

BIBLE TEACHING AND WORSHIP GUIDE



FOR THE HOME-BASED CHURCH

Produced Weekly

Certain Judgment—and Hope
Amos 9

Copy this sheet for the Gathering Time, Bible Study, and Worship Experience leaders for the next meeting of the church.

Leaders' Responsibilities:

Important: Each person who will be leading one of the three parts of a session during a series of sessions needs to have access to the "Introduction" article found at the beginning of each series (Bible Teaching #....). The weekly session "Background" located in the Teacher Preparation is much more specific to that day's study.

1. **The Gathering Time Leader** will gather all of the people together and help them prepare their minds and hearts for a wonderful worship experience before God. His/her responsibility is to introduce the congregation to the theme (content) and the Scripture that will be central to their worship experience for the day.

2. **The Bible Study Leader** will then help the people understand what the Scriptures have to say and teach us about the content of the study for the day. He/she will guide the people to make a general application of the study (ie: How does this Bible study apply to people today?)

3. **The Worship Time Leader** has the responsibility to use the theme and Scriptures to guide the congregation to make personal commitments to God's will for each one in regard to the study for the day. He/she will use others to lead in the music, taking the offering, ministry moment comments, and other activities and parts of the **Worship Time** that can aid in participatory worship.

Prior to this Coming Session:

Gathering Time Leader:

Bible Study Leader:

If there are youth, plan to have a sieve, grain and pebbles for them to demonstrate the teaching of Amos 9:9-10. You may also have art materials for them to draw an illustration of the teaching.

Worship Time Leader:

If the youth have a visual presentation of the teaching of Amos 9:9-10, ask them to present it to the group.

Copy the reading on the final page of this session for someone to read at the moment of “**Praying for the World**” during the **Worship Time**.

Music Sources:

To God Be the Glory, *The Worship Hymnal*, # 28; CCLI #23426 Public Domain

Blessed Be Your Name, *The Worship Hymnal*, # 26; CCLI #3798438

You Are My Hiding Place, *The Worship Hymnal*, #25; CCLI #21442

1

Copy this section for the Gathering Time leader.

Gathering Time: (Suggested time: 15 minutes)

Certain Judgment—and Hope

Focal Text

Amos 9

Background Text

Amos 9

Main Idea

God's judgment on sin is certain, as is the restoration that God offers.

Question to Explore

What can we count on God to do?

Teaching Aim

To lead the class to decide what they will do about God's message of judgment and restoration.

Gathering together:

Sing one or both of the following:

To God Be the Glory, *The Worship Hymnal*, # 28; CCLI #23426 Public Domain
Blessed Be Your Name, *The Worship Hymnal*, # 26; CCLI #3798438

First thoughts:

We began the study of Amos with the theme "The God Who Roars". Amos told us in verse 2 of Chapter 1 that "***The Lord roars from Zion and thunders from Jerusalem; the pastures of the shepherds dry up, and the top of Carmel withers***". The book of Amos is not a chronological description of events for the prophecies of Amos are repeated as he most likely preached in a variety of places. But there is a sense in which the last chapter is the climax of all that has been said before. It speaks of bitter destruction, but hope as well.

We come to the end of our study on Amos. It has not been an easy one. The prophecies of Amos were serious and they came to pass. People suffered because of their own sin and because of the sin of others. We must hold to the constant theme which Amos returned to again and again. ***Seek the Lord and live. Seek good and not evil that you may live. Let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!***

The prophecies of Amos were fulfilled. Yet as we read the book of Amos we are all too aware that the evils of that day are present in our day. We too must ***Seek the Lord and live. Seek good and not evil.*** We must seek to ***Let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!***

Closing the Gathering Time

Take time at this point to mention items of prayer concern for the church, announcements of ministry or activities, and anything else that needs to be shared with or by the congregation. Pray for these needs. Remember to praise God in prayer.

Break time! Take five minutes between sessions. Encourage children to use the washroom so that they won't need to leave during the Bible Study time.

Distribute youth/adult Bible study outlines or paper for note-taking, if available.

Also hand out the activity sheets for preschool and younger children to use during Bible Study and/or worship.

2

Copy this section for the Bible Study leader.

Note to the Bible Study Leader: Suggested teaching time for the Bible study should be about 35 minutes. Use the “Teacher Preparation” for your personal study during the week before the session. Use the “Bible Study Plan” for the actual session.

Teacher Preparation

Certain Judgment—and Hope

Focal Text

Amos 9

Background Text

Amos 9

Main Idea

God’s judgment on sin is certain, as is the restoration that God offers.

Question to Explore

What can we count on God to do?

Teaching Aim

To lead the class to decide what they will do about God’s message of judgment and restoration.

Background:

Please ask for and read the information contained in the “**Introduction**” article found at the beginning of this series of Bible Study and Worship sessions (Bible Teaching #.....). The person who downloaded this session should have that material for you, as well.

Focusing on the Meaning:

In the book of Amos we find three short poems that celebrate the power of Yahweh in creation and history (4:13; 5:8-9; 9:5-6). These are distinct hymnal-creedal statements. That is, they express both worship and teaching. The words lift us up in worship of God. They also teach who God is – his characteristics and his power. In Amos 9:5-6 we read again of God’s power and might.

God's claims on the whole world - all nations, not just Israel - are grounded in his relationship and interest as creator, owner, and judge of the universe (See Metzger, B.M. and Coogan, M.D. (Eds.) *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1993, p. 25).

The fifth vision and the oracles that go with it (9:1-10) predict the total destruction of **“all the sinners of my people”**. We will see again that judgment is aimed at those who have forgotten the law and worship of the Lord in their hearts. However, the judgment of the nation will affect all those who live in Israel.

This is not the end of everything, however. As elsewhere in the Bible, death can be overcome by the miracle of resurrection: and Amos promises the recovery of Israel's life and institutions in a new age of prosperity and bliss (9:11-15).

Chapter 9 forms the basis for the study. It is a long chapter containing fifteen verses. We will examine important points from these verses.

In verse one Amos again has a vision and hears the Lord speak.

I saw the Lord standing by the altar, and he said:

***“Strike the tops of the pillars
so that the thresholds shake.
Bring them down on the heads of all the people;
those who are left I will kill with the sword.
Not one will get away,
none will escape.”*** (Amos 9:1)

The altar is not identified, but likely it was the altar at Bethel since that altar was soon to be destroyed, as Amos had predicted, and since it is the only one about which we have any record of Amos visiting (Amos 7:10-13) (See *The Broadman Bible Commentary*, Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1972, Volume 7, p. 135.)

It would have been no surprise that God would appear to a prophet at an altar. The people believe that the temple was God's dwelling place on earth and that he met them at the altar. What was surprising was the fact that the appearance of God did not bring a blessing but a curse.

***Though they are driven into exile by their enemies,
there will I command the sword to slay them,
I will fix my eyes upon them
for evil and not for good.*** Amos 9:4

The temple is to be destroyed and the worshippers within it. An earthquake of terrible severity is one of the ways in which God will visit his people. Remember that Amos 1:1 speaks of the earthquake

The words of Amos, one of the shepherds of Tekoa – what he saw concerning Israel two years before the earthquake, when Uzziah was king of Judah and Jeroboam son of Jehoash was king of Israel.

This is followed by a depiction of the finality of the doom that is to overtake the people as a whole. Devastating war is to complete the extinction of the nation.

It is certainly a measure of how corrupt the worship of the people had become that God would slay them even as they worshipped. Places of worship have in most cultures been considered places of sanctuary. But there is no sanctuary here. In fact there is no sanctuary anywhere. Verses 2-4 describe places where one might think to find safety, but there is no safety to be found.

***Though they dig down to the depths of the grave,
from there my hand will take them,
Though they climb up to the heavens,
from there I will bring them down.
Though they hide themselves on the top of Carmel,
there I will hunt them down and seize them,
Though they hide from me at the bottom of the sea,
there I will command the serpent to bite them.
Though they are driven into exile by their enemies,
there I will command the sword to slay them.***

The prophet enumerates five places which might be expected to provide safe hiding. There are two pairs: the grave (the lowest depth called Sheol) and heaven and Carmel and the bottom of the sea.

The most remote realms of the universe are not beyond the reach of God. The top of Mount Carmel and the bottom of the sea represent extremes of height and depth on earth. Mount Carmel offered many hiding places, but not from God. The sea probably referred to the Mediterranean Sea which comes up to the base of Mount Carmel. Sea or waters in Semitic thought often represented the powers of chaos or forces in opposition to God. In this case, the sea monsters are under the command of God.

The fifth possible hiding place mentioned is exile. Some of the Jewish people may have believed that God's sovereignty was limited to the borders of Israel. God says this is not true. Even if they are carried into captivity, it will be God's direction which leads to their slaying – not the power of the captors.

There is no escape from God.

Verse 4 ends with the chilling words ***I will fix my eyes upon them for evil and not for good.*** We can not imagine what it would mean to have God's favour removed from our world. Even those hardened in heart against God enjoy the daily blessings of his

goodness. What if the sun did not shine? What if the rain never came? What if plagues were to run rampant?

We have watched in horror the many natural disasters which have occurred around the world. We have seen the suffering of the people and some have asked “Where is God in all of this?” But we cannot not imagine the horror of a world in which God’s power and control were not present. We take for granted his everyday protection and guidance.

The Israelites took that protection for granted as well. They were God’s chosen people and even though they knew they were not keeping his commandments or worshipping in a right spirit, they expected God to continue that protection. Such a hollow hope was, in part, the result of Israel’s persistent belief in her preferred position of privilege in the sight of God. The memory of God’s deliverance of his people from servitude in Egypt and their consequent gratitude, is one of the most continuous and moving themes in the Old Testament. But it was early and often corrupted by the human propensity, not yet abated, to exploit a sovereign act of God until it becomes a man’s or a nation’s selfish assumption of being so privileged as to be safe from the consequences of their actions (See *The Interpreter’s Bible*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1956, Vol. VI, pp. 845-853).

Certainly these words ***I will fix my eyes upon them for evil and not for good*** are among the most chilling words in all of Scripture.

It may seem strange that verses 5-6 are a doxology or hymn of praise. It is the third such hymn found in Amos (see 4:13, 5:8). However, after the ominous words which precede it, the hymn of praise is a welcome reminder of God’s power. That power is used in favour of His people. That He must ***“touch the earth and it melts”*** indicates the serious, long-term nature of the people who have abandoned true faith. God’s presence in judgment has a devastating effect on nature and man. God ***calls for the waters of the sea and pours them out over the face of the land***. This indicates the power of God in controlling the rain. Adequate rain is necessary for crops to grow; too much rain causes flooding. The worship of Baal occurred often in Israelite history. The prophets of Baal preached that Baal was the god who gave the rain. Here Amos is saying that God controls the rain and by implication all of nature. In our day of great concern over environmental changes it is well to remember that God is in control. We must do our part to be the responsible caretakers of our world that God intended (Genesis 2:15), but God is the God of nature. Amos intends to remind the people of God’s sovereignty.

***The Lord, the Lord Almighty,
he who touches the earth and it melts,
and all who live in it mourn-
the whole land rises like the Nile,
then sinks like the river of Egypt –
he who builds his lofty palace in the heavens
and sets its foundation on the earth,***

***who calls for the waters of the sea
and pours them out over the face of the land –
the Lord is his name.***

God is sovereign over all nations. The Israelites rejoiced in God's punishment of other nations. Here he indicates that he will punish Israel just as other nations have been punished.

***“Are you not Israelites
the same to me as the Cushites?” declares the Lord;
“Did I not bring Israel up from Egypt,
the Philistines from Caphtor
and the Arameans from Kir?
Surely the eyes of the Sovereign Lord
are on the sinful kingdom.
I will destroy it
from the face of the earth-
yet I will not totally destroy
the house of Jacob” declares the Lord.*** (Amos 9:7-8).

The Israelites had known they were a chosen people. Here God points out that he has always been the God which directed the comings and goings of all people. The Cushites were Ethiopians who lived in southern Egypt. Caphtor probably refers to the island of Crete as the place of origin of the Philistines although some scholars suggest that Caphtor was a general term for the whole Aegean area from which the Philistines as one of the “sea peoples” had come. Kir was the homeland of the Arameans and was located in Mesopotamia near the territory of Elam. Verse 7 indicates that God's love expressed in blessing and judgment knows no racial or geographical boundary. All men are equal in his sight and he is sovereign over all. This would be a radical new thought for the Israelites. It is a lesson we continue to learn today.

The last portion of verse 8 ***“yet I will not totally destroy the house of Jacob”*** has been problematic for some scholars. Some feel that in a message that emphasizes the punishment of the Israelites that such hope was inconsistent and may have been added by a later writer. Other scholars feel that hope for the “remnant of Israel” had always been a part of prophetic utterances.

The idea of the remnant continues in verses 9-10.

***“For I will give the command,
and I will shake the house of Israel
among all the nations
as grain is shaken in a sieve,
and not a pebble will reach the ground.
All the sinners among my people
will die by my sword,***

***all those who say,
'Disaster will not overtake or meet us''***

The picture here is of the pebbles being removed from the grain. The sieve probably was of large mesh and the grain would fall through the wire while the rocks and debris would remain in the sieve and be cast away.

Judgment is represented as a separation of the grain from the debris. The grain represents the remnant in Israel, the pebbles the sinners. ***Not one will get away, not one will escape*** the Lord said. These were those who believed themselves immune to the demands of God in their lives. They either had a totally exalted opinion of self or a totally inadequate opinion of God. They may have seen God as unwilling or unable to bring judgment. These verses indicate that not all Israelites fell into this category. Clearly, some remained faithful. Many of those faithful would die in the destruction which would come to the country, but others would be saved. With the fall of Samaria in 722 B.C. and that of Jerusalem in 586 B.C., Israel indeed ceased to exist as a kingdom. This had been, as Amos foretold, the work of none other than Jehovah God. But faithful servants of God would be preserved. It was no longer the nation as a whole taken into account, but individual faithfulness considered.

This is the hope of verses 11-15.

***"In that day I will restore
David's fallen tent.
I will repair its broken places,
restore its ruins,
and build it as it used to be,
so that they may possess the remnant of Edom
and all the nations that bear my name,"
declares the Lord who will do these things.***

***"The days are coming" declares the Lord,
"when the reaper will be overtaken by the plowman
and the planter by the one treading grapes.
New wine will drip from the mountains
and flow from all the hills.
I will bring back my exiled people Israel;
they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them.
They will plant vineyards and drink their wine;
they will make gardens and eat their fruit.
I will plant Israel in their own land,
never to be uprooted
from the land I have given them.
says the Lord your God".***

Deep in the hearts of the people lingered the memory of the golden age of the reign of King David. God's blessing had signally rested upon them. The persistence of the hope and belief that there could be a renewal of that wonderful age was possible even in the days when the tent of David was fallen. A few people were able to discern that God was in the overwhelming disaster which had befallen them. His majesty and righteousness would be vindicated. He was the governing force of history. He who had smitten could heal.

The writer of these materials recently read of a new church named Tent of David Church. It seemed an unusual name for a 21st century church. But it represents the hope of those who are planting the church that it will be a people who understand and hope for the blessing of God.

One understanding of verse 12 would be that eventually people of all nations will be included in those who worship Jehovah God and acknowledge His sovereignty. James quoted this passage in Acts 15:13-19. Acts 15 is the story of Paul's defense of his preaching to the Gentiles and his belief that it was not necessary for Gentile believers to become Jews through the act of circumcision and the obeying of the laws of Moses. Peter joined Paul and argued that salvation came through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. James said, ***"Brothers, listen to me. Simon has described to us how God at first showed his concern by taking from the Gentiles a people for himself. The words of the prophets are in agreement with this, as it is written: 'After this I will return and rebuild David's fallen tent. Its ruins I will rebuild, and I will restore it, that the remnant of men may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who bear my name, says the Lord, who does these things that have been known for ages.' It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God."***

The final verses of the book of Amos change from prophecies of unmitigated doom and destruction to an eloquent declaration of God's purpose to reclaim and to ***restore the fortunes of my people Israel*** (verse 14). Towns and cities that have been ravaged by the scourge of invasion will be repaired and rebuilt. Fields and vineyards will be invested with fertility and will yield crops of unprecedented richness. The dwellers will live in stability and permanence. To God's judgment is added God's forgiveness and hope.

Some Bible scholars see these verses fulfilled in the return from Babylonian exile that took place a little over 200 years after Amos prophesied. A small remnant did return from exile and rebuild the nation. It was a thriving nation during Jesus' time. However, because of rebellion it was destroyed by the Romans in 70 A.D.

Some students see the modern state of Israel as the fulfillment of Amos's message. These people are encouraged by Israel's restoration to nation status since 1948. They believe that God is committed to the nation and the land to maintain a perpetual country of Israel in it. However, the secular nature of that nation and its continuing conflict with

adjoining nations makes it difficult to see the fulfillment of the prophecy in the modern nation of Israel.

Other students see this description as being fulfilled in the church of Jesus Christ through the New Covenant. From the remnant that returned to the land in the return from exile, through Christ, came ultimately the kingdom of God as proclaimed by Jesus the Messiah. The real Israel of God is the long line of all faithful believers from the exile through modern times and into the future. ***Peace and mercy to all who follow this rule, even to the Israel of God*** we read in Galatians 6:16. Paul speaks of the new creation of which he says in verse 14: ***May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.***

Thus the rich abundance described in the final verses of the book of Amos refers not to material abundance but to spiritual riches. ***Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ*** Ephesians 1:3.

Your Goal as the Leader of this Bible Study:

Lead the people to understand the righteousness of God and his sovereignty in the whole world. No nation falls outside of his providential care or his judgement.

For Personal Reflection:

What have I learned from this study?

What personal experience does this lesson bring to mind?

What is one action I will take this week to apply this Scripture passage to my life?

Bible Study Plan (Suggested time: 35 minutes)

Certain Judgment—and Hope

Regroup the church after the Gathering Time and break by singing a chorus that young children can relate to—or another praise chorus if your congregation does not have children. Children who go to their own Bible teaching session should stay with the group until after this song. Have the preschoolers and children accompany the hymn with rhythm sticks, maracas, bells, etc.

Begin by helping the group locate the *Focal Text* in their Bibles. Also, share with them the *Main Idea* to be learned from the Scriptures, and the *Questions to be Explored* by the group.

Focal Text

Amos 9

Background Text

Amos 9

Main Idea

God's judgment on sin is certain, as is the restoration that God offers.

Question to Explore

What can we count on God to do?

Teaching Aim

To lead the class to decide what they will do about God's message of judgment and restoration.

Connect with Life:

Introduce the Bible study with this narrative: It is not difficult to see the attitudes of the Israelites portrayed in modern day society. Especially in first world countries, there is a sense of entitlement – only good things should happen. However, with the beginning of the 21st century and the advent of post-modern thinking, much of the optimism of early thinking has changed. Science is still seen as the best hope for the curing of disease and environmental blight, but there is a greater awareness of the need for spiritual commitment. In an article in a secular magazine written for seniors there was an article entitled *12 Natural Ways to Manage Chronic Pain*. Included were the use of music, art, intellectual activities, guided imagery, avoidance of stress such as the evening news.

massage, aromatherapy, exercise, sleep, eating right and spirituality. The section of spirituality closed with this statement “Your ability to bounce back from negative events improves with every bite of soul food.” (Kienien, L. 12 *Natural Ways to Manage Chronic Pain*. **Good Times**, November, 2007, pp. 33-39).

Yes, there are serious issues in our world today. But people are more open to spiritual issues than before. This final lesson in the book of Amos should cause us to ask what our responsibility is in sharing the good news of Christ with those who seek spiritual help.

Guide the Study:

Ask someone to read Amos 9:1.

Comment: Amos once again has a vision in which the Lord speaks.

Note that the altar is not identified, but likely refers to the altar at Bethel since that altar was soon to be destroyed and it is the only one we have a record of Amos visiting.

Look for opinions on the nature of the destruction to take place. (the tops of the pillars will break, the foundations will shake, the building will fall down on the heads of the people). Some will probably comment that it sounds like an earthquake and it probably was an earthquake which God used to bring about his judgment. (Read Amos 1:1).

Ask the group to consider the following: Is every earthquake or natural disaster a judgment of God?

Lead the group to carefully consider this: God can use these natural disasters to bring people to Himself but it is dangerous for us to assign God’s judgment to disasters.

Look again at verse 1 and ask: “What will happen to anyone who survives the destruction of the temple?” (“Those who are left I will kill with a sword”)

Again: How does this take place? (Amos prophesied between 760 and 750 B.C. Samaria was conquered by the Assyrians in 722 B.C. This was undoubtedly the conquest to which Amos was pointing).

Have someone read verses 2-4.

Invite answers to this: Where will people flee to in order to escape God’s judgment but without hope of escape? (the grave, heaven, Mount Carmel, depths of the sea, and through exile in other countries.)

Explain: The Jewish people might have thought that God (Yahweh) was confined to Israel. His punishment would not extend to them if they were outside of Israel. God is teaching about his sovereignty over all the earth.

Have someone reread the final part of verse 4: ***I will fix my eyes upon them for evil and not for good.***

Look for opinions on this: Identify what things we take for granted would not be present if God's goodness was taken from us.

Stress this to the participants: God's daily protection and ask for ways in which God gives that daily if this aspect of God's goodness has not already been discussed.

Ask: Who has had a near-miss of an accident and wondered how they were so fortunate as to escape.

Urge the group: Compare these words ***I will fix my eyes upon them for evil and not for good*** with the cry Jesus made on the cross "***My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?***"

Continue: The contrast between these two statements is obvious. However, what do these two sentences have in common? (In both cases, God's ultimate purpose is the redemption of his people.)

Have someone read verses 5-6.

Ask: What is different about these verses?

Comment: These verses are a doxology which is a word meaning hymn of praise. As we read these verses we praise God and we also learn about the characteristics of God.

Look for answers from the group: What are the characteristics of God taught in this hymn of praise? (He is powerful, he rules the earth, he controls the forces of nature).

Have someone read Amos 9:7-8.

Ask: How would an Israelite feel to be told by the Lord that he was the same to the Lord as people like the Cushites, the Philistines, and the Arameans? (They would not be able to accept this easily because they knew themselves to be God's chosen people).

Comment: The Israelites were a chosen people.

Then ask the group to share ways in which God had shown his special blessing to the Israelites. (God had directed their path since the days of Abraham. He brought them out of slavery in Egypt and protected them as they wandered in the wilderness. He gave them the promised land.)

Add: Amos introduces a concept that will become the great theme of the New Testament. God is the God of all people; he is no respecter of persons.

Now ask: What is the element of hope in Amos 9: 8b? (*I will not totally destroy the house of Jacob.*)

Have someone read verses 9-10.

Request someone to describe the word picture given here.

Ask: Who do the pebbles represent? (the sinful people of Israel). **If there are youth who will discuss this and share during the Worship Time, avoid too much discussion here.**

Call for an answer to the following: What has been the attitude of the people toward any warning about future destruction. (They have said ***Disaster will not overtake or meet us.***)

Urge the group to discuss these:

Is that attitude prevalent in our society?

What events have happened to cause that attitude to change?

Have someone read verses 11-15.

Comment: David's fallen tent refers to the fate of the Israelites as compared to the glorious kingdom of David and his son, Solomon.

Ask: Who are the nations referred to in verse 12 (Have someone read Acts 15:13-19).

Share: The New Testament Christians were beginning to understand that the God of the nation of Israel was the God of all nations.

Search for ideas: What pictures of God's abundance are given? (one crop is being gathered and another planted; the vineyards produce abundantly; cities will be rebuilt; stability will exist in that fruit trees are planted and give fruit).

Now ask: Has this happened to the nation of Israel? (The Israelites returned from the Babylonian captivity and rebuilt Jerusalem a little over 200 years after Amos prophesied. However, Jerusalem was destroyed again by the Romans in A.D. 70. The Jewish nation was dispersed around the world until Israel was established in 1948).

Discuss, but do not get sidetracked, on the meaning of these verses.

Inform the group: A study of New Testament truths lead to an understanding that these verses refer to a spiritual restoration in the Kingdom of God.

Have someone read Galatians 6:16.

Close with reading Ephesians 1:3.

Encourage Application:

If you have two or more youth, this is the time to give them the **Youth!!! Take Ten** page and allow them to move away from the adults and apply the lesson by and for themselves.

God's judgment on sin is certain, as is the restoration that God offers. Your task as leader is to help the group determine what God is saying to them about sin in their own lives.

It is also important to identify sin in the larger culture and what obligation believers have to address this. Prayer and the teaching of our children and others may be foremost in our responsibility to make change.

Take a five minute break to separate the Bible Study and Worship Time. Children may need to use the washroom again before worship.

Youth!!! Take Ten

Bible Study Application for Youth

You may wish to move away from the adults for the final five to ten minutes of the Bible study and help each other as youth to apply the lesson to your own needs.

Certain Judgment—and Hope Amos 9

A youth will lead the following activity and comments. No adults need to be present. If possible, teens should take turns in leading the application time.

Sifting Pebbles and Grain

Examine the passage given in Amos 9: 9-10. Draw a picture of a sieve and the pebbles remaining in the sieve while the grain sifts through. If you plan ahead, bring a sieve, pebbles and grain and plan to demonstrate these verses in the Worship Time.

Worship Time (Suggested time: 30 minutes)***Certain Judgment—and Hope***
Amos 9**Beginning the Service:**

Sing:

You Are My Hiding Place, *The Worship Hymnal*, #25; CCLI, #21442

If the youth have drawn a picture of the sieve or have brought a sieve to demonstrate Amos 9:9-10, give them time for their presentation.

Offering:**Praying for the World:**

Friendly and gracious, even though they live isolated on a small island, the Icelandic people are well-educated and industrialized. Out of the 300,000 people who live on the island, almost two-thirds live in Reykjavik, the capital city. Most all Icelandic people speak English as a second language. They have a national church and are open to all religious groups, yet the vast number of the people are cold to the Gospel. Volcanic events at [Eyjafjöll](#) in [Iceland](#) which, although relatively small for volcanic eruptions, caused enormous disruption to air travel across western and northern Europe over an initial period of six days in December 2009. Additional localized disruption continued into May 2010. The eruption was declared officially over in October 2010, when snow on the glacier did not melt. Iceland was brought into international attention. But in May of 2011, more eruptions took place—showing that the volcanic danger is far from over.

Pray this week that the people of Iceland will turn to the Good News of our Lord and respond with commitment to the message of salvation.

Sharing Guide:

This sharing guide is written to assist the person who directs the worship time to reemphasize the teaching for the day and help guide the congregation to respond to God's call and will for their lives in regard to the scripture studied. The leader may choose to follow the guide closely. Or, he or she may wish to only use it to give direction and a concept for preparing an original message. The leader is free to choose other ways to communicate and share the concepts presented here.

The Hiding Place Psalm 32

We began the study of Amos with the theme "The God Who Roars". Amos told us in verse 2 of Chapter 1 that "***The Lord roars from Zion and thunders from Jerusalem; the pastures of the shepherds dry up, and the top of Carmel withers***". We ended the book of Amos with the Lord saying

***Surely the eyes of the Sovereign Lord
are on the sinful kingdom.
I will destroy it
from the face of the earth-
yet I will not totally destroy
the house of Jacob***" declares the Lord. Amos 9:7-8.

We read how no place of refuge was available; there was no place to hide from the wrath of God.

***Though they dig down to the depths of the grave,
from there my hand will take them,
Though they climb up to the heavens,
from there I will bring them down.
Though they hide themselves on the top of Carmel,
there I will hunt them down and seize them,
Though they hide from me at the bottom of the sea,
there I will command the serpent to bite them.
Though they are driven into exile by their enemies,
there I will command the sword to slay them.***

Yet, the final verses indicate that God will restore and rebuild the faithful remnant. True repentance will bring salvation.

King David knew what it was to have sinned and to have been restored. In Psalm 32 we read

***Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven,
whose sins are covered.***

***Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord does not count against him
and in whose spirit there is no deceit.***

***When I kept silent,
my bones wasted away
through my groaning all day long.
For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;
my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer.
Then I acknowledged my sin to you
and did not cover up my iniquity.
I said, "I confess my transgressions to the Lord"
and you forgave the guilt of my sin.***

David knew about sin. He knew that the agony of keeping his sin unconfessed and unforgiven was like having his bones waste away. He gives the picture of his very body groaning through the day under the heavy load of his sin. He had no strength. He felt as one might feel trying to work or exist during the hottest day of the summer.

David's descendants, those to whom Amos was speaking, managed to live quite well with their sin. They seemed oblivious to it. They had grown hardened to the serious nature of their estrangement from God. And the God who roared said that they would have no hiding place from his wrath.

David, however, and millions like him have prayed "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord" and found forgiveness from that sin.

And they found a hiding place.

Psalm 32 continues:

***Therefore let everyone who is godly pray to you while you may be found;
surely when the mighty waters rise,
they will not reach him.
You are my hiding place;
you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance.***

As Amos prophesied the destruction of Israel, he also said, **Seek good, not evil**, that you may live. It was always repentance that God sought through his messenger, Amos. He desired that the people turn from their sins and seek good. However, they continued to trample on the poor and conduct religious feasts with no sense of truly seeking God and repentance from their sins.

The Psalm continues with the Lord Himself speaking:

***I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go;
I will counsel you and watch over you.
Do not be like the horse or mule ,
which have no understanding
but must be controlled by the bit and bridle
or they will not come to you.
Many are the woes of the wicked
but the Lord's unfailing love surrounds the man who trusts in him.***

***Rejoice in the Lord and be glad, you righteous;
sing, all you who are upright in heart.***

Confession of sin and true repentance – a turning away from the selfish actions and attitudes which are so much a part of us as humans – are necessary to find the hiding place we need. We will not run from God but to him and find in him a hiding place, protection from trouble and songs of deliverance.

Call to Commitment:

Sing **You are My Hiding Place** prayerfully.

Concluding the Service:

Say: **Rejoice in the Lord and be glad, you righteous;
sing, all you who are upright in heart.**

Copy for someone to read at the moment of “**Praying for the World**” during the **Worship Time**.

Friendly and gracious, even though they live isolated on a small island, the Icelandic people are well-educated and industrialized. Out of the 300,000 people who live on the island, almost two-thirds live in Reykjavik, the capital city. Most all Icelandic people speak English as a second language. They have a national church and are open to all religious groups, yet the vast number of the people are cold to the Gospel. Volcanic events at [Eyjafjöll](#) in [Iceland](#) which, although relatively small for volcanic eruptions, caused enormous disruption to air travel across western and northern Europe over an initial period of six days in December 2009. Additional localized disruption continued into May 2010. The eruption was declared officially over in October 2010, when snow on the glacier did not melt. Iceland was brought into international attention. But in May of 2011, more eruptions took place—showing that the volcanic danger is far from over.

Pray this week that the people of Iceland will turn to the Good News of our Lord and respond with commitment to the message of salvation.