independent kingdom during the 10th and 9th Centuries BC
 - e. Syria
 - f. Kir – located in Mesopotamia. The original home of the Syrians (Arameans). 2 Kings 16:9 – “The king of Assyria went up against Damascus and carried the people of it captive to Kir, and slew Rezin (732 BC). Isaiah 22:6 the people of Kir are allies with Assyria and Elam.
4. Phoenicia
 - a. Tyre
 - b. Edom



5. Edom
 - a. Edom
 - b. Teman – in Southern Edom. Noted in Scripture as a place of wisdom. Named after the grandson of Esau.
 - c. Bozrah – Capital of Edom. The ruins are next to modern Busaira in Jordan today.
6. Ammon
 - a. Ammon
 - b. Gilead
 - c. Rabbah
7. Moab
 - a. Moab
 - b. Edom
 - c. Kerioth
8. Judah
 - a. Judah
 - b. Jerusalem
9. Israel
 - a. Israel
 - b. Amorite
 - c. Egypt





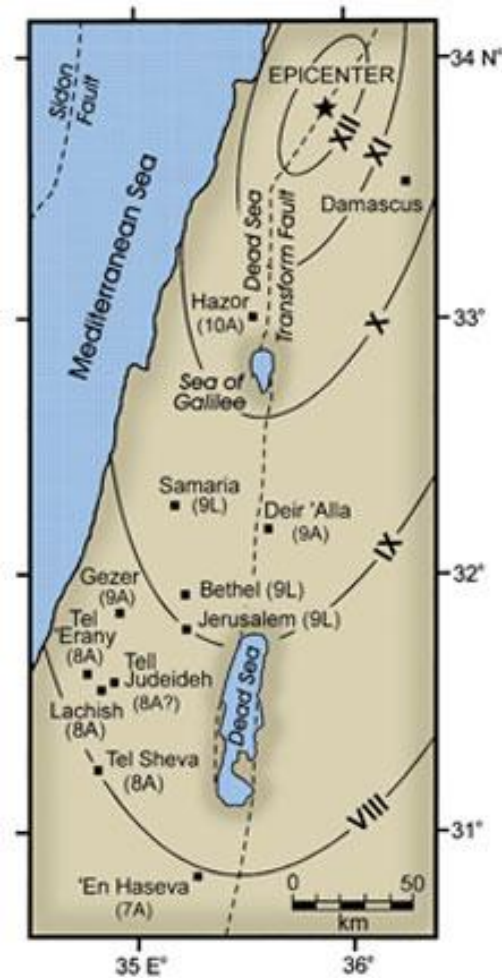
The earthquake of Amos 1:1

- This earthquake is now established in the archaeological records and is documented in multiple places.

- Recorded and revealed in excavations at:

- **Hazor** in Stratum VI with tilted walls, inclined pillars, collapsed houses including fallen ceilings covering objects used in daily life. The strongest architecture at this level shows signs of the earthquake.
- **Gezer** has hewn stones weighing several tons cracked and moved several inches off their foundation. The lower part of the city wall moved away from the city outward while the upper part of the wall fell inward and still lies course on course indicating a sudden collapse
- **Beersheba**
- **Ashdod**
- **Bethel**
- **Deir 'Alla**
- **Lachish**
- **Tell Judeideh**
- **'En Haseva**

- Dating these finds to the same earthquake that occurred around 750 BC (give or take 30 years)
- The epicenter was north of Israel and likely in Lebanon
- Israel and Judah received general damage while significant damage occurred within 300 miles of the epicenter
- Magnitude was around 8
- The Dead Sea transform fault ruptured during 90 seconds of violent shaking that became legendary and noted in Scripture as a historical marker.
- Amos spoke 2 years before this happened (Amos 1:1) and in his book Amos spoke of these things BEFORE they happened:
 - 8:8 - the land being shaken
 - 6:11 – houses being smashed
 - 3:14 – altars being cracked
 - 9:1 – the Bethel temple being struck and collapsing
- Isaiah 5:25 may mention this earth quake.
- Isaiah 6:4 speaks of the temple in Jerusalem shaking with a visitation of the Lord
- Joel 3:16 uses Amos 1:2
- 230 years after Amos the prophet Zechariah (14:5) uses the earthquake of Amos to warn of another event that will cause the people to respond as they had in Amos' day (or, Uzziah's day): "You will flee like you fled from the earthquake in the day of Uzziah king of Judah."
- Josephus connects this earthquake to the illness of King Uzziah around 760 BC



Map showing the locations of damaged cities and the earthquake's probable epicenter.

