

# Outline of the book of Amos

*“You only have I know of all the families of the earth: therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities”*  
**Amos 3:2**

## Introduction:

### Date

The days of Amos were “*evil times*” (Amos 5:13). Uzziah was king of Judah, and Jeroboam II was king of Israel. Uzziah reigned 52 years (790 to 738 BC / II Chron. 26:3), whereas Jeroboam II reigned forty-one years in Israel (791 to 750 BC / cf. II Kg. 14:23). Amos’ prophecy had to fall some time between 791 and 750 BC (the time that encompasses both reigns of Uzziah and Jeroboam II). The only other indicator of time is that this prophecy falls two years before the “earthquake” (Amos 1:1; see also Zech 14:5). During these days the Assyrian Empire was on the verge of world dominance and would begin their westward trek of war and terror under Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria, who would arise to power in Assyria at approximately 745 BC i.e., 5 years after Amos’ prophecy. Amos came to pronounce a message of doom upon the people of the northern nation of Israel (Amos 1:1; 7:15).

### God in Amos

Amos was careful to identify Jehovah as the “*God of hosts*” on eight occasions in his prophecy. Amos would leave no doubts within the mind of Israel as to their lawless state and just judgment that they faced. No sin committed by Israel had escaped the all-seeing and all-knowing God (Amos 4:13). Amos not only revealed the omniscience of God but also that He is omnipotent (Amos 4:13; 5:8-9). During these evil days the prophet proclaimed, “*prepare to meet thy God, O Israel*” (Amos 4:12).

### Amos

The name “Amos” means “burden-bearer” (ISBE v. 1, pp. 114). Amos’ home town was Tekoa, which was located six miles south of Bethlehem. Tekoa was high in elevation and overlooked wilderness areas of Judah and Palestine. Amos lived here as a “*herdsman*” (Amos 1:1) and “*dresser of sycamore trees*” (cf. Amos 7:14). God called Amos to prophesy to Israel, and it seems that he did most of his work at Bethel (Amos 7:13). Amos was a man of prayer (cf. Amos 7:2, 5) and deep conviction (Amos 7:14ff). At one point, Amaziah the priest had commanded Amos to go south to speak his words of doom, yet the prophet answered by a “*thus saith Jehovah*” (Amos 7:15). Amos was a man that placed God’s commands before man’s (cf. Acts 5:29).

### Israel

Israel had become as the heathen to the Lord (Amos 9:7). God said of Israel, “*I know how manifold are your transgressions, and how mighty are your sins*” (Amos 5:12). Furthermore, the Lord proclaimed that Israel was “*the sinful kingdom*” (Amos 9:8). Israel had far removed itself from the plumb-line of truth and justice (Amos 7:7-8). Amos revealed Israel’s lack of regard for the poor (Amos 2:6-7; 4:1; 5:11-12; 8:4) and insatiable appetite for riches (Amos 3:12, 15; 5:11; 6:1-3). Israel was ungrateful (Amos 2:9) and disrespectful toward God (Amos 2:11-12). God had given her His divine revelation, yet she turned to her own ways (Amos 3:1-2, 10). The people were guilty of idolatry (Amos 3:14) and disingenuous worship (Amos 4:4-5; 5:21ff; 8:4-6). Israel was deluded in that she considered that God was with her while she conducted herself in unlawful ways (cf. Amos 5:14, 18 / “*as ye say*” compare to Jer. 2:35; 8:8; 13:22; 16:10). Israel was filled with pride (Amos 6:8), and the people were cheaters and swindlers (Amos 8:5-6) who were dependant upon their own strength (Amos 6:13). That which really identifies Israel’s character is her state of self imposed spiritual delusion. Israel not only thought that God was with her (cf. Amos 5:14), but looked forward to the day of God’s judgment (Amos 5:18) because she thought, “*The evil shall not overtake nor meet us*” (Amos 9:10).

## The Day of Judgment for Israel

Due to Israel's wickedness Amos proclaimed, "*prepare to meet thy God*" (Amos 4:12). The Lord proclaimed, "*The end is come upon my people Israel*" (Amos 8:2). God would send the Assyrian army to accomplish His judgment upon Israel (cf. Isa. 10:5; Hos. 11:5; Amos 3:11; 5:27). Israel had only captivity (Amos 6:7, 14; 7:9) and violent judgment (Amos 8:3; 9:1-2, 10) to look forward to. The foolishness of Israel was depicted in her actually longing for this day (cf. Amos 5:18). The days of judgment would be times of great sorrow and darkness for the wicked (Amos 5:16-20; 8:9-10). Not one single wicked man or woman would survive this day (Amos 9:1, 10).

## Lessons learned from Amos

We, too, live in an "*evil time*" (Amos 5:13). A day of judgment is coming and shall fall upon the misguided masses that have put God out of their lives. Many today are religiously deluded. Religious people in our society long for the day when Christ shall come again, yet fail to realize that His coming will be a day of terror for all who did not subject themselves to His authority (Amos 5:18; Matt. 7:21-23). Denominational bodies are worshipping the Lord and doing many things in His name, yet for the workers of iniquity the Lord "*hates, despises, and takes no delight in your solemn assemblies*" (Amos 5:21). Amos helps us to understand that God has a standard, His law, by which man is measured (cf. Amos 7:7-8). If any man or woman does not meet that standard, then violent judgment awaits. God's day of terror will not be a time that the wicked should look forward to. The wicked will not be able to hide on the mountain tops, clouds of the heavens, and depths of the earth or sea without being found (Amos 9:1-4). Now is the time to let God's word fashion my life rather than man's will (Amos 7:14ff).

## Israel's Sin (Amos 5:12; 7:7-8; 9:8):

- No regard for the poor (2:6-7; 4:1; 5:11-12; 8:4).
- An insatiable appetite for riches (3:12, 15; 5:11; 6:1-3)
- Ungrateful toward God for His acts of care and mercy toward them (2:9)
- Exercised disrespect for God's prophets and the Nazirite who illustrated a desire to follow God (2:11-12).
- God had given them His divine revelation yet they turned to their own ways (3:1-2).
- Did not have a knowledge of God and His laws (3:10).
- Idolatry (3:14)
- Unlawful and un-thoughtful worship (4:4-5; 5:21ff; 8:4-6)
- Refused to repent even after God exercised His divine chastening upon them (4:6-11).
- Israel hated and mistreated the righteous and just (5:7, 10)
- Israel was deluded in that they considered that God was with them while they conducted themselves in unlawful ways (cf. Amos 5:14, 18 / "*as ye say*" compare to Jer. 2:35; 8:8; 13:22; 16:10).
- Pride (6:8)
- Dependant upon their own strength (6:13)
- Cheaters and swindlers (8:5-6)

## Outline of Book

### I. Amos announces his prophetic work and the doom of the Ungodly (1:1-2):

A. *“The words of Amos, who was among the herdsmen of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel, two years before the earthquake”* (1:1).

1. We have discussed in the introduction Amos, Tekoa, and the dates of this prophecy. Two other things that come out in this verse are the process of revelation and *“the earthquake.”* First, note that Amos *“saw”* this prophecy *“concerning Israel.”* God communicated His message to the prophets by means of dreams and visions (cf. Dan. 7:1; Obed. 1:1; Joel 2:28ff). Apparently the Lord gave Amos a vision of what was to be of *“Israel”* (i.e., the northern nation). At chapter 7 Amos is showed three visions and in chapters 8 and 9 there are two more (see study # 1; Divine Revelation).

2. Secondly, Amos speaks of an earthquake occurring two years before he began to reveal his divine visions and words. Zechariah also mentions the earthquake that occurred during the days of Uzziah the king of Judah (Zech. 14:5). Nothing more is known about this quake. The fact that both Amos and Zechariah mention the occurrence indicates that the earthquake must have been a historical event of significance and one the people were well aware of.

B. *“And he said, Jehovah will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the pastures of the shepherds shall mourn, and the top of Carmel shall wither”* (1:2).

1. Zion was the mountain in Jerusalem where David had constructed the temple of Jehovah. Inspired Bible prophets often used this term to signify not only God’s immediate kingdom but future spiritual kingdom, the church and those who would eventually dwell in heaven (cf. Heb. 13:22-23).

2. Jehovah was to roar as a fierce lion from this mountain and terror would fill the hearts of the inhabitants of the land.

### II. Judgments pronounced against 7 nations (including Judah and Israel) (1:3-2 all):

A. *“Thus saith Jehovah: For three transgressions of Damascus, yea, for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they have threshed Gilead with threshing instruments of iron”* (1:3).

1. It is apparent that the number three yea four is not to be taken literal. The Lord states that for these three yea four sins the nations were to be punished yet gives only one example. The thought is that their sins have come to be so great that they are now due God’s punishment. Note that God’s punishment is directly associated with the nation’s transgression (see study # 2; The Consequences of Sin).

2. The error of Damascus is summed up in their threshing of Gilead with instruments of iron. Acts of cruelty are no doubt under consideration here. Damascus murdered the inhabitants of Gilead with crude instruments that indicated brutality. Damascus was the capital city of Syria located about 55 miles northeast of the Sea of Galilee. Gilead was the region of land due east of the Jordan River (between the Dead Sea and Sea of Galilee). Gilead was occupied by the tribes of Manasseh and half the tribe of Gad.

B. *“But I will send a fire into the house of Hazael, and it shall devour the palaces of Benhadad. And I will break the bar of Damascus, and cut off the inhabitant from the valley of Aven, and him that holds the scepter from the house of Eden; and the people of Syria shall go into captivity unto Kir, saith Jehovah”* (1:4-5).

1. God’s punishing judgment of fire was to be sent to the house of Hazael, one who had murdered King Benhadad for his place upon the throne of Syria (cf. II Kgs. 8:7ff).

2. Kir was “a country in Mesopotamia (Isa. 22:6), from which Syrians came (Amos 9:7) and to which they were later exiled (II Kings 16:9; cf. Amos 1:5)” (Oxford Bible Atlas, pp. 133).

C. *“Thus saith Jehovah: For three transgressions of Gaza, yea, for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they carried away captive the whole people, to deliver them up to Edom”* (1:6).

1. Gaza was to be punished for her iniquities too. Gaza was one of the chief cities of Philistia (home of the Philistines). Gaza likely stands as a representative of the whole of Philistia.

2. Gaza's punishment is due to their capturing innocent people (likely their neighboring Israelites) and selling them as slaves to Edom. When human beings are treated as treasures to be discovered and sold there is a problem with one's estimation of human life.
- D. *"But I will send a fire on the wall of Gaza, and it shall devour the palaces thereof. And I will cut off the inhabitant from Ashdod, and him that holdeth the scepter from Ashkelon; and I will turn my hand against Ekron; and the remnant of the Philistines shall perish, saith the Lord Jehovah"* (1:7-8).
1. Jehovah's fiery judgments would come upon Gaza for her human trafficking and shall devour her palaces.
  2. The association of Gaza with all of Philistia is now made more probable as the prophet pronounces woes upon all the chief cities of Philistia (i.e., Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, and Ekron).
  3. The Philistines were devoted to extinction for their part in human trade for money.
- E. *"Thus saith Jehovah: for three transgressions of Tyre, yea, for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they delivered up the whole people to Edom, and remembered not the brotherly covenant. But I will send a fire on the wall of Tyre, and it shall devour the palaces thereof"* (1:9-10).
1. God's judgments were set against Tyre, a chief city in the region of Phoenicia. Tyre was known for their sea trade due to their location upon the Mediterranean Sea. Ezekiel had pronounced judgment upon Tyre due to her disposition toward Judah as God's nation fell to the Babylonians. Tyre thought that Judah got her just reward and scoffed at the inhabitants thereof (cf. Ezek. 26 all).
  2. Amos reveals that Tyre's chief sin was in their slave trafficking (like as the Philistines) against a people that they had made covenant agreements with. Tyre was thereby dishonest and treacherous for the sake of monetary gain (see Joel 3:4-6).
- F. *"Thus saith Jehovah: For three transgressions of Edom, yea, for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because he did pursue his brother with the sword, and did cast off all pity, and his anger did tear perpetually, and he kept his wrath forever. But I will send a fire upon Teman, and it shall devour the palaces of Bozrah"* (1:11-12).
1. Edom was located south of the Dead Sea (due south of Moab). Teman and Bozrah were chief and capital cities of Edom. Edom's origins were with Esau. The Edomites were descendants of Esau (twin brother of Jacob) (cf. Gen. 25:19-24, 30; 36:8-9). The sins of Edom, throughout history, are summed up in the words pride and arrogance (cf. Jer. 49:16). Edom had no real concern for the lives of their kinsmen of Israel and Judah (Ezek. 35:6). Edom's corruption is depicted in their rejoicing over the fall of Israel and Judah (cf. Ps. 137:7; Ezek. 35:13-15). When Jehovah brought upon Israel and Judah calamity from the Assyrians and Babylonians, the Edomites reasoned within that they would now possess the land of these two nations (cf. Ezek. 35:10). There could be nothing further from the truth. Edom had even gone as far as attacking God's people in their weakened state after doing battle with the Babylonians (cf. Ezek. 25:12; 35:4-6).
  2. Ezekiel reveals the perpetual anger and envy against their brethren in Canaan (cf. Ezek. 35:10-12). This perpetual anger is now reiterated by Amos and is a symptom of their erroneous disease. Edom would be touched by God's judgment of fire too for their unrepentant state of mind and acts of cruelty toward their brethren (see also Joel 3:19).
- G. *"Thus saith Jehovah: For three transgressions of the children of Ammon, yea, for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they have ripped up the women with child of Gilead, that they may enlarge their border. But I will kindle a fire in the wall of Rabbah, and it shall devour the palaces thereof, with shouting in the day of battle, with a tempest in the day of the whirlwind; and their king shall go into captivity, he and his princes together, saith Jehovah"* (1:13-15).
1. The Ammonites (and Moabites) were the descendants of Lot (cf. Gen. 19:30ff). Ammon was located due east of Gilead in the desert.
  2. Ammon's sins are likened unto the nations listed above in that they treated human life with the basest of ways. God reveals that Ammon killed women and children (women who were

pregnant with children) for the sole sake of gaining more territory. Once again, the value of human life was not a value to this nation. God's fiery judgment would come against Rabbah, the capital city of Ammon for her transgressions.

3. Ammon had long been an enemy of God's people. We find Jotham, King of Judah and son of Uzziah fighting against them at II Chron. 27:5. Jeremiah records that Baalis, King of the children of Ammon, decided to pay to have Gedaliah (appointed governor of Judah) assassinated probably to further disrupt Judah (Jer. 40:13-14).
4. Jeremiah pronounces an oracle against Ammon at Jeremiah 49:1-6 because they had taken possession of Gad (one of the territories east of the Jordan) at a point in time when Israel was weak. Ammon (along with Moab) had fallen into gross idolatry worshipping the god "*Malcom*" (cf. Jer. 49:1-6).
5. The long history of conflict and strained relations between Israel and Ammon is culminated in the statement by Ammon toward Judah saying, "*Aha, against my sanctuary, when it was profaned and against Israel, when it was made desolate; and against the house of Judah, when they went into captivity.*" To say "*Aha*" is to exercise "contemptuous and malicious joy."
6. Jehovah's main complaint against Ammon is that they exercised malicious joy over the fact that Judah had profaned the Lord's sanctuary with their idolatry (cf. Ezek. 5:11; 23:38-39).

## Chapter 2

### I. A continuation of God's judgments against seven nations including Israel and Judah (counted as one) (2 all):

- A. "*Thus saith Jehovah: For three transgressions of Moab, yea, for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because he burned the bones of the king of Edom into lime. But I will send a fire upon Moab, and it shall devour the palaces of Kerioth; and Moab shall die with tumult, with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet; and I will cut off the judge from the midst thereof with him, saith Jehovah*" (2:1-3).
  1. Due east of the Dead Sea lie the land of Moab. Moab, like Ammon, was a son of Lot by an incestuous relationship with his two daughters (Gen. 19:30ff). At some unrevealed time the Moabites had taken the dead body of the king of Edom and ground the bones into lime. Again, a sense of inhumane acts was done on the part of Moab as all the rest.
  2. Ezekiel would later write, "*and I will execute judgments upon Moab; and they shall know that I am Jehovah*" (25:11). Jeremiah would later pronounce an oracle against the Moabites at Jer. 48:1ff. Moab rejected Jehovah God and worshipped "*Chemosh*" (Jer. 48:7-8). Moab had rejoiced over the fall of Judah as did Ammon (cf. Jer. 40:14). Jeremiah records the sin of **pride** being a primary issue with the profligate nation (cf. Jer. 48:26-30). Isaiah recorded the fact that Moab would not go unpunished (cf. Isa. 15-16).
  3. One truth that we can certainly gain from these pronouncements of judgment against the surrounding nations is that God is the Lord of all souls and nations (cf. Ezek. 18:4; cf. Jer. 32:27 [He is the God of all flesh]).
- B. "*Thus saith Jehovah: for three transgressions of Judah, yea, for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof: because they have rejected the law of Jehovah, and have not kept his statutes, and their lies have caused them to err, after which their fathers did walk. But I will send a fire upon Judah, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem*" (2:4-5).
  1. Judah will not escape the judgment of God for their iniquities. Judah, the southern nation, had participated in idolatry and irreverent acts of disobedience toward God. Amos exposes their error referring to them as "*liars*" and those who have "*rejected God's laws and not kept his statutes.*"
  2. The punishment due Judah was because she was in sin. God does not act in partiality toward any peoples or nations. When one is in error, no matter who that may be, they are due His wrath (cf. Rom. 6:23).

- C. *“Thus saith Jehovah: For three transgressions of Israel, yea, for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they have sold the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes – they 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 go unto the same maiden, to profane my holy name: and they lay themselves down beside every altar upon clothes taken in pledge; and in the house of their God they drink the wine of such as have been fined”* (2:6-8).
1. Israel, the northern kingdom, was likewise due God’s punishing judgments for her sin.
  2. Israel was guilty of selling their poor brethren as slaves for silver and a pair of shoes to wear. They had no regard for the needy. Often times the needy could sell themselves to others for services yet the rich of Amos’ day was taking these needy people and selling them to others as slaves. Here again is an illustration of no regard for human life.
  3. They had no compassion over the poor that would pant even after the dust of the earth for need. Neither did they respect the meek (i.e., those who humbly sought God).
  4. Israel corrupted themselves sexually by a father and son taking the same woman in a sex act (cf. Lev. 20:10ff).
  5. The Israelites further profaned their self by bowing down and worshiping idols.
  6. Israel took the coat of the poor and would not return it to them though the law commanded such to be done (cf. Deut. 24:12ff).
  7. Lastly, Israel was guilty of drinking wine gained from fines against others within the temple of Jehovah God.

**II. The burden that Amos would bear (prophecy against Israel) begins here. God had done much for His beloved Israel; however, they were ungrateful and disrespectful to His Laws (2:9-15):**

- A. *“Yet destroyed I the Amorite before them, whose height was like the height of the cedars, and he was strong as the oaks; yet I destroyed his fruit from above, and his roots from beneath”* (2:9).
1. Israel and Judah seems to have forgotten that the very land they currently dwell in was given them by Jehovah God.
  2. No foe was too large or strong for God to defeat. Israel should have taken note of God’s providential care yet they did not consider His love and protection.
- B. *“Also I brought you up out of the land of Egypt, and led you forty years in the wilderness, to possess the land of the Amorite”* (2:10).
1. Due to the lack of confidence in God on the part of Israel and a failure to keep His commandments the Lord made them wander forty years in the wilderness (cf. Josh. 5:6).
  2. The Amorite dwelled in the Land of Ammon due north of Moab. Israel had traveled around Moab and defeated the king of Ammon thereby possessing their land before marching into Canaan across the Jordan River.
- C. *“And I raised up of your sons for prophets, and of your young men for Nazirites. Is it not even thus, O ye children of Israel? Saith Jehovah. But ye gave the Nazirites wine to drink, and commanded the prophets, saying, Prophecy not”* (2:11-12).
1. The Lord cared much for Israel. He revealed His mind to Israel through various prophets. There were some who heard the message of God by the prophets and earnestly desired to serve Him with all their hearts. They took *“Nazirite vows”* that they may be separate from all that God revealed as unclean (cf. Numb. 6:1ff).
  2. Yet there were those of Israel who displayed great disrespect for the revealed word of God and gave the Nazirites wine to drink thereby disqualifying the vow (cf. Numb. 6:1ff). Those prophets who revealed law and sin were commanded not to prophesy such words of discomfort. Said incidents illustrates a mind that was not dedicated to following God’s laws.
- D. *“Behold, I will press you in your place, as a cart presseth that is full of sheaves. And flight shall perish from the swift; and the strong shall not strengthen his force; neither shall the mighty deliver himself; neither shall he stand that handleth the bow; and he that is swift of foot shall not deliver himself; neither shall he that rides the horse deliver himself; and he that is courageous among the mighty shall flee away naked in that day, saith Jehovah”* (2:13-16).
1. God points to a coming day of judgment for the ungodly and ungrateful works of Israel.

2. God will press the defiled nation with war and they will flee in terror. The fast, strong, mighty, bowman, horseman, and the courageous shall all flee the battle scene in defeat.

### Chapter 3

#### I. Egypt and Philistia are summoned upon the mountain tops to witness the judgment against the sinful, chaotic, ruthless, and wealth driven Nation of Israel (3 all):

A. *“Hear this word that Jehovah hath spoken against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family which I brought up out of the land of Egypt, saying, You only have I know of all the families of the earth: therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities”* (3:1-2).

1. God had chosen Abraham to bring forth His seed promise by which all nations would be blessed with the opportunity of having their sins forgiven. Abraham’s descendants became a great nation because Abraham had obeyed the commandments of God (cf. Gen. 22:18). Righteousness was reckoned unto Abraham due to his heart of faith and obedience (Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:3).
2. The reason for their punishment is due to their relationship to God. The Lord, by sovereign choice, had chose Israel to be His people. He revealed His mind to them and blessed them with protection, sustenance, land, fruitfulness of land and womb yet they had disrespect and irreverence toward His holy name. No other nations had these blessings aside from Israel. Due to this arrangement and the opportunities afforded Israel the Lord must now punish them for their gross disobedience.

B. *“Shall two walk together, except they have agreed? Will a lion roar in the forest, when he hath no prey? Will a young lion cry out of his den, if he have taken nothing? Can a bird fall in a snare upon the earth, where no gin is set for him? Shall a snare spring up from the ground, and have taken nothing at all? Shall the trumpet be blown in a city, and the people not be afraid? Shall evil befall a city, and Jehovah hath not done it? Surely the Lord Jehovah will do nothing, except he reveal his secret unto his servants the prophets. The lion hath roared; who will not fear? The Lord Jehovah hath spoken; who can but prophesy?”* (3:3-8).

1. In relation to the word of prophesy spoken against Israel, in that Jehovah shall visit them in judgment due to their iniquities, the prophet now poses questions that when answered they will understand that their punishment is just.
2. Can two people walk together in friendship and unity if there are serious disagreements between the two (see study # 3; Bible Fellowship)? Of course not. Thereby God and Israel do not agree and cannot peacefully walk together.
3. The roar of the lion and the young lion are indicators of captured prey. The lion does not roar without the prey. God’s roaring, through the prophets, are indicators that Israel (His prey) is in sight.
4. Israel is likened unto a bird caught in a snare trap and there is no escape. The sound of the warning trumpet is sounded and surely there is fear as a product. Israel’s problem is that she fears not. When evil has befallen Israel they ought to understand that it was of the sovereign God’s will.
5. God has revealed these things through the prophets. The Lion, God, has roared and Israel ought to be trembling in fear.
6. Why did Israel, as a whole of God’s people, not repent? There was no fear of God before her eyes (cf. Jer. 2:19; 5:24). The Lord has revealed the secrets of his thoughts to the prophets (see study # 1).

C. *“Publish ye in the palaces at Ashdod, and in the palaces in the land of Egypt, and say, Assemble yourselves upon the mountains of Samaria, and behold what great tumults are therein, and what oppressions in the midst thereof. For they know not to do right, saith Jehovah, who store up violence and robbery in their palaces”* (3:9-10).

1. God calls the defiled nations of Egypt and Philistia (Ashdod) to assemble upon high mountains to observe the chaos in Israel.

2. The wickedness of Samaria, the capital city of Israel, had attained such a level of filth that the godless nations of Egypt and Philistia are called upon to look at them with disgust. Israel was filled with tumults of disorderliness among a people who set aside the law that governed them. Israel received gain by oppressions against the weaker and less fortunate among them.
  3. Israel did not “*know to do right*” because they had forgotten all about God.
  4. A society filled with violence, thievery, chaos, and oppression is one that is governed by the will of the individual. Such a society will see few survive; i.e., the strongest and most deceptive.
- D. *“Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah: an adversary there shall be, even round about the land; and he shall bring down thy strength from thee, and thy palaces shall be plundered”* (3:11).
1. Due to Israel’s irreverence, ungratefulness, and ignorance of the laws of God they shall be destroyed. The princes, kings, priests and all those of authority who have contributed to such a despotic state of mind shall be brought down and the city plundered by an enemy.
  2. The “*adversary*” would be the Assyrians (i.e., the “*rod of mine anger*” [Isa. 10:5]).
- E. *“Thus saith Jehovah: as the shepherd rescueth out of the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear, so shall the children of Israel be rescued that sit in Samaria in the corner of a couch, and on the silken cushions of a bed”* (3:12).
1. The entire body of Israel will be devoured by the Assyrian lion save a few legs and an ear. The idea is that a small remnant will be spared.
  2. The Lord tells us that the reason for the small number being saved is that the majority have approached life having considered that their luxuries and wealth should save them. Their minds were intoxicated with the things of this world and thereby did not consider God’s will for them. “During the reign of Jeroboam II the northern kingdom reached its zenith of wealth and power with the attendant results of luxury and excess, a situation reflected constantly in the prophetic visions of Amos” (ISBE v. 1, pp. 115).
- F. *“Hear ye, and testify against the house of Jacob, saith the Lord Jehovah, the God of hosts. For in the day that I shall visit the transgressions of Israel upon him, I will also visit the altars of Bethel; and the horns of the altar shall be cut off, and fall to the ground. And I will smite the winter-house with the summer-house; and the houses of ivory shall perish, and the great houses shall have an end, saith Jehovah”* (3:13-15).
1. The Day of Judgment comes to Israel due to her transgressions. The judgment against Israel will be thorough and include Bethel, the place where Jeroboam I had set up a calf idol to worship God (cf. I Kings 12:25ff).
  2. Many inhabitants had come to be so rich that they owned not only homes in the cities but homes in which they spent winter and summer in. Some of their houses were laced with the luxuries of ivory. Again, the mind of Israel was on wealth, power, and everything of this world. God was far removed from their mind (cf. Hos. 4:6).

## Chapter 4

### I. Unauthorized Acts of Worship (4:1-5):

- A. *“Hear this word, ye kine of Bashan, that are in the mountain of Samaria, that oppress the poor, that crush the needy, that say unto their lords, Bring, and let us drink. The Lord Jehovah hath sworn by his holiness, that, lo, the days shall come upon you, that they shall take you away with hooks, and your residue with fish-hooks. And ye shall go out at the breaches, every one straight before her; and ye shall cast yourselves into Harmon, saith Jehovah”* (4:1-3).
1. The “*kine of Bashan*” may be a reference to the nobles’ wives of Israel.
  2. The judgment for their iniquities is sure. They have oppressed the poor, crushed the needy, and drank the wines of luxury all along the way. A state of disregard for other’s needs governed the selfish minds of the Israelites.
- B. *“Come to Bethel, and transgress; to Gilgal, and multiply transgression; and bring your sacrifices every morning, and your tithes every three days; and offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving of that which*

*is leavened, and proclaim freewill-offerings and publish them: for this pleases you, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord Jehovah” (4:4-5).*

1. Amos, with a sense of sarcasm, calls upon the wicked of Israel to continue their unauthorized acts of worship. A people who have no respect, gratitude, or regard for God’s laws could care less about worship the way God prescribed.
2. These self centered people are called to the centers of idolatrous worship; i.e., Bethel and Gilgal, to continue their illegal and self prescribed worship. They brought sacrifices every morning, tithes three times twice a week, leavened offerings of thanksgiving, and proclaimed free-will offerings. The purpose of their worship was not to please God but their own selves.
3. Jesus quoted from Isa. 29:13 at Matthew 15:8-9 saying, *“This people honors me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men.”* Unauthorized acts of worship never please God and are always designed to meet man’s expectations (see study # 4; Worship).

## **II. God calls to their remembrance His blessings and curses in times of obedience and disobedience “yet have ye not returned unto me, saith Jehovah” (4:6-11):**

- A. *“And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith Jehovah” (4:6).*
1. The idea of clean teeth and want of bread indicates times of famine.
  2. Though God withheld the physical bread of life from Israel they rejected God’s request of their repentance.
- B. *“And I also have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest; and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered. So two or three cities wandered unto one city to drink water, and were not satisfied: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith Jehovah” (4:7-8).*
1. The omnipotent God caused it to rain in designated areas at times for the designated purpose of the people’s repentance.
  2. The dry areas and cities went to the watered cities for drink yet their thirst was not satisfied.
  3. The drought would have diminished and destroyed much of the crops yet the people rejected God’s pleas of their repentance.
- C. *“I have smitten you with blasting and mildew: the multitude of your gardens and your vineyards and your fig-trees and your olive-trees hath the palmer-worm devoured: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith Jehovah” (4:9).*
1. A blasting wind and mildew fungus destroyed the people’s gardens, vineyards, and fruit trees due to their transgressions.
  2. Though the Lord sent these irritants among the fields of the people they continued to reject God’s request for their repentance. The texts in each of these instances indicate that the people were told, likely by a prophet, that God had caused the event due to their sinful lives.
- D. *“I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt: your young men have I slain with the sword, and have carried away your horses; and I have made the stench of your camp to come up even into your nostrils: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith Jehovah” (4:10).*
1. Due to Israel’s sin the Lord sent upon the people pestilence in the form of disease and sickness likened unto the days of Egypt.
  2. The plagues were generally followed by war and God caused so many Israelites to die by the sword that the smell of the rotting bodies corrupted the air that Israel breathed.
  3. Again, Israel refused to repent of her wickedness.
- E. *“I have overthrown cities among you, as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorah, and ye were as a brand plucked out of the burning: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith Jehovah” (4:11).*
1. The Lord withheld the blessings of food and water from Israel. God brought upon their gardens strong blasting winds and mildew. Israel experienced pestilence that brought them low and weak that was followed by sword of war and death. Through all these hardships that were designed to move them to repentance they rejected God’s desires as they were made known through the prophets.

2. The last judgment against the disobedient people was war that resulted in cities being overthrown and the inhabitants killed yet they rejected God's pleas to turn unto Him with hearts of repentance.
- F. *"Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel; and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel. For, lo, he that forms the mountains, and creates the wind, and declares unto man what is his thought; that makes the morning darkness, and treads upon the high places of the earth – Jehovah, the God of hosts, is his name"* (4:12-13).
1. The above five mentioned chastisements for Israel's sin did nothing to move them to repent. Finally, the Lord proclaims that there will be an un-named judgment that comes upon them that will be worse than the above mentioned ones.
  2. Israel is to prepare to meet the God of war in judgment. Jehovah is omnipotent (i.e., He formed the mountains and creates wind) (see study # 5; The Omnipotent God). Jehovah is omniscient in that He, *"declares unto man what is his thought"* (see study # 6; The Omniscient God).
  3. The judgments; i.e., morning darkness, are sure because He has so proclaimed.

## Chapter 5

### I. Amos calls upon Israel to "seek" the Lord (5:1-9):

- A. *"Hear ye this word which I take up for a lamentation over you, O house of Israel. The virgin of Israel is fallen; she shall no more rise: she is cast down upon her land; there is none to raise her up. For thus saith the Lord Jehovah: The city that went forth a thousand shall have a hundred left, and that which went forth a hundred shall have ten left, to the house of Israel"* (5:1-3).
1. God has revealed His divine secrets to Amos regarding the end of Israel (cf. Amos 3:7). The Northern nation has been likened unto a virgin who has been defiled by sexual immorality. She has committed spiritual adultery in that she has turned to idolatry and forgotten God (cf. Hos. 11:2; Amos 2:6-8; 5:26).
  2. The Lord has pronounced the fall of Israel as a nation. Though Israel may call upon other nations to help none will avail (cf. Hos. 7:11).
  3. Jehovah will cut down each city of Israel by 90 percent.
- B. *"For thus saith Jehovah unto the house of Israel, Seek ye me, and ye shall live; but seek not Bethel, nor enter into Gilgal, and pass not to Beersheba: for Gilgal shall surely go into captivity, and Bethel shall come to nought. Seek Jehovah, and ye shall live; lest he break out like fire in the house of Joseph, and it devour, and there be none to quench it in Bethel"* (5:4-6).
1. Though no other peoples or idols will be able to *"raise her up"* God can. The Lord has one request for His people to meet in order to avert disaster. That one request is that they *"seek"* God *"and ye shall live"* rather than turning to the idols of Bethel, Gilgal, and Beersheba.
    - a. A reoccurring theme that runs throughout the word of God is that the Lord desires people to serve Him because this is their true inner desire (1 Sam. 15:22; Hos. 6:6; Matt. 22:37-38 etc.).
    - b. The idea of *"seeking"* after God is comparable to *"calling"* upon the name of Jehovah; i.e., invoking or appealing to God for help in this life (cf. Joel 2:32). Those who seek God's forgiveness, mercy, and physical and spiritual sustenance shall not be disappointed.
  2. Those who do not *"seek"* Jehovah God will certainly face a fiery judgment.
- C. *"Ye who turn justice to wormwood, and cast down righteousness to the earth, seek him that makes the Pleiades and Orion, and turns the shadow of death into the morning, and makes the day dark with night; that calls for the waters of the sea, and pours them out upon the face of the earth (Jehovah is his name); that brings sudden destruction upon the strong, so that destruction comes upon the fortress"* (5:7-9).
1. Amos, once again, exposes the sins of Israel (cf. Amos 2:6-8). Justice (doing right in business dealings, civil courts, and spiritual service) had become bitter as wormwood in that it did not measure up to God's will. Not only justice but righteousness was not to be found among the

masses of Israelites. Their minds were set on their gain at the expense of the just, righteous, and poor.

2. Israel ought to be motivated to “*seek him*” due to His omnipotent power (see also Amos 4:12-13) (see study # 5):
  - a. God’s omnipotence is seen in that He made the “*Pleiades and Orion*.” The Pleiades is “an open star cluster in the constellation Taurus, consisting of several hundred stars, of which six are visible to the naked eye” (AHD 952). Orion is “a constellation in the celestial equator near Gemini and Taurus containing the stars Betelgeuse and Rigel” (AHD 877).
  - b. God’s omnipotence is seen in that he “*turns the shadow of death into the morning*.” The dark shadows of judgment may be turned into rays of hope if men would turn and seek Him.
  - c. God brings the rains upon the earth with His great power.
  - d. God can bring down the strong man and strong city.

## II. Amos’ days were “evil times” (5:10-13):

- A. “*They hate him that reproves in the gate, and they abhor him that speaks uprightly. Foreasmuch therefore as ye trample upon the poor, and take exactions from him of wheat: ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye shall not dwell in them; ye have planted pleasant vineyards, but ye shall not drink the wine thereof*” (5:10-11).
  1. Apparently Israel had some just judges that reproved sinful activity and spoke uprightly. Said judges were hated by the people because they put a barrier of resistance to their illegal operations. Many of the Israelites were out to make a dollar at the expense of others.
  2. The wicked among Israel stole from the poor and built beautiful houses for themselves. The Lord said that those who do such things will have no time in those luxurious homes to enjoy them because He will remove them.
- B. “*For I know how manifold are your transgressions, and how mighty are your sins – ye that afflict the just, that take a bribe, and that turn aside the needy in the gate from their right*” (5:12).
  1. The omniscience of God is depicted in that he sees and knows all the secret sins of the people’s hearts and outward doings (see study # 6).
  2. Three sins of Israel are specifically mentioned to identify them as “*mighty*” sinners.
    - a. Israel “*afflicted the just*” in that they apparently persecuted them (cf. II Tim. 3:12). Israel’s character was one of irritation when someone tried to halt their sinful activities.
    - b. Israel took “*bribes*” to do unrighteous and unjust acts. Israel’s character is revealed to be more interested in money than doing what was right.
    - c. Israel’s character was one of selfishness as well. When there was a needy one who begged for help they thumbed their nose up at him.
- C. “*Therefore he that is prudent shall keep silence in such a time; for it is an evil time*” (5:13).
  1. Times such as these ought to cause the “*prudent*” to remain silent. The “*prudent*” man was defined by Hosea as one who is wise and understands that the “*ways of Jehovah are right, and the just shall walk in them; but transgressors shall fall therein*” (Hos. 14:9). The prudent of Amos’ day may see brethren doing all manner of evil yet as he assess the prevailing character among the people he ought to determine that it will only cause harm to speak up. The people were far past reproof. Those who did try to help them were only persecuted.
  2. Amos identifies his days as, “*an evil time*.”

## III. The Day of Jehovah (5:14-20):

- A. “*Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live; and so Jehovah, the God of hosts, will be with you, as ye say. Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish justice in the gate: it may be that Jehovah, the God of hosts, will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph*” (5:14-15).
  1. The wording seems to favor the thought that rather than seeking good they were seeking evil. Amos gives Israel words of hope. They may live if only they would seek after “*the God of hosts*.” God would be with them “*as ye say*.” Israel was saying that God was with them even though they had cast off justice and righteousness. Mental delusion through ignorance of God’s will for man govern their hearts. This type of Delusion is described by Jeremiah regarding the Southern kingdom of Judah. They considered themselves to be without sin (Jer.

2:35; 16:10) and that their worship was acceptable to God (Jer. 6:20; 11:15; 14:11-12; 26:2). Judah had considered themselves wise (Jer. 8:8). When captivity came upon them they said, "Why are all these things happening to us?" (cf. Jer. 13:22; 16:10).

2. A disposition and or character of "*hate*" toward "*evil*" deeds and "*love*" toward justice and righteousness would certainly reveal a heart that had turned to God.
- B.** *"Therefore thus saith Jehovah, the God of hosts, the Lord: Wailing shall be in all the broad ways; and they shall say in all the streets, Alas! Alas! And they shall call the husbandman to mourning, and such as are skilful in lamentation to wailing. And in all vineyards shall be wailing; for I will pass through the midst of thee, saith Jehovah"* (5:16-17).
1. God's judgment against Israel's wicked behavior will be a day of great mourning and wailing. Sad hearts will prevail as the people look out over a desolated land and dead loved ones.
  2. The joy of luxury and plenty will be taken away.
- C.** *"Woe unto you that desire the day of Jehovah! Wherefore would ye have the day of Jehovah? It is darkness, and not light"* (5:18).
1. Those who truly believe that God is with them even though they do deeds of wickedness are actually those who "*desire the day of Jehovah.*"
  2. There is no fear of God's judgments because they do not think they are doing anything wrong. So far removed were they from God's word that they actually believed that all was well. Many live likeminded today. As long as one believes his acts are right he has no fear of God. Unfortunately, one's ideas or beliefs of right and wrong will not be the standard they are judged by. Israel's arrogance is depicted in that they measured their standing with God not by His word but by their own ideas of what was right for the times they lived in.
  3. Amos tells such people that they better look at their lives again. God's judgment day is a dark and horrid time.
  4. Judgment, in addition to God's omnipotence and omniscience, should have motivated them to repent of their sins (cf. Amos 4:12-13; 5:8-9).
- D.** *"As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him. Shall not the day of Jehovah be darkness, and not light? Even very dark, and no brightness in it?"* (5:19-20).
1. The horrors of God's judgments against the ungodly will be dark days of no escape. The wicked shall flee in darkness from the lion only to be met and devoured by a bear. Other wicked men shall flee to their luxurious homes for safety only to be met and killed by serpents.
  2. The un-repenting people shall not escape the judgment of God. The darkest of all gloomy days awaits them.

#### **IV. God has rejected Israel's Worship (5:21-27):**

- A.** *"I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Yea, though ye offer me your burnt-offerings and meal offerings, I will not accept them; neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream"* (5:21-24).
1. Here was a people whose character was very disturbing; i.e., a people agitated by those who tried to uphold God's laws, more concerned with gain than doing what was right, and selfish in relationship to helping others who were in need (cf. Amos 5:12). Though these traits describe their outlook on life they continued to believe and say that God was with them (cf. Amos 5:14).
  2. It is clear that Israel continued to worship God making sacrifices and singing songs of praise to Him. God's omniscient eyes; however, saw and had knowledge of all their wicked ways. We learn a lesson here. God does not receive the worship of those who's hearts are bent on unlawful practices (cf. Amos 4:4-5). One cannot possibly think that God will accept their worship when their hearts are far from Him and His word (cf. Matt. 15:8-9). The prophet Isaiah laid down the same principle at Isaiah 1:11ff.
  3. Rather than making meaningless sacrifices and going through the mechanical motions of worship the Lord proclaims, "*But let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty*

*stream.*” Let us all cast off works of darkness and worship God by His prescribed manner because our hearts so desire justice and righteousness!

- B. *“Did ye bring unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel? Yea, ye have borne the tabernacle of your king and the shrine of your images, the star of your god, which ye made to yourselves. Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus, saith Jehovah, whose name is the God of hosts”* (5:25-27).
1. Apparently during the forty years that Israel wandered in the wilderness for an evil report of the land of Canaan they worshipped God by mingling idolatry with His prescribed worship.
  2. Amos refers to the idol that was introduced into the Jehovah worship as *“the star of your god.”* Israel had made a shrine and worshipped the idol as though it were God. Israel had continued this melting pot religion even until this later date. Due to such depraved and self delusional worship the Lord would send them into captivity to the land of the Assyrians.

## Chapter 6

### I. Israel’s False Since of Security (6 all):

- A. *“Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and to them that are secure in the mountain of Samaria, the notable men of the chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel come!”* (6:1).
1. Amos had pronounced a *“woe”* upon Israel at 5:18 because the deluded sinful people actually *“desired the day of Jehovah.”* Jesus had pronounced seven *“woes”* against the scribes and Pharisees at Matthew 23:13-36. There the Greek (*ouai*) = *“woe to thee”* (LS 575)... *“calamity”* (Moulton 294). *Ouai* is used at Revelation 9:12 and 11:14 to signify judgment for misdeeds. The un-repenting and deluded sinners of Israel have nothing but a calamity of judgment to look forward to as long as their state of mind remains contrary to the way of God.
  2. Not only was Israel guilty of idolatry, injustice, erroneous worship, and unrighteousness but their root problem, according to Amos, is their quest for financial security. The problem was not in gaining financial security but rather their attitudes and methods of such gain. The wording of this verse indicates their trust in wealth and fortified city of Samaria.
- B. *“Pass ye unto Calneh, and see; and from thence go ye to Hamath the great; then go down to Gath of the Philistines: are they better than these kingdoms? Or is their border greater than your border? Ye that put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near; that lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall; that sing idle songs to the sound of the viol; that invent for themselves instruments of music, like David; that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief oils; but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph”* (6:2-6).
1. The text infers that these great cities (i.e., Calneh, Hamath, and Gath) were considered great yet Judah and Israel far surpassed them in land mass and greatness of strength. God had truly blessed His people with land and power. Israel had not; however, considered God’s blessings and by their wicked ways were bringing the day of calamity and violence closer and closer.
  2. Israel was currently living off of the past blessings of God. They were wealthy; i.e., laying on beds of ivory, content as they lounged without fear upon their couches, sang songs with instruments and invented new ways of playing to enrich their contentment and joy of life. They had all that a man could ever want in this day. They drank plenty of wine from bowls, ate the best of steak from lambs, and anointed themselves with the chief oils. Israel had come to be lost in a world of plenty. They were blind to the dangers of ease and to the need of the poor of their brethren.
- C. *“Therefore shall they now go captive with the first that go captive; and the revelry of them that stretched themselves shall pass away. The Lord Jehovah hath sworn by himself, saith Jehovah, the God of hosts: I abhor the excellency (pride) of Jacob, and hate his palaces; therefore will I deliver up the city with all that is therein”* (6:7-8).
1. Due to Israel’s sin of ease and unwillingness to help the needy among their brethren God will bring them into captivity at the hands of the Assyrians (cf. Amos 3:11; 5:27; Hos. 11:5).

2. Amos identifies the activities above regarding the singing with instruments and the inventions of new music as “*revelry*” (i.e., “boisterous merrymaking... to engage in uproarious festivities... a noisy festivity” [AHD 1057]).
  3. Note that God had hatred and abhorrence toward Israel’s spirit of “*pride*” and the “*palaces*” they placed their security in.
- D. “*And it shall come to pass, if there remain ten men in one house, that they shall die. And when a man’s uncle shall take him up, even he that burns him, to bring out the bones out of the house, and shall say unto him that is in the innermost parts of the house, Is there yet any with thee? And he shall say, No; then shall he say, Hold thy peace; for we may not make mention of the name of Jehovah. For, behold, Jehovah commands, and the great house shall be smitten with breaches, and the little house with clefts*” (6:9-11).
1. So complete will God’s calamity fall upon the wicked of Israel that none will be left in a house to bury their dead. The nearest of kin, such as an uncle, will come to not bury but burn the bodies of the dead (possibly due to the fact that the dead are so numerous that there is no grave spaces to bury them).
  2. The name of Jehovah will carry much greater fear in the day of Israel’s judgment. To mention the name of the great judge was to bring further destruction upon the house of the wicked.
- E. “*Shall horses run upon the rock? Will one plow there with oxen? That ye have turned justice into gall, and the fruit of righteousness into wormwood; ye that rejoice in a thing of nought, that say, Have we not taken to us horns by our own strength? For, behold, I will raise up against you a nation, O house of Israel, saith Jehovah, the God of hosts; and they shall afflict you from the entrance of Hamath unto the brook of the Arabah*” (6:12-14).
1. Amos calls upon Israel to reason with him. The prophet poses two questions of which the answer was obvious. Horses have more sense than to run on rocks. Men do not plow in rocky areas. The point is that the matter of justice and righteous behavior is just as easily determined; however, Israel has muddied the waters of their responsibilities toward the Lord (i.e., they turned both justice and righteousness into such a mess that they were like people who foolishly plowed on rocks and ran a horse over the same).
  2. Yet even more foolish was their conclusion that that they could obtain all blessings of life by “*our own strength*.” Israel looked to idols (Hos. 11:2), other nations (Hos. 7:11), and now their own strength (Amos 6:13; Hos. 10:13) for comfort in time of need.
  3. The Lord; however, shall judge the nation of Israel with Assyria from the northern most border to the southern most line (cf. Amos 3:11; 5:27).

### Lessons learned from Amos 5 – 6

- Seek Jehovah with all the heart (Amos 5:1-8). Joel explains that it is the individual who “*calls upon the name of Jehovah*” that shall be saved (Joel 2:32). Those today who would turn to Jesus for help in time of various needs (i.e., the forgiveness of sins, emotional stress, times of persecution, famine, and sickness) are those whom the Lord accepts (cf. I Sam. 15:22; Hos. 6:6; Matt. 22:37ff) (see study # 7; What God wants out of Man).
- Amos identifies God’s desired character in man:
  - Just and righteous (5:7, 24)
  - Seek good and not evil (5:14)
  - Hate evil and love good (5:15)
- Recognize times of wickedness:
  - Times when people hate those who expose their sin (5:10)
  - Erroneous worship (5:21-23)
  - Times of revelry (6:7)
  - Times of wealth (2:6; 3:12, 15; 5:10; 6:4).
- The Power of self delusion: Israel thought that God was with them (Amos 5:14) and thereby foolishly hastened the day of His judgments against the ungodly (Amos 5:18) (see study # 8; Self Delusion):
  - Israel foolishly practiced idolatry (Amos 5:26).

- Israel was deluded by her wealth (Amos 6:4).
- Israel thought their worship was acceptable (Amos 5:21ff).
- Israel had put trust in their own strength (Amos 6:13).
- A people filled with pride (Amos 6:8).

## Chapter 7

### I. Amos is showed Three Visions of God’s Judgment against Israel (7:1-9):

- A. *“Thus the Lord Jehovah showed me: and, behold, he formed locusts in the beginning of the shooting up of the latter growth; and, lo, it was the latter growth after the king’s mowings. And it came to pass that, when they made an end of eating the grass of the land, then I said, O Lord Jehovah, forgive, I beseech thee: how shall Jacob stand? For he is small. Jehovah repented concerning this: it shall not be, saith Jehovah”* (7:1-3).
1. The Lord had “*showed*” Amos through visions of divine revelation judgments that were to come upon Israel for her wickedness. The first vision indicated that God would punish the people of the land by taking away all the grass, by means of locusts, that the cattle and horses fed on.
  2. Amos petitions the Lord in prayer that this would not be done to Israel based upon their littleness in comparison with the power of God. Amos said, “*O Lord Jehovah, forgive, I beseech thee:*” God heard the prayer of Amos and it repented Him to perform such actions (i.e., he changed his mind).
- B. *“Thus the Lord Jehovah showed me: and, behold, the Lord Jehovah called to contend by fire; and it devoured the great deep, and would have eaten up the land. Then said I, O Lord Jehovah, cease, I beseech thee: how shall Jacob stand? For he is small. Jehovah repented concerning this: This also shall not be, saith the Lord Jehovah”* (7:4-6).
1. Again, the Lord “*showed*” Amos a divine vision of Israel being destroyed by fire. The destruction of the fire would run “*deep*” within Israel.
  2. Amos, once again, petitions the Lord in prayer that this disaster upon the land and people of Israel would not take place. Amos explains that Israel is small in comparison to Jehovah’s mighty power. The Lord hears Amos’ prayer and it repents Him that he would do such a thing.
- C. *“Thus he showed me: and, behold, the Lord stood beside a wall made by a plumb-line, with a plumb-line in his hand. And Jehovah said unto me. Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A plumb-line. Then said the Lord, Behold, I will set a plumb-line in the midst of my people Israel; I will not again pass by them any more; and the high places of Isaac shall be desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste; and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword”* (7:7-9).
1. This is now the **third vision** that Amos has been showed. Amos beheld the Lord standing beside a wall that had been made perfectly vertical by use of a plumb-line. A plumb-line is a string with a weight attached at the end. The weight hangs suspended from a measuring device (such as a tripod) and is used to determine the absolute vertical over any given point. Such a device may be used to calculate elevations in surveying land. Amos sees the Lord standing next to a wall with a plumb-line in His hand.
  2. The Lord then asks Amos what it is that he sees. Amos replies to the Lord by saying that he sees a plumb-line. God thereby answers Amos by saying that He will place a plumb-line in the midst of the people as if to check or measure the verticality of each person. Those who do not measure up to the vertical wall will be judged unworthy of His blessings.
  3. The plumb-line, in this third vision, represents God’s laws. God had made Israel upright (i.e., vertical) by use of the law yet many had transgressed it. Israel is made to be measured by the vertical wall and what the Lord determines is that they are far off from the true standard that has been set in His laws. Like Daniel, who interpreted the hand writing on the wall to mean that God’s people had been weighed in the balance and found wanting, even so Amos has seen God’s measuring of His people (see Dan. 5:27) (see study # 9; The Standard of Truth).

4. Note that Amos does not pray to God on this occasion so that His judgments would not pass against Israel. What can one say when the standard of truth has exposed a people's error? Amos knew that the standard never lies and thereby the people stand condemned. The Lord pronounced the punishing sword upon the wicked house of Jeroboam (king of Israel).

## II. Amaziah's conversation with Jeroboam and Amos (7:10-17):

- A. *"Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, Amos hath conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel: the land is not able to bear all his words"* (7:10).
  1. Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, had gained intelligence of Amos' words of prophecy against Jeroboam, i.e., Jeroboam's house would die by the sword. The priest seems to urgently make his way to the king and reveal Amos' "conspiracy" against the king of Israel.
  2. Amos' words of divine revelation were words that stung the priest of Bethel and pronounced condemnation upon the king of Israel. Hatred for those who spoke truth and exposed error is now exemplified (cf. Amos 5:10).
- B. *"For thus Amos saith, Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall surely be let away captive out of his land. Also Amaziah said unto Amos, O thou seer, go, flee thou away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there: but prophesy not again any more at Bethel; for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a royal house"* (7:11-13).
  1. Amaziah tells Jeroboam all that Amos has said against the king and his house. Amos had prophesied that the king and his house would die by the sword and that the nation would be led captive by foreigners.
  2. These words of doom were more than the king or Amaziah the priest could bear. Rather than changing their unlawful works they request that Amos changes his location of doomsday prophecy. Amos had been prophesying in the city of Bethel (a center for idolatrous worship / cf. Amos 3:14). The prophet's words not only affronted the king but the entire nation. Amos' words were contrary to the lifestyle of all. Such a state indicates how far from the plumb-line of God's law they had erred (both in mind and actions).
  3. The priest thereby speaks to Amos and asks that he leave. Why not go to Judah and annoy them? (see Amos 2:12)
- C. *"Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah, I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was a hearsman, and a dresser of sycamore-trees: and Jehovah took me from following the flock, and Jehovah said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel"* (7:14-15).
  1. Amos responds to Amaziah's request that he go to Judah to prophecy. Amos reveals to Amaziah that his work in Israel is of divine instruction. Shall the prophet obey God or Amaziah's request to leave?
  2. Amos was no prophet or a prophet's son yet God called him to do the work of a prophet to the nation of Israel. When God authorizes a work no one may default in the service.
- D. *"Now therefore hear thou the word of Jehovah: Thou sayest, Prophecy not against Israel, and drop not thy word against the house of Isaac; therefore thus saith Jehovah: Thy wife shall be a harlot in the city, and thy sons and thy daughters shall fall by the sword, and thy land shall be divided by line; and thou thyself shalt die in a land that is unclean, and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of his land"* (7:16-17).
  1. Amos, with a spirit of boldness, openly declares Amaziah's folly. To tell one not to do something that God commands is the height of error. Note that God's fury will be poured out not only upon the land and people of Israel but upon Amaziah.
  2. Due to the wicked advise Amaziah gave to Amos he would die in an unclean land. Amaziah's sons and daughters would fall by sword. Lastly, Amos tells the erring priest that God would make his wife a harlot in the city.
  3. Note the bold spirit of Amos the man of God. We would do well to take such a firm stand against the wicked today who condemn us for following God's laws. Let us rise up and address these men and women to their face rather than fearing them.
    - a. If the wicked tell me that I do not have to be baptized to be saved let me pronounce woe unto their soul for so long as they hold such an erring view.

- b. If the wicked tell me that I do not have to call one a false teacher who teaches false doctrines then let me pronounce woe upon their soul as they hold to such erring views.
- c. If the wicked tell me that I will not be condemned even though I am disobedient then let me pronounce woe upon their soul as they hold to such erring views.
- d. If the wicked tell me to do anything contrary to God's laws let me proclaim that it is better to obey God than men (cf. Acts 5:29).

## Chapter 8

### I. Israel is ripe for Judgment (Amos' fourth vision) (8 all):

- A. *"Thus the Lord Jehovah showed me: and, behold, a basket of summer fruit. And he said, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A basket of summer fruit. Then said Jehovah unto me, The end is come upon my people Israel; I will not again pass by them any more. And the songs of the temple shall be wailings in that day, saith the Lord Jehovah: the dead bodies shall be many; in every place shall they cast them forth with silence"* (8:1-3).
  - 1. Amos is showed a fourth vision. The prophet communicates with God as the Lord shows him a summer fruit basket. Summer fruit is ripe fruit. The nation is thereby ripe for the outpouring of God's wrath.
  - 2. The time of the people's joyful singing in the temple has come to an end. These were "*evil times*" (Amos 5:13) and a time thereby when "*dead bodies*" shall fill the cities of Israel. Assyria would violently march upon Israel and crush them by the guidance and power of God (cf. Isa. 10:5; Hos. 10:6).
- B. *"Hear this, O ye that would swallow up the needy, and cause the poor of the land to fail, saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell grain? And the Sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and dealing falsely with balances of deceit; that we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes, and sell the refuse of the wheat?"* (8:4-6).
  - 1. Israel's ill treatment of the poor and needy of the land was one of three reasons God would punish Israel (cf. Amos 2:6). Israel's unjust handling of the poor and unsatisfied hunger and thirst for wealth came to be their demise.
  - 2. Israel's state of mind is revealed in these verses. They understood the necessity of worship; however, their convictions lay only upon the surface. Like the future Pharisees they practiced their religion in hypocrisy. The wickedness of their minds is revealed in that they could not wait for the religious days of a new moon and Sabbath to be over so that they could get back to their fraudulent practices.
  - 3. Israel shortchanged and overcharged the poor in that their balances were corrupt. Hosea said that Israel's scales were "*balances of deceit*" (Hos. 12:7). Produce and grain was sold by weight. Israel had perverted scales so that it favored them when selling and buying. When weighing produce the scales were calibrated to read more than what was actually being weighed if they were selling to the poor. If they were buying, their scales would read less than the actual weight. Such a deceitful balance would bring the seller more money for less fruit and grain.
- C. *"Jehovah hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works. Shall not the land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwells therein? Yea, it shall rise up wholly like the river; and it shall be troubled and sink again, like the River of Egypt"* (7:7-8).
  - 1. Jehovah God should have been "*excellent*" in the eyes of Jacob; however, they were blinded by their quest for riches. Their wickedness had brought upon them God's judgments and the Lord proclaims, "*I will never forget any of their works.*"
  - 2. When the Assyrians flood Israel with violence then there shall be mourning and trembling. Isaiah had spoke of such a flood of destruction (Isa. 8:7ff). The Assyrian flood would be likened unto the Nile River that had a reputation and history of severe flooding and drought.

- D. *“And it shall come to pas in that day, saith the Lord Jehovah, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day. And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation; and I will bring sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness upon every head; and I will make it as the mourning for an only son, and the end thereof as a bitter day”* (7:9-10).
1. While we understand that Amos is speaking these words we too know that God is the origin. These are words of condemnation against the ungodly. Amos was the mouth piece for God and thereby the Lord’s words were his conviction. When Amos spoke to Amaziah he proved that he was convicted of the truths he spoke. Words of condemnation flow from the mind of God against the unjust and unrighteous. Let the messenger be convicted of the condemning words he preaches for they are of divine origin.
  2. The dark days of God’s judgment would come upon Israel. These gloomy days of judgment would severely dampen any mood to sing songs of joy. The people will lament as they look out upon the dead body of brethren, loved ones, and family. They would lament as they are shackled in chains and exiled to Assyria. This was no day to look forward to without fear (cf. Amos 5:18).
- E. *“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord Jehovah, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of Jehovah. And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east; they shall run to and fro to seek the word of Jehovah, and shall not find it”* (8:11-12).
1. Not only would Jehovah destroy Israel with the sword and captivity but He would cause a famine of divine revelation to His people.
  2. Though they seek council from God in the extreme corners of the world they will not find it.
- F. *“In that day shall the fair virgins and the young men faint for thirst. They that swear by the sin of Samaria, and say, As thy god, O Dan, liveth; and, As the way of Beersheba liveth; they shall fall, and never rise up again”* (8:13-14).
1. The day of God withholding revelation and divine council will be the day that Israel’s young men will faint of thirst. The words of God are truly waters of life to the world (cf. Jn. 4:10-11; 7:38).
  2. The life sustaining waters of truth would be withheld from Israel because they had put their trust in the idols of Samaria, Dan, and Beersheba.

## Chapter 9

### I. Jehovah’s Judgments are Unavoidable (Amos’ fifth vision) (9:1-10):

- A. *“I saw the Lord standing beside the altar: and he said, Smite the capitals, that the thresholds may shake; and break them in pieces on the head of all of them; and I will slay the last of them with the sword: there shall not one of them flee away, and there shall not one of them escape”* (9:1).
1. Amos sees his fifth and final vision from the Lord. It is not clear as to who the Lord commands to do the smiting... i.e., Amos or His angels.
  2. God commands that the capitals and thresholds of the idolatrous altars be broke in pieces. Those that are not killed in the destruction of the buildings will be killed by the sword. No one shall be able to flee or escape. All the wicked shall perish; however, the piece of ear and two legs out of the lions mouth would escape (i.e., the few righteous of the day) (cf. Amos 3:12).
- B. *“Though they dig into Sheol, thence shall my hand take them; and though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down. And though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out thence; and though they be hid from my sight in the bottom of the sea, thence will I command the serpent, and it shall bit them. And though they go into captivity before their enemies, thence will I command the sword, and it shall slay them: and I will set mine eyes upon them for evil, and not for good”* (9:2-4).
1. A picture of utter destruction without hope is given. Israel would not be able to hide in the depths of Sheol (probably a reference to the depths of the earth i.e., caves and so forth), the

heavens, mountaintops, nor the bottom of the sea. Those who are captured by the enemy will not even escape. The sword will devour them in captivity. The wickedness of God's people had reached its maximum status of wickedness and the time of their judgment had come.

2. Note the authority of God. He commands the animals and they obey (i.e., serpents). Jehovah commands the nations and they bring their swords. All things and all peoples are subject to God (cf. Matt. 8:27).
  3. Some may read these words and declare God everything but loving. What a sad conclusion this would be for any today. The word of God reveals Jehovah's patience and longsuffering with the wicked as He sent prophet after prophet to turn them from their sins yet they would not. To continue in His just state of being the people must be punished.
- C. *"For the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, is he that touches the land and it melts, and all that dwell therein shall mourn; and it shall rise up wholly like the River, and shall sink again, like the River of Egypt; it is he that builds his chambers in the heavens, and hath founded his vault upon the earth; he that calls for the waters of the sea, and pours them out upon the face of the earth; Jehovah is his name"* (9:5-6).
1. Amos describes the omnipotence of God as He simply touches the earth and all melts with destruction. God's destructive touch is likened to the Nile River that swells and dries and the land is washed away in its vigor (see study # 5).
  2. Jehovah God is in the heavens and earth and with the power of authority commands the elements of the world and they obey.
  3. Likewise, by God's power, these awful judgments shall come upon Israel.
- D. *"Are ye not as the children of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel? Saith Jehovah. Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir?"* (9:7).
1. Israel had become *"as the children of the Ethiopians"* to God. They were like the heathen in that they were far removed from the mercy of God.
  2. Jehovah left Israel no room to exclaim, "But we are the people of God that were brought up out of Egypt." The Lord proclaims that he also brought the Philistines into Philistia from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir. The point is that God controls all nations not just Israel.
- E. *"Behold, the eyes of the Lord Jehovah are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth; save that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith Jehovah"* (9:8).
1. The all seeing eye of Jehovah God has looked and saw the wickedness of Israel. They are now depicted as a *"sinful kingdom"* (see study # 6).
  2. God's purpose is destruction for the wicked but salvation for the just.
- F. *"For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all the nations, like as grain is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least kernel fall upon the earth. All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword, who say, The evil shall not overtake nor meet us"* (9:9-10).
1. Israel will be likened unto grain that is sifted to separate the chaff from the good grain. The chaff people will blow away and be consumed by the fires of God's judgment.
  2. The wicked are so deluded that they cannot see their own sin nor do they think it possible that God would destroy His own people (see study # 8). The judgment is clear. Sinners shall die! The message is clear today as well (Rom. 6:23).

## II. A Final Message of Hope for those who wait patiently upon the Lord (9:11-14):

- A. *"In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up its ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old; that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and all the nations that are called by my name, saith Jehovah that doeth this"* (9:11-12).
1. The closing words of this book are words of hope. Amos has left the wicked to ponder their no win situation. As long as they continue in a self constructed state of delusion (cf. Amos 5:14, 18; 9:10) there is absolutely nothing for them to look forward to but death (Amos 8:3; 9:10). The words of the prophets were indeed words of doom. Let us remember; however, that it is the wicked that shall be consumed with such judgments. Amos concludes his prophecy with the fact that the powerful rule of David would one day soon see glorious times.

2. The glorious days of the raising of the tabernacle of David would come in the days of Jesus Christ. Amos looks to the day when God would call all nations to His kingdom as was promised to Abraham and fulfilled in Jesus Christ. These glorious days would be measured by spiritual blessings in Jesus Christ. The forgiveness of sins would be afforded to Jew and Gentile alike.
  3. James quotes from Amos 9:11-12 at Acts 15:16-18. During these days there were false teachers that had taught that the Gentiles needed to be circumcised in order to be saved (cf. Acts 15:1ff). Paul and Barnabas come to Antioch and meet with the elders and apostles over the matter. James concludes that there is no need to circumcise the Gentiles because God has always had them in mind for salvation as is made evident by the promise to Abraham (Gen. 12:1ff).
- B.** *“Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that sows seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. And I will bring back the captivity of my people Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be plucked up out of their land which I have given them, saith Jehovah thy God” (9:13-15).*
1. The picture of hope under the days of the Messiah were days of continued blessings. So bountiful are the spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus that Amos compares it to a continued harvest of produce and grapes.
  2. These days of plenty are figures, not literal, of a time when man would be richly blessed with the forgiveness of sins (Eph. 1:7). A time when the spiritual kingdom of God was established and it would last for eternity.