

Book of Amos

Amos: Introduction

Meaning

The name Amos originates from a Hebrew word that means —burden. As with the messages from every one of Yahuwah's true prophets, what Amos prophesied was a burden to those who received the prophecy.

Timeframe

The most probable place of the writing of this scroll was the Northern Kingdom of Israel, and the most probable time was 760 B.C., approximately 40 years before it fell.

The historical setting of Amos reveals that Israel was not keeping Yahuwah's law; they were neither loving Him, nor loving their neighbors. During that time of great materialism, the wealthy, in an attempt to increase their personal prosperity, were oppressing and trampling down the poor of the land. Throughout the book there are various terms used reflecting the ill treatment of the less fortunate. The nation was also actively, openly practicing idolatry. Time and again, through His prophets, Yahuwah chastised the people because they were looking to idols, worshiping pagan deities in the guise of worshiping Yahuwah.

Israel's Reaction

However, Yahuwah's words through Amos were regarded in the same manner as the words spoken by His other prophets.

2KI 17:13-14 Yet Yahuwah testified against Israel and against Yahuwdah, by all of His prophets, namely every seer, saying, —Turn from your evil ways, and keep My commandments and My statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by My servants the prophets. Nevertheless they would not hear, but stiffened their necks...

Amos: Chapter 1

1:1 The words of Amos, who was among the herdsmen of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Yahuwdah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake.

Author

It is immediately established that Amos was a shepherd from Yahuwdah and was chosen by Yahuwah to be a prophet. As with every prophet except Moses, Yahuwah revealed through visions what He wanted relayed by His prophets.

NUM 12:6 Then He said, —Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I, Yahuwah, make Myself known to him in a vision, and I speak to him in a dream.

Timeframe

The reigns of Uzziah and Jeroboam II overlapped for almost forty years. The exact year of Amos' prophecy was two years prior to the great earthquake that occurred during that time. Although not included in the details of Uzziah's sin in 2CH 26:16-21, according to Josephus the

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earthquake was the result of that sin. He gives those added details in Antiquities of the Jews, IX.X.4:

—...Uzziah...was corrupted in his mind by pride... Accordingly, when a remarkable day was come, and a general festival was to be celebrated, he put on the kadosh garment and went into the temple to offer incense... a great earthquake shook the ground, and a rent was made in the temple and the bright rays of the sun shone through it, and fell upon the king's face, insomuch that the leprosy seized upon him immediately; and before the city... half the mountain broke off from the rest on the west and rolled itself four furlongs [$\frac{1}{2}$ mile] and stood still at the east mountain...

It is most likely that Uzziah's son, Jotham, took over the actual rule of the kingdom when Uzziah became a leper, even though the reign of Uzziah, who lived in seclusion because of his leprosy, continued to be counted until his death. Uzziah's foolish action was in all likelihood committed in his thirtieth year, which would have been 758 B.C. and the year of the earthquake. This means Amos probably prophesied in 760 B.C.

1:2 And he said: —Yahuwah roars from Zion, and utters His voice from Jerusalem; the pastures of the shepherds mourn, and the top of Carmel withers.

Timeframe

As shown in JOEL 3:16, the roaring of Ha'Mashyach from Zion occurs during the latter stage of the Day of Yahuwah. The mourning of pasture land and the lack of moisture atop Mt. Carmel corroborate the time setting of the prophecies which follow.

Audience

The areas which Amos is about to address are those in the closest proximity of the land of Israel. Before laying out the punishment He would bring on Israel, Yahuwah first announces His intention of punishing some of Israel's traditional enemies for the sinful deeds they have committed. Since even those who never had Yahuwah's law revealed to them must incur punishment for their evil deeds, those given Yahuwah's law are even more deserving of punishment. Therefore, all Israel will be forced to admit they have earned the punishment that comes on them.

1:3 Thus says Yahuwah: —For three transgressions of Damascus, and for four [REB: for crime after crime of Damascus], I will not turn away its punishment, because they have threshed Gilead with implements of iron.

Idiom

The phrase —for three transgressions and for four is a translated Hebrew idiom that stresses a cumulative effect. It can be taken literally in some places (PRO 6:16-19), but in most cases, as in this chapter and the next, it refers to an accumulating action.

Judgment Upon Syria

The prophecies begin with Damascus, which was the most distant location from Israel. Each succeeding prophecy addresses a location nearer than its predecessor, giving the impression of the tightening of a noose.

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Damascus was the capital of Syria. Gilead was the territory in the southern part of the tribe of Manasseh east of the Jordan. It was there that the army of Syria, brutally and without remorse, killed and maimed many Israelites during the reign of the Syrian king, Hazael. Elisha warned Hazael that he would turn extremely evil after becoming king.

2KI 8:12-13 And Hazael said, —Why is my lord weeping? And he answered, —Because I know the evil that you will do to the children of Israel: Their strongholds you will set on fire, and their young men you will kill with the sword; and you will dash their children, and rip open their women with child. So Hazael said, —But what is your servant—a dog, that he should do this gross thing? And Elisha answered, —Yahuwah has shown me that you will become king over Syria.

It may also be that part of their threshing with iron implements was a reference to their slaughter of the army of Israel by iron chariots.

2KI 13:7 For He left of the army of Jehoahaz only fifty horsemen, ten chariots, and ten thousand foot soldiers; for the king of Syria had destroyed them and made them like the dust at threshing. Yahuwah's condemnation of Syria was due to their excessive cruelty and brutality; rather than reluctantly using only the force necessary to accomplish their nation's objective, the Syrians enjoyed inflicting fear, torture and gruesome murder on the Israelites they encountered.

1:4 But I will send a fire into the house of Hazael, which shall devour the palaces of Ben-Hadad.

As in many places in the Bible, the —fire Yahuwah will send is metaphoric for either the accomplishment of Yahuwah's judgment or complete destruction.

Hazael was anointed by Eliyah (1KI 19:15) and became one of the greatest Syrian kings. Ben-Hadad (—son of Hadad, the storm god of Syria) was a title given to some of the kings of Syria; this one was probably the son of Hazael (2KI 13:3).

1:5 I will also break the gate bar [MOF: shatter the defences] of Damascus, and cut off the inhabitant from the Valley of Aven, and the one who holds the scepter from Beth Eden. The people of Syria shall go captive to Kir, says Yahuwah.

A barred gate prevented an invasion of a city; once Yahuwah renders His judgment, no physical barrier can prevent His will from being fulfilled. The Valley of Aven (—iniquity) is probably a reference to the Beqaa Valley, the fertile land located southwest of Damascus where a large part of the Syrian working class lived. Beth Eden (—house of delight) possibly represented the wealthy of the nation, to which the king belonged. Whether rich or poor, all of the inhabitants of Syria would be removed from the land and exiled to their place of origin (9:7).

1:6 Thus says Yahuwah: —For three transgressions of Gaza, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment, because they took captive the whole captivity [TNK: exiled an entire population] to deliver them up to Edom.

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Judgment Upon Gaza

The city of Gaza was not only the southernmost of the cities of the Philistines - it was also the strongest and richest. As with the Syrians, Yahuwah states that the reason for punishing this neighbor to the southwest is their cumulative sins, the worst being selling men, women and children as slaves. That practice separated family members and engendered physical and sexual abuse.

This may refer to a past event. But it is most likely that the fulfillment of this sin will involve the people living in the Gaza area at the close of the age as well; they may very well be some of the ones who round up and transport many Jewish families out of the land of Israel after the Beast takes control of the area.

The sins of both Gaza and Tyre, which is listed next, were their making of agreements with the descendants of Esau.

1:7 I will send down fire upon the wall of Gaza, and it shall devour its fortresses. (TNK)

Yahuwah's judgment will be to destroy all involved in this grievous social sin.

1:8 I will cut off the inhabitant from Ashdod, and the one who holds the scepter from Ashkelon; I will turn My hand against Ekron, and the remnant of the Philistines shall perish, says Yahuwah Aluhym.

Ashdod, Ashkelon and Ekron were three other major cities of the Philistines; of the five main cities of Philistia, only the city of Gath is not mentioned here.

By stating He will destroy the —remnant of the Philistines, Yahuwah indicates an end-time fulfillment.

1:9 Thus says Yahuwah: —For three transgressions of Tyre, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment, because they delivered up the whole captivity to [REB: a whole community to exile in] Edom, and did not remember the covenant of brotherhood.

Judgment Upon Tyre

Yahuwah now moves His focus to the area northwest of Israel. Like those living in the Gaza Strip, the people of southern Lebanon will willingly bow to the desires of Esau's descendants rather than emulate the relationship that existed between Hiram and Solomon (1KI 5:12).

These prophecies reveal that there are different peoples living in the various areas mentioned. Yet, they will all conspire together with the Beast.

PSA 83:2-8 For behold, Your enemies make a tumult; and those who hate You have lifted up their head. They have taken crafty counsel against Your people, and consulted together against Your sheltered ones. They have said, —Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation, that the name of Israel may be remembered no more. For they have consulted together with one

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consent; they form a confederacy against You: the tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites; Moab and the Hagarites; Gebal (Lebanon), Ammon and Amalek; Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre; Assyria also has joined with them; they have helped the children of Lot.

1:10 I will send down fire upon the wall of Tyre, and it shall devour its fortresses. (TNK)

There will be no defense against the judgment Yahuwah has determined for this group.

1:11 Thus says Yahuwah: —For three transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment, because he pursued his brother with the sword, and cast off all pity; his anger tore perpetually, and he kept his wrath forever.

Judgment Upon Edom

Esau's descendants are guilty of conducting themselves like a carnivorous animal that has gone mad; they have perpetuated senseless murders generation after generation.

OBA 10 For your violence against your brother Jacob, shame shall cover you, and you shall be cut off forever.

JOE 3:19 Egypt shall become a desolation and Edom a desolate wilderness, because of the violence done to the people of Yahuwdah, in whose land they have shed innocent blood. (NRS) This evil behavior of Esau's descendants toward Jacob's descendants throughout history has stemmed from Esau's original hatred against his brother (GEN 27:41). Every generation has passed that hatred on to the following generation.

EZE 35:5 Because you harbored an ancient [KJV: a perpetual] hatred and handed the people of Israel over to the sword in their time of calamity, the time set for their punishment (TNK)

1:12 I will send down fire upon Teman, and it shall devour the fortresses of Bozrah. (TNK)

Teman was the capital of Edom and Bozrah was a major city. Yahuwah's judgment against the descendants of Esau will be based on the manner in which they have treated the descendants of Jacob—even to the close of the age.

OBA 15 For the day of Yahuwah upon all the nations is near; as you have done, it shall be done to you; your reprisal shall return upon your own head.

JAM 2:13 For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy.

PSA 137:7-8 Remember, O Yahuwah, against the Edomites the day of Jerusalem's fall; how they cried, —Strip her, strip her to her very foundations! Fair Babylon, you predator, a blessing on Him who repays you in kind what you have inflicted on us.

1:13 Thus says Yahuwah: —For three transgressions of the people of Ammon, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment, because they ripped open the women with child in Gilead, that they might enlarge their territory.

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Judgment Upon Ammon

The sins of the Ammonites included their practice of the same type of merciless brutality as the Syrians later employed. They also coveted the land Yahuwah gave to Israel. They attacked Israel in an attempt to take control of the area of Gilead during the time of Jephthah (JDG 11).

1:14 But I will kindle a fire in the wall of Rabbah, and it shall devour its palaces [TNK: fortresses], amid shouting in the day of battle, and a tempest in the day of the whirlwind.

Rabbah, which today is called Amman, was the primary city of the Ammonites.

The fire of Yahuwah's wrath will destroy the city during the Day of Yahuwah, which is the day of the whirlwind.

JER 25:32-33 Thus says Yahuwah of hosts: —Behold, disaster shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the farthest parts of the earth. And at that day the slain of Yahuwah shall be from one end of the earth even to the other end of the earth...

1:15 Their king and his officers shall go into exile together—said Yahuwah. (TNK)

The prophecy recorded by Jeremiah substitutes the Ammonite idol, Molech, and his priests for the king and his officers (JER 49:3). All who today inhabit the land of Ammon will be exiled from that area when Ha'Mashyach establishes His kingdom on earth.

Amos: Chapter 2

2:1 Thus says Yahuwah: —For three transgressions of Moab, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment, because he burned the bones of the king of Edom to lime.

Judgment Upon Moab

Moab, located between Ammon in the north and Edom in the south, went too far in its sins by retaining a spirit of revenge. The incident mentioned here is not recorded in scripture, but probably occurred at some point after the king of Edom joined forces with Israel and Yahuwah against Moab (2KI 3:9). The king of Moab was so enraged at the time that he offered his own son as a human sacrifice (2KI 3:26-27). It was this type of deranged hatred, expressed by a man who completely lost control of his mind, that necessitated such a dire judgment by Yahuwah on the whole nation.

It is important to note that the crime, for which Yahuwah's punishment could not be averted, was committed against a non-Israelite nation. All of the other nations listed were guilty of crimes against Israelite tribes.

2:2-3 But I will send a fire upon Moab, and it shall devour the palaces [TNK: fortresses] of Kerioth; Moab shall die with tumult, with shouting and trumpet sound. And I will cut off the judge [TNK: ruler] from its midst, and slay all its princes with him, says Yahuwah.

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Kerioth was a center of worship of the main idol of the Moabites, Chemosh. The destruction of Moab will be completed during the Day of Yahuwah, during the events announced by trumpet blasts.

Moab is the last of the nations addressed in this section that never had the Law of Yahuwah revealed to them. As Amos has recorded, even those nations that were never granted the privilege of having Yahuwah's Law given to them were condemned for their sins, as defined by the Law.

ROM 2:12 For as many as have sinned without [JNT: outside the framework of] law will also perish without [JNT: outside the framework of] law, and as many as have sinned in [JNT: within the framework of] the law will be judged by the law.

Summary

Yahuwah informs us through Sha'ul that there is a penalty for sin, whether or not a nation has knowledge of the law. Yahuwah's punishment on the nations listed thus far is founded on the fact that by observation and experience, all men should recognize that good human relationships can only occur if certain basic rules are followed. Breaking those rules (transgression of Yahuwah's laws, perhaps in ignorance) damages human relationships, and will incur Yahuwah's judgment, with appropriate penalties.

ROM 2:14-15 For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do instinctively the things of the law, these, not having the law, are a law to [PHL: show that they have a law in] themselves, in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness, and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them. (NAS)

If Yahuwah is willing to punish and destroy these nations, who were never given His law, then how can the people who were given that law expect to escape paying the penalty for their sins? Having an awareness of Yahuwah's law, but refusing to heed it, alienates the sinner from Yahuwah and requires punishment for the sin committed.

ROM 2:13 for not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of Yahuwah, but the doers of the law will be justified

Since Yahuwah will punish those who have sinned apart from the law, it is only right that a harsher punishment should come upon those who have sinned under the law.

2:4 Thus says Yahuwah: —For three transgressions of Yahuwdah, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment, because they have despised the law of Yahuwah, and have not kept His commandments. Their lies lead them astray, lies after which their fathers walked.

Judgment upon Yahuwdah

Unlike the nations previously listed, Yahuwdah was a recipient of the revealed law of Yahuwah. In fact, Yahuwdah was given the responsibility to faithfully preserve the entirety of the Kadosh Scriptures, which contain the law, as well as further teaching of Yahuwah based on that law.

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ROM 3:1-2 What advantage then has the Jew...?...to them were committed the oracles of Yahuwah.

Despite being the custodians charged with preserving the Kadosh Scriptures, the Jews chose to reject the precious truth they were preserving and to replace the truth with the religious practices of their pagan neighbors, who worshipped imaginary gods and goddesses in the form of idols. Because of the disrespect and disloyalty they exhibited toward Yahuwah and His truth, which was revealed to them, they could not escape being punished for these sins.

2:5 I will send down fire upon Yahuwdah, and it shall devour the fortresses of Jerusalem.
(TNK)

This judgment came upon the Jews in the land of Israel during the times of Nebuchadnezzar, Antiochus Epiphanes and then by the Romans. However, the final fulfillment of this prophecy is scheduled for the close of the present age. The reason this has become necessary one more time is the hypocrisy of those who claim to be Yahuwah's chosen people.

ISA 10:5-6, 12 O Assyrian, the rod of Mine anger, and the staff in their hand is Mine indignation. I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of My wrath... (KJV)

...Therefore it shall come to pass, when Yahuwah has performed all His work [TNK: purpose] on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem...

2:6 Thus says Yahuwah: —For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment, because they sell the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of sandals.

Judgment Upon Israel

Like Yahuwdah, the tribes which comprised the Northern Kingdom of Israel were descendants of those who were recipients of the revealed law of Yahuwah. But, unlike Yahuwdah, they openly chose to reject Yahuwah and adopt the invented deities of their pagan neighbors after the death of Solomon. Yet, the reasons for the condemnation expressed against Yahuwdah are also applicable to the rest of the tribes—they were without excuse.

Rather than reiterate the charges against Yahuwdah, Yahuwah emphasizes how those who knew the law in Israel abused their positions to take advantage of others. Selling those who are righteous refers to the use of bribes to corrupt the judgment of the innocent. Selling the poor for a pair of sandals refers to exploiting the weak in order to gain property.

2:7 They pant after the dust of the earth which is on the head of the poor, and pervert the way of the humble [TNK: make the humble walk a twisted course]....

Their greed is so great that they take everything, even the most insignificant possessions of the poor, to satisfy their greed. Due to the manner in which their judges interpret their laws, it becomes very difficult for humble people to be treated fairly.

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2:7 (cont.) ...Father and son go to the same girl [REB: resort to the temple girls], and thereby profane My kadosh name. (TNK)

Contempt for Yahuwah and His law is evidenced in sexual promiscuity, both literally and religiously. The parental example of breaking the law is passed on to the children.

2:8 They recline by every altar on garments taken in pledge, and drink in the house of their god wine bought with fines they imposed. (TNK)

Yahuwah continues to upbraid Israel for the manner in which they flaunted their disdain for Yahuwah's instructions. One example was their callous attitude toward the suffering of the poor. Since the most valuable property of the poor was often their clothing, it was taken and held as collateral for any debt they incurred. To prevent the poor from suffering exposure during the night, Yahuwah required the one who was holding the clothing until the debt was repaid to return it to its owner each evening (DEU 24:12). However, rather than showing concern for the plight of the less fortunate, those who saw an opportunity to take advantage of them not only kept the collateral, they actually used it in further disobeying Yahuwah in their idolatry.

2:9 Yet it was I who destroyed the Amorite before them, whose height was like the height of the cedars, and he was as strong as the oaks; yet I destroyed his fruit above and his roots beneath.

Verse 9 begins a short section detailing all Yahuwah did in establishing Israel in the land they possessed. He does this to show the incongruity of Israel's response to the effort He expended on their behalf. In effect, He asks them if they think His concern for them and the purpose for His deliverance were to be rewarded by their constant gratification of their own selfish desires and lowering of their moral standards from those Yahuwah had given them to what the evil world around them observed.

The Amorites were the first of the peoples encountered by Israel that were to be driven out of the land of Canaan (NUM 21:21); they inhabited much of the hill country across southern Canaan (JOS 10:6). One of the arguments used by the ten cowardly spies for not moving forward was the size and strength of the inhabitants of the land (NUM 13:28-33). Even though Israel was required to engage them in battle, it was Yahuwah who would be responsible for their demise.

JOS 24:8, 12 And I brought you into the land of the Amorites, who dwelt on the other side of the Jordan, and they fought with you. But I gave them into your hand, that you might possess their land, and I destroyed them from before you...I sent the hornet before you which drove them out from before you, also the two kings of the Amorites, but not with your sword or with your bow.

2:10 Also it was I who brought you up from the land of Egypt, and led you forty years through the wilderness, to possess the land of the Amorite.

In this usage, the —land of the Amorite represents the whole of the land of Canaan, which was given to Israel as a blessing from Yahuwah. Their reception of that blessing required Yahuwah's

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performance of many miracles. By using the name —Amorite rather than —Canaan, Yahuwah draws attention to the promise He made to Abraham.

GEN 15:16 But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.

Yahuwah reminds Israel that because of the sins committed by the Amorites He had removed them from the land that Israel then came to possess. Like the nations listed prior to Yahuwah (1:3-2:3), the Amorites had never had Yahuwah's law revealed to them, so they had sinned in ignorance. Israel did not have that excuse, and therefore had no valid reason for being allowed to remain in the land.

2:11 I raised up some of your sons as prophets, and some of your young men as Nazirites. Is it not so, O you children of Israel? says Yahuwah.

Both the prophets and Nazirites were raised up by Yahuwah to remind the people of their special place among the nations. Israel (prevailer with Yahuwah) was to be the one nation on earth to represent the true Aluhym; they were to be an example of what was available to all men: a wide range of blessings, in return for faithful obedience to Yahuwah.

2:12 —But you gave the Nazirites wine to drink, and commanded the prophets saying, Do not prophesy!'

Rather than showing Yahuwah gratitude for the servants He raised up to remind them of their responsibility among the nations, the people refused them and abused them. They refused to listen to the prophets, and attempted to cause the Nazirites to break their vow of abstinence.

NUM 6:3 he shall separate himself from wine and similar drink; he shall drink neither vinegar made from wine nor vinegar made from similar drink; neither shall he drink any grape juice, nor eat fresh grapes or raisins.

2:13 Behold, I am weighed down by you, as a cart is weighed down that is full of sheaves.

2:13 Ah, I will slow your movements as a wagon is slowed when it is full of cut grain. (TNK)

The thrust of this verse can be translated into two valid, but different meanings. The NKJ depicts Israel's refusal to live up to the meaning of its name as a burden that Yahuwah no longer wants to bear (ISA 7:13). The TNK pictures Yahuwah impeding Israel's progress because of their disobedience to His law.

2:14 Therefore flight shall perish from the swift, the strong shall not strengthen his power, nor shall the mighty deliver himself;

No matter what physical abilities are possessed, no one can escape the judgment Yahuwah has determined for Israel.

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2:15 He shall not stand who handles the bow, the swift of foot shall not deliver himself, nor shall he who rides a horse deliver himself.

There will be no way to fight against or flee from the punishment Yahuwah has sentenced Israel to suffer.

2:16 Even the most stouthearted warrior shall run away unarmed that day, declares Yahuwah. (TNK)

The time set for Israel's punishment—when fear overcomes even the most bold—is the Day of Yahuwah.

JER 30:6-7 ...why do I see every man with his hands on his loins like a woman in labor, and all faces turned pale? Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it; and it is the time of Jacob's trouble...

Amos: Chapter 3

3:1 Hear this word that Yahuwah has spoken against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying:

The Whole Family

Yahuwah makes it clear that what He is about to say applies to both Israel and Yahuwah.

3:2 —You only have I known [TNK: alone have I singled out; NAS: chosen] of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you [TNK: that is why I will call you to account] for all your iniquities.

Yahuwah will punish all the tribes of Israel—Jacob's descendants will experience terrible trouble—during the Day of Yahuwah for their failure to live by the law that was revealed to them, which would have enabled them to be the proper example to all other nations. Since they failed in their responsibility, while they are being punished, the rest of the nations will also suffer for the sins they committed, though in ignorance.

3:3 Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?

Clearly, the only way two people can travel together is if they both have the same goal or destination they want to reach. This is the first of several questions that illustrates the principle of cause and effect. There is a cause for every effect. Until he comes to his fifth example, Amos first describes the effect then indicates the cause.

3:4 Will a lion roar in the forest, when he has no prey? Will a young lion cry out of his den, if he has caught nothing?

It is not until the lion has captured its prey that it makes a fearful roar. The young lion will lie quietly in the den until its mother brings food.

3:5 Does a bird drop into the trap, unless the trap is baited? Does the trap spring up, unless there is something to catch? (MOF)

A trap will never capture a bird if it is not set with bait. A trap will not be activated unless a victim enters and triggers it.

3:6 If a trumpet [TNK: ram's horn] sounds in the city, are not the people alarmed?... (REB)

Now, the cause is mentioned before the effect. Just as surely as the shofar causes the people to react to an approaching disaster, so they should react to the warnings of Yahuwah relayed through His prophets.

3:6 (cont.) ...If disaster strikes a city, is it not the work of Yahuwah? (REB)

Nothing happens unless Yahuwah either directs or allows it to happen.

ISA 45:7 I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create calamity; I, Yahuwah, do all these things.

Each of these examples is given to amplify the fact that Yahuwah's judgment against Israel has a very basic cause: their failure to obey Him.

3:7 Surely Yahuwah Aluhym does nothing, unless He reveals His secret [TNK: purpose; REB: plan] to His servants the prophets.

Yahuwah never intervenes in man's affairs until after He has revealed His intentions through His prophets. Each step of His plan requires revelation, which He has relayed to His prophets to record and preserve. Yahuwah alone has the power to predict the future and bring His predictions to pass.

ISA 46:10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure,

3:8 A lion has roared! Who will not fear? Yahuwah Aluhym has spoken! Who can but prophesy?

As surely as fear is the reaction of those who hear the ferocious roar of a lion, so, upon hearing the word of Yahuwah, the reaction of the prophet to whom Yahuwah has spoken is the need to prophesy.

3:9-10 Proclaim in the fortresses of Ashdod and in the fortresses of the land of Egypt! Say: Gather on the hill of Samaria and witness the great outrages within her and the oppression in her midst. They are incapable of doing right—declares Yahuwah; they store up lawlessness and rapine in their fortresses [REB: who hoard in their palaces the gains of violence and plundering]. (TNK)

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Pagan nations are instructed to witness the atrocities of those who were given the law, but failed to implement it.

3:11 Therefore thus says Yahuwah Aluhym: —An adversary shall be all around the land; he shall sap your strength from you, and your palaces shall be plundered.

Anciently, this was accomplished by Assyria. The end-time fulfillment will be accomplished by the Beast (ISA 10).

3:12 Thus says Yahuwah: —As a shepherd takes [NAS: snatches] from the mouth of a lion two legs or a piece of an ear, so shall the children of Israel be taken out [NAS: snatched away] who dwell in Samaria—in the corner of a bed and on the edge of a couch!

To prove that a sheep was killed by a predator, the law required a shepherd to collect the remains of the sheep as evidence that the majority of the animal was destroyed (EXO 22:13). That practice is here used as an analogy of how few Israelites will survive the Day of Judgment that will come on Israel and all nations.

3:13-14 Hear and testify against the house of Jacob, says Yahuwah Aluhym, the Aluhym of hosts, —That in the day I punish Israel for their transgressions, I will also visit destruction on the altars of Bethel; and the horns of the altar shall be cut off and fall to the ground.

Since Yahuwah reveals He will end the idolatrous worship of Israel at the time of this punishment, clearly the fulfillment of this judgment is yet to occur. It must refer to the Day of Yahuwah.

MIC 5:10, 13-14 And it shall be in that day...Your carved images I will also cut off, and your sacred pillars from your midst; you shall no more worship the work of your hands; I will pluck your wooden images from your midst...

ZEP 1:4-6 ...I will cut off every trace of Baal from this place, the names of the idolatrous priests with the pagan priests—those who worship the host of heaven on the housetops; those who worship and swear oaths by Yahuwah, but who also swear by Milcom; those who have turned back from following Yahuwah, and have not sought Yahuwah, nor inquired of Him.

3:15 I will destroy the winter house along with the summer house; the houses of ivory shall perish, and the great houses shall have an end, says Yahuwah.

The materialism of the people hampered their relationship with Yahuwah. Once His punishment is complete, Yahuwah will not allow selfishness and the acquisition of wealth to take root among His people. They will be taught the importance of selflessness and will be guided by the Ruwach of Yahuwah.

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Amos: Chapter 4

4:1 Hear this word, you cows of Bashan, who are on the mountain of Samaria, who oppress the poor, who crush the needy, who say to your husbands, —Bring wine, let us drink!

Judgment Upon Bashan

Bashan was an area east of the Jordan River between Mt. Hermon and the mountains of Gilead. It was highly reputed for its lush, fertile pastures and the high quality cattle raised there.

The —cows of Bashan is a sarcastic reference to the women who belonged to the classes of greater wealth and influence in Israel. This term was used because of their conduct, which was neither chaste nor influenced by the fear of Yahuwah (1PE 3:1-6). This indicates that one contributing factor to the societal corruption being addressed was the behavior of women who continually pressured their husbands for more material goods in order to gratify their physical desires.

4:2 Yahuwah Aluhym has sworn by His holiness: —Behold, the days shall come upon you when He will take you away with fishhooks [NAS: meat hooks], and your posterity [NAS: the last of you] with fishhooks.

That which is kadosh is without blemish or corruption. Since Yahuwah is the personification of holiness, He can base His oath on it and thereby guarantee the fulfillment of His judgment.

The original fulfillment of this event occurred when Israel was taken into exile after being conquered by the Assyrians in the 8TH century B.C. The Assyrians used a hook in the nose of a captive (2CH 33:11; 2KI 19:28), or a ring inserted in the lower lip, as some Assyrian monuments depict.

4:3 You will go out through broken walls, each one straight ahead of her [CJB: right behind the next], and you will be cast into Harmon [TNK: the refuse heap], says Yahuwah.

All of their material goods will vanish. They will be lucky to escape death. However, they will never regain what they will lose. The meaning of the Hebrew from which —Harmon is translated is unknown; however, it is almost identical to the Arabic word translated —harem. This indicates that some of these women could very well have been added to the harems of their conquerors.

4:4 Come to Bethel and transgress; to Gilgal, and transgress even more; present your sacrifices the next morning and your tithes on the third day. (TNK)

Both Bethel and Gilgal had been used as worship sites to Yahuwah. However, after Yahuwah cut off the ten northern tribes of Israel from Rehoboam's control and gave them to Jeroboam, both areas were used for idolatrous worship. Bethel was the main religious sanctuary and Gilgal a secondary site.

The order of events classified as transgressions is: arrive at the idolatrous sites on the first day; present sacrifices to the pagan idols on the second day; and deliver tithes to the idolatrous priests

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on the third day. The people imagined themselves to be religiously zealous by performing these deeds, but Yahuwah identified their actions as rebellion against Him.

4:5 And burn a thank offering of leavened bread; and proclaim freewill offerings loudly [CJB: brag in public about your voluntary offerings]. For you love that sort of thing, O Israelites—declares my Sovereign Yahuwah. (TNK)

Yahuwah continues to point out the futility of their worship practices. Rather than worship Him as He has instructed, they decide the manner of worship with which He should be satisfied: whatever they emotionally and intellectually conclude is best.

DEU 12:29-32 When Yahuwah your Aluhym cuts off from before you the nations which you go to dispossess, and you displace them and dwell in their land, take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise. ' You shall not worship Yahuwah your Aluhym in that way; for every abomination to Yahuwah which He hates they have done to their gods; for they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods. Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it.

Yahuwah had made it very clear that **leaven** was never to be included in an offering that was to be burned (LEV 2:11), yet they blatantly disobeyed.

Rather than humbly obeying Yahuwah, they choose to parade openly what they perceive to be their —righteousness before men; a practice that reveals a lack of humility and earns the disapproval of Yahuwah.

MAT 6:1-2, 5, 16 Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men...And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men...Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting...

4:6 —Also I gave you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and lack of bread in all your places; yet you have not returned to Me, says Yahuwah.

Yahuwah now begins reminding Israel of the curses that He promised would come upon them if they failed to fulfill the terms of the covenant they had agreed to at Sinai. The first curse involved the grain crops.

DEU 28:17 Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. The curses were Yahuwah's way of getting their attention—His way of correcting them. The application of curses originated from the love Yahuwah had for His chosen nation.

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PRO 3:11-12 My son, do not despise the chastening of Yahuwah, nor detest His correction; for whom Yahuwah loves He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights.

4:7 —I also withheld rain from you, when there were still three months to the harvest. I made it rain on one city, I withheld rain from another city. One part was rained upon, and where it did not rain the part withered.

This would be the latter rain, which is critical for the complete development of the crops.

4:8 So two or three cities wandered to another city to drink water, but they were not satisfied [REB: would not find enough]; yet you have not returned to Me, says Yahuwah.

The curse of limited rainfall (DEU 28:23-24) was not enough incentive for them to change their ways. In their arrogance, rather than looking to Yahuwah, they looked for other solutions.

4:9 I scourged you with blight and mildew; repeatedly your gardens and vineyards, your fig trees and olive trees were devoured by locusts. Yet you did not turn back to Me declares Yahuwah. (TNK)

The curses on non-grain crops did not compel them to reconsider their immoral conduct.

DEU 28:22, 38-40, 42 Yahuwah will strike you with...scorching, and with mildew; they shall pursue you until you perish...You shall carry much seed out to the field and gather but little in, for the locust shall consume it. You shall plant vineyards and tend them, but you shall neither drink of the wine nor gather the grapes; for the worms shall eat them. You shall have olive trees throughout all your territory, but you shall not anoint yourself with the oil; for your olives shall drop off...Locusts shall consume all your trees and the produce of your land.

4:10 —I sent among you a plague [TNK: pestilence] after the manner of Egypt; your young men I killed with a sword, along with your captive horses; I made the stench of your camps come up into your nostrils; yet you have not returned to Me, says Yahuwah.

Even the curses afflicting them with bodily pain, in combination with the deaths of their children and livestock, failed to make an impact on their selfish pursuits.

DEU 28:21, 26-27 Yahuwah will make the plague cling to you until He has consumed you from the land which you are going to possess...Your carcasses shall be food for all the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and no one shall frighten them away. Yahuwah will strike you with the boils of Egypt, with tumors, with the scab, and with the itch, from which you cannot be healed.

4:11 —I overthrew some of you, as Yahuwah overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and you were like a firebrand plucked from the burning; yet you have not returned to Me, says Yahuwah.

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Even those who narrowly escaped certain death (which all of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah experienced), and who were lucky to be alive, did not alter their lawless course. The response they should have exhibited to being delivered from death should have been an expression of gratitude.

ROM 6:13 And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to Yahuwah as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to Yahuwah.

4:12 —Therefore thus will I do to you, O Israel; and because I will do this to you, prepare to meet your Aluhym, O Israel!

Since none of the methods Yahuwah had used to try to bring them to repentance had worked, a more drastic step must be taken. Historically, Yahuwah exiled them from the land.

All of these curses which came on Israel in the past will be repeated at the close of the age, when Yahuwah will pour out His wrath during the Day of Yahuwah.

4:13 For behold, He who forms mountains, and creates the wind, Who declares to man what his thought is [CJB: humankind his thoughts], and makes the morning darkness, Who treads the high places of the earth—Yahuwah Aluhym of hosts is His name.

The Aluhym of Israel—the Aluhym that Israel is to prepare themselves to meet—is all powerful and has complete control of the earth and all who dwell on it. He instantly knows the thoughts of all men.

ISAM 16:7 ...Yahuwah looks at the heart.

JER 17:9-10 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? I, Yahuwah, search the heart, I test the mind, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.

Amos: Chapter 5

5:1 Hear this word which I take up against you, this lamentation, O house of Israel:

O House of Israel

This prophecy was specific to the Northern Kingdom.

5:2 The virgin of Israel has fallen; she will rise no more. She lies forsaken on her land; there is no one to raise her up.

Since becoming a kingdom under Saul and Dawid, the Northern Kingdom of Israel had never surrendered complete control of the land and been defiled by a conqueror. The Assyrian Empire changed that status after defeating Israel's army and subjugating the land.

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5:3 For thus says Yahuwah Aluhym: —The city that goes out by [NRS: marched out] a thousand shall have a hundred left, and that which goes out by [NRS: marched out] a hundred shall have ten left to the house of Israel.

The survival rate experienced by Israel's military forces was a mere ten percent, fulfilling the curse Yahuwah had pronounced on them for abandoning Him.

DEU 28:62 You shall be left few in number, whereas you were as the stars of heaven in multitude, because you would not obey the voice of Yahuwah your Aluhym.

Yahuwah also reveals that the same ratio of survivors to the dead will be maintained with those upon whom He pours out His wrath at the end of the age.

EZE 20:37 I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant;

ISA 6:13 But yet a tenth will be in it, and will return and be for consuming, as a terebinth tree or as an oak, whose stump remains when it is cut down. So the kadosh seed shall be its stump.

5:4 For thus says Yahuwah to the house of Israel: —Seek Me and live;

Seek Me and Live

This is the theme that runs throughout most of this chapter.

5:5 But do not seek Bethel, nor enter Gilgal, nor pass over to Beersheba; for Gilgal shall surely go into captivity, and Bethel shall come to nothing.

Yahuwah warns that He will never be found through pagan worship practices, as represented by Bethel and Gilgal. Neither can He be found by making pilgrimages to perceived holy sites or performing physical sacrifices, as was done in the past at Beersheba (GEN 46:1).

Yahuwah must be sought in the manner He has revealed—not in the manner that seems right to men.

5:6 Seek Yahuwah, and you will live, else He will rush like fire upon the House of Joseph and consume Bethel with none to quench it. (TNK)

The only hope of being saved from destruction requires seeking Yahuwah with a humble mind and unqualified obedience to His instructions.

House of Joseph

The House of Joseph was another designation for the Northern Kingdom; this was because the two tribes which descended from Joseph—Ephraim and Manasseh—were the most influential of all the tribes in the kingdom.

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EZE 37:16 Mortal, take a stick and write on it, For Yahuwdah, and the Israelites associated with it'; then take another stick and write on it, For Joseph (the stick of Ephraim) and all the house of Israel associated with it. ' (NRS)

We know that Benjamin and the Levites stayed in and near Jerusalem with Yahuwdah and the other tribes went to their inherited lands.

Jos 18:11 ¶ And the lot of the tribe of the children of Benjamin came up according to their families: and the coast of their lot came forth between the children of Yahudah and the children of Joseph.

Jos 21:4 And the lot came out for the families of the Kohathites: and the children of Aaron the priest, which were of the Levites, had by lot out of the tribe of Yahudah, and out of the tribe of Simeon, and out of the tribe of Benjamin, thirteen cities.

5:7 You that turn justice to poison [MOF: a bitter thing] and thrust righteousness to the ground, (REB)

Justice, which requires faithful adherence to law, becomes bitterness when the law is perverted and administered unfairly.

5:8 Who made the Pleiades and Orion, Who turns deep darkness into dawn and darkens day into night, Who summons the waters of the sea and pours them out upon the earth—His name is Yahuwah! (TNK)

Yahuwah's Power

The majesty and power of Yahuwah—Which are to be sought—are again acknowledged in this two-verse parenthetical insertion. He has power over the heavens and the earth. The Pleiades is a star cluster in the constellation Taurus; in Greek mythology it represented the seven daughters of Atlas who were supposedly chased through the sky by the constellation Orion.

5:9 It is He who hurls destruction upon strongholds, so that ruin comes upon fortresses! (TNK)

Yahuwah determines the rise and fall of nations and empires; He both establishes and removes rulers (DAN 2:21).

5:10 They hate the one who rebukes [CJB: promoting justice] in the gate, and they abhor the one who speaks uprightly [NRS: the truth].

Judgment of Israel Continues

Israel's degradation of justice is now resumed from verse 7; they do not want to hear anything that condemns their practices. (The pronoun is changed from second person to third person in verse 10, but reverts back to second person in the next verse. This is a fairly common practice in Hebrew.)

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5:11 You trample on the poor and force him to give you grain. Therefore, though you have built stone mansions, you will not live in them; though you have planted lush vineyards, you will not drink their wine. (NIV)

Houses constructed of stone were inhabited only by the very wealthy. Yahuwah condemns them for taking advantage of the poor in order to achieve their lifestyle.

5:12 For I know how many are your offenses and how great your sins. You oppress the righteous and take bribes and you deprive the poor of justice in the courts. (NIV)

Nothing is hidden from Yahuwah; He is aware of every thought and action of every man.

PSA 139:1-4 O Yahuwah, You have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. You comprehend my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue, but behold, O Yahuwah, You know it altogether.

5:13 Assuredly, at such a time the prudent man keeps silent, for it is an evil time. (TNK)

The wise person understands the consequences of condemning unjust rulers.

5:14 Seek good and not evil, that you may live, and that Yahuwah, the Aluhym of hosts, may truly be with you, as you think [REB: you claim He is]. (TNK)

Seeking good encompasses an entire way of life—a lifestyle completely different from what they were living.

MIC 6:8 He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does Yahuwah require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your Aluhym?

Even though Israel worshipped pagan idols, they claimed contact with Yahuwah, even swearing by His name (ZEP 1:5). They thought He was with them, but that connection was impossible as long as they continued to disobey Him and pursue evil.

5:15 Hate evil, love good; establish justice in the gate [REB: courts]. It may be that Yahuwah Aluhym of hosts will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.

The only ones who can hope to survive and become part of the remnant of the Northern Kingdom are those who show evidence of genuine change of heart.

5:16 Therefore this is what Yahuwah, Sovereign Aluhym Almighty, says: —There will be wailing in all the streets and cries of anguish in every public square. The farmers will be summoned to weep and the mourners to wail. (NIV)

5:17 In all vineyards there shall be wailing, for I will pass through you, says Yahuwah.

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Extensive suffering and death will be found in every quarter of society; no group will escape. At the end of the age, after one third of humanity is destroyed by famine and pestilence and another third by war, Yahuwah promises to draw out a sword to be used against the remaining third (EZE 5:12). He will —pass through them with the Trumpet Plagues, completing His wrath with the Bowl Plagues (REV 15:1).

5:18 Woe to you who desire the day of Yahuwah! For what good is the day of Yahuwah to you? It will be darkness, and not light.

Day of Yahuwah

Israel, like Yahuwah, believed the Day of Yahuwah would be the time when Israel would be exalted above all the nations. They were blind to the real impact that Day would have on them. They and every other nation are destined to suffer horribly at that time due to Israel's failure to set the proper example for the rest of the world.

5:19 It will be as though a man fled from a lion, and a bear met him; or as though he went into the house, leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him.

The Day of Yahuwah will be composed of numerous deadly perils. Even if one escapes unharmed through the first Trumpet Plague, he will still face six more.

5:20 Is not the day of Yahuwah darkness, and not light? Is it not very dark, with no brightness in it? [REB: a day of gloom without a ray of brightness]?

The Day of Yahuwah will be a time of great dread, composed of events that will cause all hope to vanish.

5:21 —I hate, I despise [NAS: reject] your festivals, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. (NRS)

Your Festivals

Yahuwah specifies that He hates the religious observances that —they established—not the festivals that He decreed (LEV 23:1-2).

5:22 Though you offer Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings, I will not accept them, nor will I regard your fattened peace offerings.

These offerings symbolized the desire to draw near to Yahuwah. Yet, the hearts of the people who brought the offerings were not hearts that were properly oriented.

PSA 51:17 The sacrifices of Yahuwah are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart—these, Yahuwah, You will not despise.

In addition, the offerings of Israel would have been made at Bethel or Gilgal and any offering not made at the temple in Jerusalem was considered an abomination.

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DEU 12:10-11, 14, 26-27 But when you cross over the Jordan and dwell in the land which Yahuwah your Aluhym is giving you...then there will be the place where Yahuwah your Aluhym chooses to make His name abide. There you shall bring all that I command you: your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the heave offerings of your hand, and all your choice offerings which you vow to Yahuwah...but in the place which Yahuwah chooses, in one of your tribes, there you shall offer your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I command you...Only the kadosh things which you have, and your vowed offerings, you shall take and go to the place which Yahuwah chooses. And you shall offer your burnt offerings, the meat and the blood, on the altar of Yahuwah your Aluhym; and the blood of your sacrifices shall be poured out on the altar of Yahuwah your Aluhym, and you shall eat the meat.

5:23 Take away from Me [CJB: Spare Me] the noise of your songs, for I will not hear the melody of your stringed instruments.

Yahuwah has no desire to hear religious songs of praise that proceed from the lips of hypocrites—those who refuse to obey the law of the One they claim to worship.

5:24 But let justice run down like water, and righteousness like a mighty [NAS: an ever-flowing] stream.

Death vs. Life

Yahuwah's desire was for His people to daily fulfill His law to enable them to become like a steady supply of water that would provide life-potential to all nations with which they had contact.

Their obedience to Him was much more important than spending their time pursuing a religion empty of substance—hypocritically performing rituals that benefited no one.

5:25 Did you offer Me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?

Sacrifices?

They did offer sacrifices from time to time during the forty years. The only ones specified were at the time the covenant was ratified (EXO 24:5); at the dedication of the tabernacle (NUM 7:10); and at the consecration of the priesthood (LEV 8). Although these offerings were made to Yahuwah on behalf of the entire nation, the nation was not unified in worshipping Yahuwah.

5:26 You also carried Sikkuth your king [KJV: the tabernacle of your Moloch] and Chiun, your idols, the star of your gods, which you made for yourselves.

You Carried Idols

In addition to the pretense of worshipping Yahuwah, many also remained tied to the idolatrous practices of Egypt during their wilderness stay. Then, after entering the land Yahuwah promised them, they began adopting the idols of the peoples of Canaan. Almost all of their idols were connected with the worship of the stars and planets—the host of heaven. Stephen alluded to this connection before quoting this passage prior to his martyrdom:

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ACT 7:41-43 And they made a calf in those days, offered sacrifices to the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands. Then Yahuwah turned and gave them up to worship the host of heaven, as it is written in the book of the Prophets: Did you offer Me slaughtered animals and sacrifices during forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel? Yes, you took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, images which you made to worship...

The Stephens Greek translation replaced —Chiun with —Remphan. Since —Chiun was a Babylonian identification of Saturn, it seems evident that —Remphan was another title given to Saturn, possibly derived from the Egyptian name given to Saturn, which was —Repa.

In his final address to Israel, Joshua indicated that some of the Israelites were still in possession of idols of imaginary gods, and were worshipping them.

JOS 24:14, 23 Now therefore, fear Yahuwah, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve Yahuwah!...put away the foreign gods which are among you, and incline your heart to Yahuwah Aluhym of Israel.

5:27 Therefore I will send you into captivity [TNK: exile] beyond Damascus, says Yahuwah, whose name is the Aluhym of hosts.

Israel's ongoing idolatrous practices clearly revealed their rejection of both Yahuwah and His law. Like that of the Amorites, their iniquity had reached a level that required their removal from Yahuwah's land.

When Stephen referred to this passage he inserted —Babylon in place of —Damascus (ACT 7:43).

Amos: Chapter 6

6:1 Ah [NKJ: Woe to], you who are at ease in Zion and confident on the hill of Samaria, you notables of the leading nation on whom the House of Israel pin their hopes: (TNK)

You Notables

Yahuwah warned Israel—and in particular the leaders of the nation—not to think that the lifestyle to which they had grown accustomed would remain a permanent condition.

6:2 Go to Calneh and look at it; go from there to great Hamath, and then go down to Gath in Philistia. Are they better off than your two kingdoms? Is their land larger than yours? (NIV)

History Repeats Itself

At one time, all of these cities were powerful, wealthy, and seemingly invincible, but they had come to nothing. Yahuwah warned Israel to learn from history: pride causes men to make faulty

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decisions, which culminate in loss or destruction (PRO 16:18). What made them think they were the exception?

6:3 Yet you ward off the thought of a day of woe [NKJ: the day of doom] and convene a session of lawlessness. (TNK)

Rather than taking stock of themselves and weighing their findings with the words of Yahuwah's prophets, they purposely put Yahuwah's words out of mind so that they could pursue whatever sinful enticements might come along.

ECC 8:11 Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.

No matter that men want to push it far into the future, the day of reckoning is quickly drawing near.

EZE 12:27-28 Son of man, look, the house of Israel is saying, The vision that he sees is for many days from now, and he prophesies of times far off.' Therefore say to them, Thus says Yahuwah Aluhym: —None of My words will be postponed any more, but the word which I speak will be done, says Yahuwah Aluhym.'

6:4 You lie on beds inlaid with ivory and lounge on your couches. You dine on choice lambs and fattened calves. (NIV)

Self-Indulgent

An attitude of complacent indulgence will take hold of those who are steeped in materialism and self-gratification.

6:5 who chant [NRS: sing idle songs] to the sound of stringed instruments, and invent for yourselves musical instruments like Dawid;

Ignoring their need to examine themselves and heed the warnings of the prophets, they refused to give thought to the future they were about to experience, preferring to idle away their time by eating, drinking and making merry.

6:6 who drink wine from bowls, and anoint yourselves with the best ointments, but are not grieved for the affliction [TNK: concerned about the ruin] of Joseph.

They are so caught up in their own self-indulgence they give no thought to the harm that is poised to overtake their countrymen.

6:7 Therefore you will be among the first to go into exile; your feasting and lounging will end. (NIV)

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Judgment

The leadership of the nation—the notables—would be the first to have their lifestyle stripped from them.

6:8 Yahuwah Aluhym has sworn by Himself, Yahuwah Aluhym of hosts says: —I abhor the pride of Jacob, and hate his palaces; therefore I will deliver up the city and all that is in it.

The pride of Israel prevented them from humbling themselves and looking to Yahuwah for guidance. Because of their arrogance Yahuwah would allow the enemy to unleash great devastation on them.

6:9 Then it shall come to pass, that if ten men remain in one house, they shall die.

6:10 And if someone's kinsman—who is to burn incense for him—comes to carry the remains out of a house, and he calls to the one at the rear of the house, —Are there any alive besides you? he will answer, —No, none. And he will say, —Hush!—so that no one may utter the name of Yahuwah [NAS: Keep quiet. For the name of Yahuwah is not to be mentioned]. (TNK)

If by chance there is a survivor, he will not want Yahuwah's name mentioned because of fear that Yahuwah will hear, return and take his life.

6:11 For behold, Yahuwah gives a command: He will break the great house into bits, and the little house into pieces.

The homes of the wealthy as well as the dwellings of the common people will all be destroyed.

6:12 Do horses run on the rocky crags? Does one plow there with oxen? But you have turned justice into poison and the fruit of righteousness into bitterness— (NIV)

These two analogies stress the absurdity of such activities, which no one in his right mind would contemplate. Deliberately turning away from Yahuwah and refusing to yield to His law were just as absurd; yet, the people chose to do so.

6:13 you who rejoice over Lo Debar, who say, —Have we not taken Karnaim for ourselves by our own strength?

6:13 Jubilant over a nothing, you boast, —Have we not won power by our own strength? (REB)

Lo Debar and Karnaim were towns in Gilead, the sites of successful battles waged by Jeroboam II around the time Amos wrote this prophecy. The REB gives a better rendering based on the meaning of the town names.

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6:14 —But, behold, I will raise up a nation against you, O house of Israel, says Yahuwah Aluhym of hosts; —and they will afflict you from the entrance of Hamath to the Valley of the Arabah.

Yahuwah would raise up a nation to oppress them from one end of the land of Israel to the other: from Hamath in the north to the Valley of the Arabah in the south.

Amos: Chapter 7

Shifting Focus

Yahuwah's indictment of Israel's complacency toward its sins and its unwavering pursuit of self-gratification has accounted for much of the prophecy recorded by Amos through the first six chapters. Throughout these chapters, Yahuwah affirmed that the Northern Kingdom would be conquered and exiled from the land because its people refused to repent of these faults. In the final three chapters, even though Yahuwah continues to give some emphasis on the reasons for this punishment, more attention is given to the experiences of Amos.

7:1 This is what the Sovereign Yahuwah showed me: He was preparing swarms of locusts after the king's share had been harvested and just as the second crop was coming up. (NIV)

Visions

Amos now relates several visions Yahuwah gave him in which He depicted disasters that He could use to bring down the Northern Kingdom. The first involved the destruction of their food supply. The taxes levied by the king included the first of the harvest of both grain and hay to feed his army's horses.

7:2 And so it was, when they had finished eating the grass [CJB: all the vegetation] of the land, that I said: —O Yahuwah Aluhym, forgive, I pray! Oh, that Jacob may stand [NIV: How can Jacob survive?], for he is small!

A locust swarm eats all vegetation as it moves across the land. Amos knew that if Yahuwah followed through with what was portrayed in the vision, so many Israelites would die from starvation that there would not be enough of them left to rebuild the tribes with the blood of their ancestors.

7:3 So Yahuwah relented concerning [CJB: changed His mind about] this. —It shall not be, said Yahuwah.

The heartfelt concern of Amos moved Yahuwah to reject His plan to use severe famine to bring Israel down.

7:4 This is what the Sovereign Yahuwah showed me: The Sovereign Yahuwah was calling for judgment by fire; it dried up the great deep and devoured the land. (NIV)

The second disaster proposed was the use of fire to cause all the pools of water to evaporate, followed by firestorms rushing across the land, consuming whatever vegetation stood in its path.

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7:5 Then I said: —O Yahuwah Aluhym, cease, I pray! Oh, that Jacob may stand [NIV: How can Jacob survive?], for he is small!

Once again, Amos reacted with compassion for the people of Israel. The vision portrayed such extensive destruction that Amos thought recovery would be impossible, so he pleaded for the extension of Yahuwah's mercy.

7:6 So Yahuwah relented concerning this. —This also shall not be, said Yahuwah Aluhym.

In response to Amos' plea, Yahuwah declined to follow through with the destruction He proposed in the second vision.

7:7 Thus He showed me: Behold, Yahuwah stood on a wall made with a plumb line, with a plumb line in His hand.

Unlike the first two visions, the third vision was not another manner of destroying the Kingdom of Israel. It was a vision of Yahuwah holding a tool used for checking for proper alignment.

7:8 And Yahuwah said to me, —Amos, what do you see? And I said, —A plumb line. Then Yahuwah said: —Behold, I am setting a plumb line in the midst of My people Israel; I will not pass by [TNK: pardon; NAS: spare] them anymore.

The plumb line was used as the standard to keep a wall vertical or true, during construction. If the wall, when tested by the plumb line, were shown to be —out of plum, or —untrue, the wall would have to be torn down and rebuilt with more care. Yahuwah's plumb line, or standard, was His law, and He used it to determine whether the people were true to Him.

ISA 28:17 Also I will make justice the measuring line, and righteousness the plummet...

Yahuwah's plumb line clearly revealed they had not remained true, but had wandered recklessly; they were full of faults that could not be ignored any longer. By using the plumb line of His law on Israel, Yahuwah showed that, unlike the judges of Israel, who were always ready to bend the standard whenever they could personally benefit by doing so, He would not alter His standard of judgment for any people.

7:9 The high places of Isaac shall be desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste. I will rise with the sword against the house of Jeroboam.

Isaac, the father of Jacob, had never built high places. Therefore, —Isaac represents the people of Israel who descended from him (verse 16). After all, the land of Israel was also promised to Abraham and Isaac before Yahuwah narrowed down their descendants to the family of Jacob.

The high places used for idol worship throughout the land of Israel, including the sanctuaries at Bethel, Dan and Gilgal, would all be destroyed when the time came for the exile of the Northern Kingdom.

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Yahuwah also revealed to Amos His intention to have the son of Jeroboam II put to death. This was necessary in order to fulfill the prophecy that Yahuwah had earlier made concerning the dynasty of Jehu.

2KI 10:30 And Yahuwah said to Jehu, —Because you have done well in doing what is right in My sight, and have done to the house of Ahab all that was in My heart, your sons shall sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation.

Jehu's dynasty continued through Jehoahaz, Jehoash, Jeroboam II, to Zechariah.

2KI 15:8, 10 In the thirty-eighth year of Azariah king of Yahuwdah, Zechariah the son of Jeroboam reigned over Israel in Samaria six months...Then Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him, and struck and killed him in front of the people; and he reigned in his place.

Amos delivered all of this warning to the Northern Kingdom. According to the next verse, he was apparently in the vicinity of Bethel when he did so.

7:10 Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, —Amos has conspired against you in the midst of the house of Israel. The land is not able to bear all his words [TNK: cannot endure the things he is saying].

Inset

At this point, Yahuwah had Amos relate a personal experience he had with the chief idolatrous priest at Bethel. This digression is similar to what Yahuwah had some of His other prophets include within the prophetic material given them.

Amaziah was accusing Amos of plotting a conspiracy against the king. In the Hebrew, there is an obvious play on words. Amos (meaning —burden) was accused of putting an unbearable burden on the land.

7:11 For Amos has said, Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall be exiled from its soil.' (TNK)

Amaziah was mixing some truth—Israel would be exiled from the land—with his false accusations. Yahuwah had not said that Jeroboam would die by the sword, but that the sword would bring his house to an end.

7:12 Then Amaziah said to Amos: Go, you seer! Flee [CJB: Go back] to the land of Yahuwdah. There eat bread [TNK: earn your living], and there prophesy.

Amos had traveled north to Bethel to deliver his prophecies. His home was Tekoa (1:1), a small town about ten miles south of Jerusalem. The pagan priest demanded that Amos leave the territory of the Northern Kingdom and take his prophecies with him. By telling him to go back to Yahuwdah to earn his living, Amaziah insinuated that Amos was being paid by the king of Yahuwdah to deliver a message of doom to stir up dissension and rebellion in Israel.

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7:13 But never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is the royal residence [NRS: a temple of the kingdom].

Amaziah implied that Amos' presence and words defiled the religious center of the kingdom and were an affront to king Jeroboam. Amaziah revealed the corruptness of his position when he emphasized that Bethel was the sanctuary of the king rather than the sanctuary of Yahuwah.

7:14 Amos answered Amaziah, I was neither [CJB: not trained as] **a prophet nor a prophet's son, but I was a shepherd, and I also took care of sycamore-fig trees.** (NIV)

Since Amos was a prophet of Yahuwah, his answer was directed at correcting Amaziah's insinuation that he was earning his living as a prophet. He had never received any formal training for what Yahuwah had directed him to do, nor was his father a prophet who could train him for the role he had been given. The only training he had received involved caring for animals and trees, which was the only way he earned his living.

The sycamore-fig was inferior in flavor and sweetness to the regular fig. Before it could be eaten, each fig required careful preparation, by shallow piercing, which was a tedious job.

7:15 Then Yahuwah took me as I followed the flock, and Yahuwah said to me, Go, prophesy to My people Israel.'

Amos was pursuing his regular vocation when Yahuwah chose him as His messenger and sent him to the Northern Kingdom.

7:16 Now therefore, hear the word of Yahuwah: you say, Do not prophesy against Israel, and do not spout [REB: speak out] **against the house of Isaac.'**

Amos now draws attention to the fact that the chastisement he received from the pagan priest, Amaziah, contradicted the instructions that Yahuwah had given him: Yahuwah told him to go prophesy to Israel, but Amaziah told him not to do so.

For the second time in this chapter (the first was in verse 9), the name Isaac is used to refer to Israel.

7:17 Therefore this is what Yahuwah says: Your wife will become a prostitute in the city, and your sons and daughters will fall by the sword. Your land will be measured and divided up, and you yourself will die in a pagan country. And Israel will certainly go into exile, away from their native land.' (NIV)

Amos stresses that this detailed, personal prophecy for Amaziah came directly from Yahuwah. Amaziah had earned these forecasted curses by interfering with the work Yahuwah was doing through Amos. Amaziah would become an example for others who would attempt to disrupt Yahuwah's work in the future. Like him, they would be prevented from accomplishing their goals, because nothing can prevent Yahuwah's decrees from coming to pass:

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ISA 46:9-12 Remember the former things of old, for I am Yahuwah, and there is no other; I am Yahuwah, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure'...Indeed I have spoken it; I will also bring it to pass. I have purposed it; I will also do it. Listen to Me, you stubborn-hearted, who are far from righteousness...

At the time Yahuwah called Sha'ul, he was told his attempt to destroy the Assembly was utter futility.

ACT 9:5 And he said, —Who are You, Lord? And Yahuwah said, —I am Amanuwal, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads.

Yahuwah has pronounced a curse of eternal death on anyone who attempts to interfere with the preservation of the scriptures.

REV 22:18-19 For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, Yahuwah will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of this prophecy, Yahuwah shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the kadosh city, and from the things which are written in this book.

Because he sought to obstruct the work Yahuwah was accomplishing through Amos, all that belonged to Amaziah would be taken from him. Nothing he did would prevent the fulfillment of the prophecy of the exile of the Northern Kingdom.

Amos: Chapter 8

8:1 Thus Yahuwah Aluhym showed me: Behold, a basket of summer fruit [TNK: figs; MOF: ripe fruit].

More Visions

Now that the digression concerning Amaziah is concluded, Amos returns to relating the visions he was given. Summer fruit symbolizes the last of the year's crops and denotes the final harvest of the season.

8:2 What do you see, Amos? He asked. A basket of ripe fruit, I answered. Then Yahuwah said to me, The time is ripe for my people Israel; I will spare them no longer. (NIV)

The previous vision of the plumb line emphasized the certainty of Yahuwah's verdict against Israel, confirming Yahuwah's unwillingness to bend the standard of His law, which He used in judging the nation. This vision reveals that the execution of Yahuwah's verdict was quickly approaching.

8:3 And the songs of the temple shall be wailing in that day, says Yahuwah Aluhym—Many dead bodies everywhere, they shall throw them out in silence.

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When Yahuwah's judgment would be carried out by the Assyrians, the praise Israel offered to pagan idols would be replaced by extreme sorrow and mourning.

8:4 Hear this, you that trample on the needy, and bring to ruin the poor of the land, (NRS)

Yahuwah again draws attention to the obsessive greed of the majority in Israel and their lack of concern for anyone but themselves.

8:5 saying, When will the New Moon be over that we may sell grain, and the Sabbath be ended that we may market wheat?... (NIV)

It seems that business was generally halted on the Sabbath and New Moons in the Northern Kingdom, even though pagan idols were worshipped and the Sabbath defiled (EZE 20). The indication from 1SAM 20:5 and 2KI 4:23 is that the people assembled or sought out men who represented Yahuwah on the New Moons.

Although businesses ceased operation on the New Moons, Yahuwah did not include any New Moon except the Feast of Trumpets in the list of commanded festivals and kadosh times in LEV 23. The only other instruction regarding the observance of New Moons was in regard to making special animal sacrifices (NUM 28:11-15).

This verse emphasizes their hypocrisy: although they outwardly conformed to what their religious leaders required, their hearts longed to pursue their selfish desires.

8:5 (cont.) ...skimping the measure, boosting the price and cheating with dishonest scales, (NIV)

In their greed, they rigged their scales so they could charge more for less.

LEV 19:35-36 You shall not falsify measures of length, weight, or capacity. (TNK)

LEV 19:35-36 Use honest scales and honest weights... (NIV)

8:6 that we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of sandals even sell the bad [NIV: sweepings with the] wheat?

Many of the poor had no hope of survival except by selling themselves and their children into slavery. The greedy rich even mixed refuse with the grain they sold in order to increase the weight and thereby the price they received.

8:7 Yahuwah has sworn by the pride [KJV: excellency] of Jacob: —Surely I will never forget any of their works.

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Judgment

Earlier Yahuwah swore by —His holiness (4:2). Now, He reveals that He has sworn by Himself, who alone is the Pride of Jacob. By affirming that He would never forget their works, Yahuwah could be referring to:

1. the required suffering, in Amos' time, of the selfish Israelites who ignored the royal law to love neighbor as self; and
2. the unleashing of Yahuwah's wrath on the descendants of Israel at the end of the age, which may be what is depicted in the next two verses.

8:8 Shall the land not tremble for this, and everyone mourn who dwells in it? All of it shall swell like the River, heave [CJB: be in turmoil] and subside like the River of Egypt.

A great earthquake is prophesied to shake the land of Israel. This could refer to the one which occurred two years after Amos relayed this prophecy (1:1), or to the one which will occur when Ha'Mashyach stands on the Mount of Olives at the conclusion of Yahuwah's wrath (ZEC 14:4-5).

8:9 And it shall come to pass in that day, says Yahuwah Aluhym, —That I will make the sun go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in broad daylight;

Since there was no solar eclipse during the year of the earthquake in Amos' time, in that day must refer to the results of the Fifth Bowl Plague during the outpouring of Yahuwah's wrath at the close of the age (REV 16:10).

8:10 I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation; I will bring sackcloth on every waist, and baldness on every head; I will make it like mourning for an only son, and its end like a bitter day [MOF: a day of utter bitterness].

Yahuwah's punishment would end their self-indulgent lifestyle of eating and drinking at pagan altars, at the expense of the less fortunate (2:8).

8:11 Behold, the days are coming, says Yahuwah Aluhym, —That I will send a famine on the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of Yahuwah.

When Yahuwah provided His instructions through His prophets to the people, they refused to listen. They either ridiculed the prophets or told them to take their messages and go elsewhere, as Amaziah did to Amos (7:12-13). However, once Yahuwah's predicted judgment begins, those who did not want to hear will change their minds, but too late. Yahuwah will have finished talking when He begins punishing.

8:12 They shall wander from sea to sea, and from north to east; they shall run to and fro, seeking the word of Yahuwah, but shall not find it.

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They will search for a prophet of Yahuwah from one end of the country to the other in order to learn how to get out of their calamity, but Yahuwah will not send the Northern Kingdom another messenger after initiating His judgment.

8:13 In that day the fair virgins and strong young men shall faint from thirst.

Even the strongest and those most filled with hope will be in despair.

8:14 Those who swear by the sin of Samaria, who say, As your god lives, O Dan!‘ and, As the way of Beersheba lives!‘ They shall fall and never rise again.

The sin of Samaria referred to the calf-idols erected by Jeroboam I at Dan and Bethel after, Yahuwah gave him the ten northern tribes once He had taken them from Rehoboam (1KI 12:28-29).

Since idols have no life, to swear by them was a blasphemous practice. The way of Beersheba (which was to the south) probably referred to the pilgrimage route to the primary pagan altar at Bethel. The principal individuals who swore allegiance to Israel’s idolatrous religion were the pagan priests; they would be silenced in death and never again serve idols.

Once Israel has returned from exile, Yahuwah will never allow pagan altars and counterfeit priests in His land to spew out deceptions and pervert the truth. Such will also be the case at the time of the Second Resurrection, when those who died during the Assyrian invasion will live again.

Amos: Chapter 9

9:1 I saw my Sovereign standing by the altar, and He said: Strike the capitals [CJB: tops of the columns; NKJ: doorposts] so that the thresholds quake, and make an end of the first of them all [NRS: shatter them on the heads of all the people]. And I will slay the last of them with the sword; not one of them shall escape, and not one of them shall survive. (TNK)

As his vision continues, Amos takes note that Yahuwah took a position by the calf-idol altar at Bethel, to ensure that all of the pagan priests would be killed as He stated in 8:14.

9:2 Though they dig into hell [TNK: Sheol; NIV: the depths of the grave], from there My hand shall take them [CJB: haul them out]; though they climb up to heaven, from there I will bring them down;

There is no place deep enough or high enough for anyone to escape Yahuwah’s decreed punishment.

9:3 If they hide on the top of Carmel, there I will search them out and seize them; and if they conceal themselves from My sight at the bottom of the sea, there I will command the serpent to bite them; (TNK)

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Carmel was the most prominent mountain in the Northern Kingdom, located just a few miles east of the Mediterranean Sea shore. From sea level, it rises very quickly up to an altitude of 1800 feet. It is reputed to have over 2000 limestone caves, in which those who hide are hard to find. There is no escape from Yahuwah. He has complete control over all the living creatures that He has created and can use them to flush out any who attempt to hide from Him.

9:4 Though they are driven into exile by their enemies, there I will command the sword to slay them. I will fix My eyes upon them for evil [NKJ: harm] and not for good. (NIV)

Not even being taken into exile as was Amaziah (7:17) will allow one to escape Yahuwah's decreed punishment.

This verse ends the section dealing with the destruction of the pagan priests who were largely responsible for severing Yahuwah's truth from Israel.

9:5 Yahuwah Aluhym of hosts, He who touches the earth and it melts, and all who dwell there mourn; all of it shall swell like the River, and subside like the River of Egypt.

Awesome Power

This and the next verse are yet more references (as were 4:13; 5:8) to the greatness of Yahuwah's limitless power— both on and off the earth. This description of the omnipotence of Yahuwah is a reminder that nothing can prevent Him from carrying out the judgment He decrees.

9:6 Who built His chambers [NKJ: layers] in heaven and founded His vault on [NAS: vaulted dome over] the earth, Who summons the waters of the sea and pours them over the land—His name is Yahuwah. (TNK)

Layers of Heaven

Yahuwah's vault would be the first heaven wherein all physical life exists, and in which precipitation is formed and released. The next chamber is the second heaven, which contains all physical matter outside earth's atmosphere. The final chamber is the third heaven, the realm of spirit, wherein Yahuwah dwells.

9:7 Are you not like the people of Ethiopia to Me, O children of Israel? says Yahuwah...

Israel

Israel's continued wicked conduct after being confronted by Yahuwah's prophets proved they would not change. Yahuwah later inspired Jeremiah to give greater detail to this analogy when used with the Southern Kingdom.

JER 13:22-23 And if you ask yourself, Why has this happened to me? it is because of your many sins that your skirts have been torn off and your body mistreated. Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Neither can you do good who are accustomed to doing evil. (NIV)

9:7 (cont.) ...Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt, the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir?

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The removal and transplanting of peoples were nothing new to Yahuwah. He has actively been involved with the migrations of human families from their beginnings.

ACT 17:26 And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their habitation...

Because of their arrogant refusal to repent, the time had come for the removal of the Northern Kingdom from the land they were given after being removed from Egypt.

9:8 Behold, the eyes of Yahuwah Aluhym are on the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from the face of the earth; yet I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, says Yahuwah.

The sinful kingdom of Israel would be utterly destroyed. The kingdom composed of the ten northern tribes will never again exist. However, Yahuwah did not say the Kingdom of Israel was gone forever.

9:9 For surely I will command, and will sift the house of Israel among all nations, as grain is sifted in a sieve; yet not the smallest grain shall fall to the ground.

Although the house of Israel would cease as a kingdom, the bloodline of Jacob would continue through the survivors taken into exile by the Assyrians. Yahuwah promised to preserve every descendant as the succeeding generations of Israel lived and died in various parts of the world. In some cases, Yahuwah's preservation included having the individual tribes attain national identities, as revealed in Jacob's prophecy concerning his sons at the close of the age (GEN 49). When the time of exile comes to an end, at the establishment of the Kingdom of Yahuwah, all of the descendants of the tribes of Israel will be brought back to the land of Israel.

JER 30:10-11 So do not fear, O Jacob My servant; do not be dismayed, O Israel declares Yahuwah. "I will surely save you out of a distant place, your descendants from the land of their exile. Jacob will again have peace and security and no one will make him afraid. I am with you and will save you", declares Yahuwah. Though I completely destroy all the nations among which I scatter you, I will not completely destroy you. I will discipline you but only with justice; I will not let you go entirely unpunished.' (NIV)

9:10 All the sinners of My people shall die by the sword, who say [TNK: boast], The calamity shall not overtake us nor confront us.'

This includes all the descendants of Israel those during Amos' time and those at the close of the age. All who think they can continue in their sins without reaping the penalties of transgressed laws will eventually pay the price:

ROM 6:23 For the wages of sin is death...

9:11 On that day I will raise up the tabernacle of Dawid, which has fallen down, and repair its damages [TNK: breaches]; I will raise up its ruins, and rebuild it as in the days of old;

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At the time this prophecy was given, the tabernacle of Dawid was still functioning in the Kingdom of Yahuwdah. It had not yet fallen; Uzziah was on the throne. It was not until Zedekiah was removed from rulership by Nebuchadnezzar that the tabernacle of Dawid fell from the throne and no longer ruled the tribes that composed the Kingdom of Yahuwdah.

By using tabernacle rather than house, Yahuwah emphasizes how frail the throne of Dawid had become after the division of Israel into two separate kingdoms after the death of Solomon. In fact, it is to this separation that the damages have reference. The day that Yahuwah will raise up the throne of Dawid to rule all Israel and repair its damages will be after the House of Israel is sifted among the nations (9:9) and returned to the land of Israel.

EZE 37:21-22 Then say to them, Thus says Yahuwah Aluhym: Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all; they shall no longer be two nations, nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again.

HOS 1:11 Then the children of Yahuwdah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together, and appoint for themselves one head...

9:12 That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and all the Gentiles who are called by My name, says Yahuwah who does this thing.

The Kingdom of Israel will inherit the territory of Edom after it is made totally desolate during the Day of Yahuwah (JOE 3:19). Once Yahuwah opens the minds of all humanity to the truth, and they see the perfect national model that the Kingdom of Israel will be, they will want to become part of Israel.

ISA 44:5 One will say, I am Yahuwah's; another will call himself by the name of Jacob; another will write with his hand, Yahuwah's, and name himself by the name of Israel.

Both this verse and verse 11 were referenced by the apostle James when he was explaining Yahuwah's future intention of treating non-Israelites as equals, once His kingdom is established. He did this to verify scriptural support for allowing non-Israelites to be added to the Assembly prior to that time.

ACT 15:14-17 Simon has declared how Yahuwah at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written: After this I will return and will rebuild the tabernacle of Dawid which has fallen down. I will rebuild its ruins, and I will set it up, so that the rest of mankind may seek Yahuwah, even all the Gentiles who are called by My name, says Yahuwah who does all these things.'

Even though James virtually quotes verse 11, he combines part of verse 12 with truth that is found in other prophetic writings, such as:

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ISA 2:2-3 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of Yahuwah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, —Come, and let us go up to the mountain of Yahuwah, to the house of the Aluhym of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths...

9:13 Behold, the days are coming, says Yahuwah, When the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him who sows seed; the mountains shall drip with sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it [TNK: wave with grain].

Blessing

Like JOE 3:18, this verse depicts an agrarian utopia after the establishment of Yahuwah's Kingdom over all nations. From the outset of their covenant with Yahuwah, Israel had been promised this very blessing if they would be faithful to Yahuwah and obeyed Him.

LEV 26:5 Your threshing shall last till the time of vintage, and the vintage shall last till the time of sowing; you shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely.

9:14 I will restore My [NIV: bring back My exiled] people Israel. They shall rebuild ruined cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine; they shall till gardens and eat their fruits. (TNK)

Once Yahuwah has cleaned up the ruin caused by the events during Day of Yahuwah, massive rebuilding projects of farms and dwellings will be required of the survivors. Yahuwah has promised to restore the land to a pristine condition in the aftermath of the destruction that will occur during the Day of Yahuwah.

ISA 51:3 Yahuwah will surely comfort Zion and will look with compassion on all her ruins; He will make her deserts like Eden, her wastelands like the garden of Yahuwah. Joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the sound of singing. (NIV)

9:15 I will plant them in their land, and no longer shall they be pulled up from the land I have given them, says Yahuwah your Aluhym.

Never again will Israel stray from their relationship with Yahuwah. Therefore there will never be a reason to have Israel removed from the land as they were when they were taken into exile by the Assyrians.

ISA 65:21 They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

Amos: Conclusion

Amos ends on a very upbeat note, emphasizing the outpouring of every type of blessing after Ha'Mashyach returns—when the descendants of Israel shall truly become —prevailers with Yahuwah!