

## AMOS

- Amos (meaning “a burden” or “to load a burden on”) asked how long judgment of the successful northern kingdom would tarry; Israel was wealthy, prosperous and successful. Military was secure and treated the impoverished “poorly.” The book of Amos was written against Social Injustices and Religious Formalism (Amos 4:4-5; 5:21-23).
- Israel religiously engaged in idolatry; Jeroboam had established idol calves at Dan and Bethel which continued to be worshipped.
- Amos had come from Judah to preach against Israel’s rebellion, but Israel was more dominant than Judah. This was a time of wealth and peace when there was great religiosity surrounding their ritualistic worship. Religion was an outward shell of rituals without any inward relationship with God.
- Within 40 years of Jesus’ ministry concluding, Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed – within 40 years of Amos sermon (~760BC), the northern kingdom was scattered (722 BC).
- The book of Amos can be considered a collection of three sermons (Ch 1-2, Ch 3-6, Ch 7-9)

Outline of Amos	
1:1 - 2:15	Judgment on Surrounding Nations
2:16 – 6:14	Condemnation of Israel
7:1 – 9:15	Five Visions of Amos

14 Amos 1-3

### Read Amos 1:1-2 ... The Setting of Amos

1:1 Amos was a sheep breeder (more than a shepherd) from Tekoa (“a trumpet to blast”) which was 12 miles southwest of Jerusalem. He lived during the reign of Uzziah (the good king of Judah (who reigned 52 years in Judah) and Joash (who reigned 41 years in Israel).

- Hannukah celebrates oil extended 8 days in the Temple – the new oil was retrieved from Tekoa
- Nabal was a sheep shearer (1 Samuel 25:2)
- Amos was a caretaker of Sycamore Trees (humble fruit which poor people ate)

Era of Amos Circa 760BC	
King Uzziah of Judah	783-742BC
King Jeroboam II of Israel	786-746BC
The Earthquake	Zechariah 14:5; 2 Chronicles 26:16-21

1:2 Zion became a synonym for the city of Jerusalem although the city is built on Mt. Moriah next to My Zion. It is said that lions roar before attacking their prey (Amos 3:4) as Israel becomes wasteland.

- Carmel was known for its lush vegetation; it was an oasis promontory on the Mediterranean Sea (Is 35:2), and its decline bodes poorly for the rest of Israel.
- God's judgment on man involves nature (Romans 8:18-25).
- Judgments would now be given on the six surrounding nations: Damascus, Gaza, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, Moab.
- The statement "three crimes/transgressions, even four" is repeatedly used; the statement conveys that three is enough for judgment, but four reasons would be given inferring that there are plenty of reasons to choose from.
- A "transgression" is a revolt against authority, and the punishment on these six "Gentile" peoples was primarily based on slavery and wanton shedding of blood.

### **Read Amos 1:3-5 ... God's Judgment Against Syria**

1:3 Damascus, the capital of Syria, used excessive force particularly against Gilead on the east of Jordan; they were cruel with a reputation of sawing their victims in two.

- Syria was Israel's main nemesis during this time (2 Kings 8:12, 10:32-33, 13:3, 7).
- Assyria was a growing world power at this time in the Euphrates-Tigris River Valley, and Assyria defeated Syria, but did not have the might to control Syria's land. As Syria interacted with Assyria, both Israel and Judah increased in power.

1:4 Hazael (842-802BC) became king through a political coup (a usurper) by murdering his master, Ben-hadad II (2 Kings 8:7-15).

- Hazael and his son, Ben-hadad, were oppressors of Israel, and their reign was ended by Tiglath-Pileser III and the Assyrian army (2 Kings 16:5-9). Ben-hadad was named after the Syrian god and similar to the use of the name "Pharaoh" in Egypt.
- "*For three transgressions of Damascus, and for four...*" was the ancient way of saying "For the many transgressions of Syria..." Damascus was the capital of Syria and represented the entire nation.
- Gilead represented the entire Transjordan area.
- The threshing instrument was a platform of wood with iron spikes; a man would stand on the "sled" with heavy rocks, and it was used to rip the husks from the grain (2 Samuel 12:31).
- The judgment on the surrounding nations is primarily concerned with wicked war practices, so Syria may have threshed some of their prisoners of war.

1:5 Aven and Beth-Eden were the center of idolatry (to Venus and the sun god), and the people of Aram (Syria) would indeed be exiled to Kir (Assyria).

- Aven is the Hebrew word for "vanity." (Hosea 5:8)
- Beth-Eden in Hebrew is referenced as the "Garden of Pleasure."

### **Read Amos 1:6-8 ... God's Judgment Against Philistines**

1:6 Gaza was the Philistine capital that pursued the slave trade of Israelites. These people of Philistia attempted to invade Egypt from Crete (1100BC), but when they were put off, they entered the southwestern section of Palestine.

- The Philistines were leaders in iron weaponry and tools.
  - Edom was located south of the Dead Sea, and they were involved in a Hebrew slave trade.
- 1:7 In 743 BC, the Assyrian Tiglath-Pileser brought Philistia under tribute; Assyria conquered them again in 711 BC (Ashdod) and 701 BC (Ashkelon, Ekron) for renegeing on tribute payments.
- 1:8 The Philistines were known by their key cities of Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, and Ekron, but the Philistines would ultimately perish under Babylon's reign.

### **Read Amos 1:9-10 ... God's Judgment Against Tyre**

- 1:9 The Phoenician city of Tyre was a merchant city by the Sea, and it is the only standalone city mentioned because they, too, were trafficking Israel slaves and thus, broke the treaty between King Hiram and David (2 Samuel 5; 2 Kings 5).
- No Jewish King ever went to war against Phoenicia (2 Samuel 5:11; 1 Kings 5:2-6, 15-18; 9:11-14)
- 1:10 In 332 BC Alexander the Great destroyed Tyre after a seven-month siege and then sold 30,000 from Tyre into slavery.

**The first three nations were not related to Israel, but those following are related to Israel.**

### **Read Amos 1:11-12 ... God's Judgment Against Edom**

- 1:11 Esau's descendants, Edom, pursued the destruction of their brother nation, Israel. Edom purchased Israelite slaves from Gaza and Tyre, and the entire book of Obadiah is committed to the curse against Edom.
- Throughout the ages, Edom never relented on their hatred of Israel.
- 1:12 Teman (means "on the right") was named after the grandson of Esau who was the son of his firstborn, Eliphaz (Genesis 36:11; 1 Chronicles 1:36). Teman was known for its wise men (Obadiah 1:8; Jeremiah 49:7; Ezekiel 25:13)
- Bozrah (means "sheepfold") was the capital city of Edom (Genesis 36:32-33)

### **Read Amos 1:13-15 ... God's Judgment Against Ammon**

- 1:13 Ammon descended from Lot's youngest daughter (Gen 19:38). Through forced abortion, they attempted to cut off the Israeli race (especially on those tribes east of the Jordan: Reuben, Gad, Manasseh – 2 Ki 10:32)
- 1:14 Rabbah was Ammon's capital city located Transjordan on the Jabbok River by Penuel (where Jacob wrestled with the angel). Every nation had specific "war cries" while for Israel and Judah, the war cries were related to God.
- 1:15 Beyond the common people, the kings of Ammon would be exiled by Babylon.

### **Read Amos 2:1-3 ... God's Judgment Against Moab**

- 2:1 Moab was located east of the Dead Sea. Moab descended from Lot's eldest daughter (Gen 19:37) with Kerioth as their capital city.
- The Moabite king had sacrificed his own son as a burnt offering to horrify the invaders, but this enraged the Moabite so much that they retaliated by burning the king alive (2 Kings 3).

- Moab also used corpses in the making of lime to plaster walls. Israel never cremated corpses unless the crime was horrendous (Genesis 38:24; Leviticus 20:14, 21:9)
- 2:2 The troops in the field were directed by the blasts of the trumpets.
- 2:3 Nebuchadnezzar weakened Moab, and it disappeared altogether by the time of the Romans. To “cut-off” means to execute instead of taking the royalty into exile (Amos 1:15).

**Much like the first several chapters of Romans, the Prophet began by discussing the wickedness of the world and the fair judgment that was coming; then Amos turned to the wickedness and judgment coming on God’s people.**

**Read Amos 2:4-5 ... God’s Judgment Against Judah**

- 2:4 Judah is the seventh country to be cursed because of three things: 1.rejection of the law 2.disobedience 3.self-deception by listening to the lies of their fathers (Lev 26:14-17; Rom 2:12-20)
- “Lies” is a Hebrew idiom for following after the idols of false gods (Psalm 40:4; Habakkuk 2:18)
  - While Judah is the symbol of the true church, Israel is the symbol of the apostate Christendom as they renounced the true God.
- 2:5 Fire represents the judgment of God, and although Jerusalem was a fortified city, it would ultimately be destroyed by Babylon in 586BC.

**Read Amos 2:6-8 ... God’s Judgment Against Israel**

2:6 Israel is the eighth and last country to be cursed with the longest indictment; however, no fire is mentioned.

<b>Israel’s Seven Transgressions Against God</b> <i>(Amos 2:6-8)</i>		
1	They sell a righteous person for silver	Bribes skew justice (Dt 16:18-20; Prov 14:31, 17:5)
2	“They sell” a needy person for a pair of sandals. (Amos 8:6)	Sold into debtors’ prison (2 Kings 4:1)
3	They trample the heads of the poor on the dust of the ground	While the rich rode on horses, the poor died in their work and need.
4	They block the path of the needy	There was no way for the poor to work their way out of debt
5	A man and his father have sexual relations with the same girl, profaning My holy name	A practice of cultic prostitutes with licentious worship of Baal
6	They stretch out beside every (false) altar on garments taken as collateral,	Poor and homeless went cold without clothing/shelter (Deut 24:12-13)
7	They drink in the house of their God wine obtained through fines.	Bethel and Dan

**Read Amos 2:9-16 ... Israel’s Ingratitude for God’s Provision**

2:9 Israel has no gratitude for how far God has brought them. God destroyed the Amorites meaning “trafficker” (symbol for Canaanites)

<b>God’s Provision for Israel</b> <i>(Amos 2:10)</i>	
I brought you from the land of Egypt	Freed
And I led you 40 years in the wilderness	Guided
...in order to possess the land of the Amorite.	Protected

- The land of the Amorites is a collective title for all of the Canaanite people (Genesis 15:16).

2:11 God sent men to reach the hearts of Israel, but they made His messengers fail

2:12 Israel purposed against the ministries of God’s servants. The Nazarites had a moral obligation, and were not to drink wine (Numbers 6:1-21). While the Prophets were meant to Prophecy (Mt 23:37; 1 Kings 13:21)

2:13 Just as Israel had been a burden to the Lord (Isaiah 43:24)., He would increase pressure on Israel (Isaiah 28:27-28).

2:14-16 Assyria was the major world empire, and these verses prophesied what would occur when Assyria attacked in 722BC. “Abilities” will turn into “liabilities” (defeats); seven examples given for complete failure.

**Read Amos 3:1-8 ... The Necessity of Responsibility and Judgment**

3:1 The basis for God’s severe judgment against Israel was that He had chosen them and brought them out of slavery in Egypt just as He had told Abraham (Genesis 15:16). Amos repeatedly calls on Israel to “hear this word” at the beginning of chapters 4 and 5.

3:2 The Hebrew word for “know” (“Yada”) is an image of an intimate relationship (Genesis 4:1) instead of simply knowing about Him.

- This is an emphasis on “election” (Exodus 19:5-6; Deuteronomy 7:6, 8) as God called His people to be a testimony of Him to the world (not so that they would have license to sin).
- Relationship necessitates responsibility (Luke 12:45-48)

3:3-7 God asks six questions in which the answer is “no”, but the seventh answer is “yes” because God is the cause of calamity. Sovereign God is in control of everything (nature, nations, history).

3:3 This verse is in reference to the intimate relationship between God and His prophets as well as God and His people.

3:4 It is said that lions roar before attacking their prey (Amos 1:2) as Israel becomes wasteland.

3:5 The snare and the trap do not spring unless something has caused them to react in that manner. In the same way, God will cause the judgment of Israel to occur because of Israel’s sin.

3:6 The blown trumpet is an alarm of an imminent attack (Ezekiel 33:2-5).

- “Does disaster come to a city, unless the Lord has done it?”
- God brings calamity as well as peace; all things are in control of the Sovereign Lord.

<b>Another Side of God’s Nature</b> <b>(Isaiah 45:7 versus Psalm 145)</b>
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<b>Sovereignty of God</b>	Genesis 18:14, Jeremiah 32:27, Jeremiah 32:17, Job 23:13, Psalms 115:3, 135:6 Daniel 4:35, Luke 1:37, Mt 19:26
<b>God Created All Things</b>	Colossians 1:16, Revelation 4:11, Romans 11:36
<b>God Creates Unpleasant Things</b>	Isaiah 45:7; Exodus 4:11
<b>God Uses Lying Spirits</b>	1 Kings 22:22; 2 Chronicles 18:21, 2 Thessalonians 2:11
<b>God Uses Evil Spirits</b>	1 Samuel 16:14, 15, 16, 23 & 18:10 & 19:9
<b>God Causes Some to Suffer and Fail</b>	Exodus 21:13; 2 Chronicles 15:6, 21:14-16, 25:8; Job 5:18, 9:24, 12:14-25; Ps 71:20, 80:5-6; Ecclesiastes 7:13-14 ; Isaiah 19:2&22, 42:24; Jeremiah 11:11, 29:17-19, 32:23, 42, 44:27, 45:5; Lamentations 1:5, 12, 3:37-38; Ezekiel 4:16-17, 5:10, 7:9, 14:9, 23; Zech 7:10; 1 Peter 3:17, 4:17; Acts 9:15-16; John 9:3
<b>Hearts are Swayed by God for His Purposes</b>	Ephesians 1:11; Psalms 33:15, 105:25; Isaiah 63:17; Jeremiah 32:39-40; 1 Kings 18:37; Revelation 17:17

3:8 When God has spoken to someone, they cannot be silent, they must testify. The lion is symbolic of the Lord in His intimidating roar (Amos 3:8)

### **Read Amos 3:9-15 ... God’s Detailed Judgment on Israel’s Detailed Sin**

3:9 The Masoretic text translates the location as “Ashdod” (a Philistine city) while the Septuagint translates the aggressor as Assyria (because they are better paralleled to Egypt).

- These two nations will be the two witnesses against Israel represented by its capital city of Samaria.

3:10 The people are incapable of doing right (John 18:38). These people have lived in sinful lifestyles for so long and denied God’s call to repentance that they no longer know what is considered appropriate and pleasing to the Lord (Romans 1:18-25).

- Israel takes what does not belong to them through violence and greed. In essence, Israel bought into the philosophy that might makes right.

3:11 Assyria will conquer and exile the northern kingdom of Israel in 722BC.

3:12 This is an ancient proverb that means that there will be so little remaining after the slaughter that it is not going to be worth finding or taking. (Exodus 22:12-13)

- As the shepherds provided a piece of the carcass to show that an animal was dead, only a small fraction of Samaria’s wealth would be retained.
- Another example might be an elegant piece of furniture with only a small broken piece of it remaining – not enough to save.

3:13 This declaration is coming from: 1. The Lord (Adonai) 2. God (Elohim) 3. God of Hosts (Elohim of the Heavenly Armies)

3:14 Jeroboam established golden calves as alternative gods (1 Kings 12:28-33).

Historically, fugitives could grasp the horns of the altar for asylum (Ex 21:12-13; 1 Kings 1:50, 2:28), but there would be no asylum for Israel. Horns also represent authority and power, but they were now cut off.

- Bethel is located 10 miles north of Jerusalem.
- Bethel is the location where Jacob interacted with God (Genesis 28:10-22)

3:15 Archeologists have found remnants of these houses inlaid with ivory (1 Kings 22:39). Israel must have imported the ivory (Amos 6:4) from Egypt because the ivory was inlaid with designs of Egyptian gods.

15 Amos 4-6

### **Read Amos 4:1-3 ... Israel Reprimanded for Oppression**

4:1 Bashan had rich pastures, and these “cows” were wives of the landlords who crushed the needy as grapes for their wine (pleasure).

- Bashan was Transjordan northwest and famous for their cattle.
- The wealthy Israelite wives had both alcoholism and greed as they encouraged their husbands to perpetually take from the poor for their comforts.

4:2 Assyria will lead them off as cattle with hooks (rings in the noses of cows to lead them) and fishhooks (can’t escape and the more one struggles causes a deeper hold)

- God swore by His holiness which represents how sure and certain His holiness is; this is similar to God swearing by Himself because there is nothing more certain (Amos 6:8, 8:7).

4:3 The breaches would be holes/gaps in their “protective” walls that are so large that they will be used instead of the city gates while the women (represented by cows) are driven straight ahead.

- Assyria would put a hook in the lower lip or a nostril of their defeated foes to lead them in exile (2 Chronicles 33:11).

### **Read Amos 4:4-5 ... Israel Reprimanded for Idolatry**

4:4 Bethel and Gilgal originally worshipped God, but they devolved into idol worship (Amos 5:5). They compensated by “playing church” and bringing sacrifices every three days instead of every three years (Dt 14:28-29)

- Both Bethel and Gilgal were viewed as religious centers that replaced Jerusalem:
  - Bethel was the location where Abram first pitched his tent upon entry into the Promised Land (Genesis 12:8)
  - Gilgal was the location where Joshua set up the memorial stones after crossing the Jordan into the Promised Land (Joshua 4:20).
- People were worshipping God in their own way as they followed religious rituals and then lived lifestyles of sin.
  - The people were living lives of sin which they normalized by bringing a sacrifice every morning before going out and pursuing the same sinful lifestyle.
  - The people were bringing tithes often, but generosity (or any good deed) can never be used justify sin.

4:5 Even if they follow worship details closely and go overboard with worship (leaven was expensive), their worship is not sincere. Even if they loudly proclaim their righteousness (Mt 6:1-4), their ostentatious, hypocritical presentations were show.

- This was similar to a fashion show on Easter, but they did not interact with God nor did they repent of their daily sinful lifestyle.

### **Read Amos 4:6-13 ... Israel Reprimanded for Their Stubborn Desire to Sin**

4:6 Famine came from God and revealed His displeasure (Lev 26:26; Dt 28:17; 1 Ki 8:33-40). This judgment is presented in a positive manner as “giving His people clean teeth.”

- In the Old Testament, the phrase “*return to me*” represented repentance as His people were called to turn from sin and towards a walk (prayerful interaction and obedience) with God. (Amos 4:6, 8, 9, 10, 11)
- The redemptive purpose of the calamities was so His people would turn back to Him (Luke 13:3) ...from indulgent self-living to following God.

4:7-8 Drought also meant God’s displeasure (Lev 26:19; Dt 28:23-24; 1 Kings 8:35-36), but they just applied self-effort and looked for water through alliances versus turning to God

4:9 The scorching wind was called “scirocco” (Genesis 41:6, 23, 27). The root word of “mildew” means to turn pale as crops without water (blight – Deuteronomy 28:22).

- Disease was used to turn man towards Himself; there is a treasure inside of every difficulty.
- The fig trees and olives trees (physical and spiritual) are devoured by locusts (Deuteronomy 28:38-42)

4:10 The pestilence is also translated a plague like those of Egypt (Deuteronomy 28:59-61). The battles and wars are now introduced.

4:11 Israel is likened to Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19:25; Jeremiah 20:16)

<b>Complete Judgment on Israel (Amos 4:6-11)</b>	
1. Famine	Amos 4:6
2. Drought	Amos 4:7-8
3. Sirocco (East Wind)	Amos 4:9
4. Blight (Mildew w/o Water)	Amos 4:9
5. Insects	Amos 4:9
6. Plague	Amos 4:10
7. War/Overthrow	Amos 4:10-11

4:12 Israel was facing the horror of irrevocable doom as they are called, “*Israel, prepare to meet your God!*” The entire lives of God’s people should be invested to prepare to meet God.

4:13 Some believe that this verse is a poetic liturgy or hymn (Amos 5:8-9, 9:5-6). God is viewed as the sovereign Creator. Mountains are viewed as something mighty and awesome.

- God reveals His thoughts to mankind (as He did through the Prophets – Amos 3:7). God also knows man’s thoughts, attitudes and intentions (Jeremiah 17:9-10).
- God is in charge of the seasons.
- “*Treading on the heights of the earth*” may refer to God riding on the storm clouds. However, the “heights of the earth” was also utilized to reference Israel (Deuteronomy 32:13, 33:29) The term “treading” may carry judgment in its nature as a horse treads a man that has been thrown down. (Amos 9:13)

**Read Amos 5:1-3 ... Mourning a Dirge for Israel**



5:1 As Amos begins to sing this dirge that is often sung at funerals, scholars believe that Amos would have probably dressed the part with sackcloth, ashes and disheveled hair.

- There is a Hebraic, rhythmic pattern for a dirge composed as 3-2-3-2; this rhythmic pattern is used in Amos 5:2-6 and Amos 5:16-17
- Amos is mourning over the death of a nation.

5:2 The mourning over the death of a nation, but there will remain a “tithe” remnant (Amos 5:3).

- The term “fallen” may reference the immediate spiritual aspect of Israel or the future physical destruction of Israel as if it has already happened.
- The description as a virgin might reference God’s special relationship with His children in Israel that He had protected.
- The imagery is a virgin who is raped and killed as she is left lying on the ground.

5:3 The Hebrew for “Lord God” is “Adonai Yahweh.”

- Only a remnant (a tenth; a “tithe”) will survive as the destruction will be fierce (Amos 5:3).

### **Read Amos 5:4-20 ... Israel Exhorted to Repent**

5:4 *“Seek me and live.”*

5:5 Nations will fall, but there remains individual hope if individuals seek God personally instead of participating in the polluted traditional places of worship.

- Although Bethel, Gilgal and Beersheba originally worshipped God, they devolved into idol worship (Amos 4:4). Bethel, Gilgal and Beersheba were viewed as religious centers that replaced Jerusalem:
  - Bethel was the location where Abram first pitched his tent upon entry into the Promised Land (Genesis 12:8). Bethel (“house of God”) was renamed to Beth-Aven (“house of vanity”) – Hosea 4:15
  - Gilgal was the location where Joshua set up the memorial stones after crossing the Jordan into the Promised Land (Joshua 4:20).
  - Beersheba was located on the southern border of Judah (2 Kings 23:8); it was named by Abraham (Genesis 21:31) and then by Isaac (Genesis 26:31-33).

5:6 The fiery destruction of judgment would be complete, so the term “house of Joseph” is used instead of simply the name of “Ephraim” (Israel’s strongest tribe).

- Joseph had two sons: Ephraim and Manasseh (Genesis 47:28-48:22).
- There is a small hope that Israel would repent, so that God would relent; however, this warning may have further justified Israel’s judgment.

5:7 Wormwood can be used for any plant that is bitter, so there was no justice; the wealthy used the justice system to hurt the needy.

- A “plumb line” was used to see what was “out of line” or “out of plumb” instead of meeting God’s perfect standard. A plumb line is dropped vertically (as if from heaven), but in this instance, the standard of righteousness was thrown to the ground.

5:8 Pleiades (the “seven sisters” is the only constellation within a gravitational pull) and Orion (the “hunter” is three stars traveling their own course, independent of all the others). Orion was related to Nimrod in ancient times, and the Creator God controlled

even the constellations. Assyria had some astral worship of the heavenlies which is primarily related to Babylon.

- Idolatrous Baal worship sought to influence rainfall (agricultural fertility); however, God controlled rain.
- When the name “LORD” is spelled in all capital letters, it represents God’s covenant name “Yahweh” (Exodus 3:14). “Yahweh” is an emphasis on the true, the living, the everlasting God.

<b>Three Doxologies as God the Creator</b>
Amos 4:13
Amos 5:8-9
Amos 9:5-6

5:10 The city gate was where the elders would meet to pass judgment and settle disputes. (Ruth 4:1-2; Deuteronomy 25:1-3). There was a hatred for anyone who denounced sin and administered justice

5:11 The wealthy exacted unreasonably high rates from share croppers, but self-effort will not produce fruit. God warned Israel that they would not live in their wicked houses (Deuteronomy 28:30).

5:12 Although all sin brings death, the sin of Israel was assessed as being “great” because some sins are more egregious than others.

<b>Great Sin (Amos 5:12)</b>
The affliction of the righteous
Those who take a bribe
Obstacles to the needy about getting justice

5:13 Those who told the truth were ridiculed and persecuted; it was prudent to be silent - as the truth would only condemn the honest person as well.

5:14 God’s people who are “playing church” have a false perception of walking with God; *“Seek good and not evil so that you may live, and the LORD, the God of Hosts, will be with you, as you have claimed.”*

- The presence of the “LORD” (“Yahweh”) and His heavenly armies is a great promise (Psalm 23:4).

5:15 Earlier Amos encouraged Israel to seek the Lord and live (Amos 5:4, 6) which is along the lines of the first commandment to love the Lord (Matthew 22:37-38). This command of this verse to seek good and live may emphasize the second commandment to love others (Matthew 22: 39).

<b>Imperatives of Amos 5</b>	
Seek & Live	Amos 5:4
Seek	Amos 5:6
Seek	Amos 5:14
Hate	Amos 5:15
Love	Amos 5:15
Establish	Amos 5:15

5:16 The loss and grieving will be so great that laymen will be recruited to be professional mourners

- 5:17 When God is with them, there would be mourning and conviction. God’s presence brings blessing and judgment.
- 5:18 The second coming of Jesus will bring judgment instead of the heavenly bliss so many expect.
- 5:19 There would be no escape from God’s judgment.
- 5:20 Israel looked forward to the presence of the Lord, but they did not realize that He would be against them and judge their sin.

**Read Amos 5:21-27 ... God Rejects Hypocritical Rituals for A Sincere Walk**

- 5:21-23 As the people “play church” in ritualistic worship, God rejects the feasts, the offerings (Isaiah 1:10-20), and the worship.
- Israel pursued sinful lifestyles while following the rituals of worship, but there was no relationship with the Lord.
  - The fattened animals were animals that had been fattened for sacrifice.
- 5:24 God desires righteous lives with justice and truth. God wants action and not just words; who a person “is” can be seen in what is done; how it is done, and why it is done.
- 5:25-27 Before Stephen becomes the first martyr for Christ, he quotes these verses; the hearts of God’s people were divided in the wilderness between God and false gods of Sikkuth (Molech) and Kiyyun (Saturn).
- Sikkuth was the Assyrian war god called “Adar-Melek-Saturn.”
  - Kiyyun was the Assyrian star god that identified with the planet Saturn.
  - God vows to send Israel into exile (Amos 9:3, 10:6, 11:5)

**Read Amos 6:1-6 ... God Warns Israel’s Successful Against Being Arrogant**

- 6:1 God gives a warning to those at ease in Jerusalem in Judah and in Samaria, the capital of Israel because there is ill-placed confidence in their misguided leadership.
- Samaria seemed impregnable, but after a three-year siege, Samaria would fall to Assyria.
  - The royal and noble elders would be the first to be exiled (Amos 6:7).
- 6:2 Amos references three great “impregnable” cities that had fallen: 1.Calneh – founded by Nimrod (Genesis 10:10; Isaiah 10:9) 2.Hamath – Solomon’s great assembly 3.Gath – leading city of the Philistines
- 6:3 People awaiting judgment responding “surely not me” and “surely not now”
- 6:4 The beds had ivory inlays. Archeologists have found remnants of these houses inlaid with ivory (1 Kings 22:39). Israel must have imported the ivory (Amos 3:15) from Egypt because the ivory was inlaid with designs of Egyptian gods.
- 6:5-6 God warns these self-made men with their self-made inventions (music/worship) and their self-made anointings.
- It was wrong for these wealthy Israelites not to grieve the sin of the nation.

<b>Familiarity &amp; Misuse</b>		
<i>(Amos 6:4-6)</i>		
<b>Reference</b>	<b>Familiarity</b>	<b>Misuse</b>
6:4	Lambs/Calves for Offering	Self-gratification
6:5	David’s Hymns	Improvise & pleasure

6:6	Lord's Feasts & Anointing	Rapacious consumption & self-selection
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### Read Amos 6:7-11 ... The Destruction of Israel Would Be Complete

- 6:7 The royal and noble elders would be the first to be exiled (Amos 6:1). Those who were the most self-indulgent would pass away.
- 6:8 God hates pride and self-righteousness. (James 4:6; Proverbs 11:2, 16:5; 1 John 2:16)
- 6:9-10 Even a small remnant of unfaithful will die; since the family is dead, an outside relative (an uncle) must dispose of the corpses of the household by burning instead of burying (Lev 20:14; 21:9) possibly to prevent plague
- 6:11 God's judgment on sin wasn't concerned on whether the house was a mansion or a shack, the house of the wicked would crumble regardless of their social status.

### Read Amos 6:12-14 ... Israel's Denial Would Conclude in Affliction

- 6:12 God's rebellious people ruin what their lives. Running horses on rocks would cause injury while using oxen to plow rocks would also cause fruitless injury.
- 6:13 They rejoiced over Lo-debar ("nothing") as they claimed to be the cause of victory over Karnaim (meaning "double horn") as horn is the symbol of strength.
- These two towns (Lo-debar & Karnaim) were Transjordan in Gilead that Israel had conquered and taken militarily.
  - The meanings of the town names seem to be symbolic. Although Israel assessed themselves as mighty (Karnaim - "double horn"), Israel was in reality nothing (Lo-debar).
- 6:14 Oppression will come against his people from top (Lebo-hamath was the northernmost point of Israel) to bottom (Arabah was in the south as a Tributary to the Dead Sea). (2 Kings 14:25)
- God warned His people that if their prosperity turned their hearts away from Him, He would take their prosperity from them (Deuteronomy 8:11-14)

16 Amos 7-9

### Read Amos 7:1-3 ... The Judgment of Locusts

- 7:1 Amos is given five revelations by the Lord which are possibly visions. The phrase "*This is what the Lord God showed me: behold...*" begins each of the first four visions (Amos 7:1, 4, 7; 8:1)
- This initial vision concerns a locust plague against the second harvest. The first harvesting/mowing of crops was designated for the king's tribute while the second harvest was for personal use. These locusts would have destroyed all harvests used for personal and family sustenance (Exodus 10:12; Deuteronomy 28:38-42).
  - There are a dozen different words for locusts in the Hebrew language.
- 7:2 Amos intercedes successfully on behalf of the nation of Judah. Instead of focusing on the upcoming locust plague, Amos asks for God to forgive His people.
- The Hebrew word for "forgive" (səlahַ סָלַח) in this verse is only used twice in Scripture (Numbers 14:19; Amos 7:2) to refer to God forgiving man.

- Amos appeals to the need for mercy; however, Amos does not appeal to the covenant because Israel had clearly, perpetually broken the covenant.
- 7:3 The Lord has full knowledge of events/repercussions beforehand, so nothing is a surprise to Him.
- Being the almighty, sovereign creator, the language used to describe Him is at times anthropopathic which is used to ascribe human passions/feelings to a thing or a being that is not human.
  - God has revealed a judgment that He could have justifiably used, but chooses not to pursue.
  - The Hebrew term for “relenting” (niḥām נִחַם) means to “breathe heavy.” (Psalm 106:45; Jeremiah 26:19; Jonah 3:10). However, God’s purpose for man never changes (Numbers 23:19; 1 Samuel 15:29; Hebrews 13:8; James 1:17)
  - The Hebrew term for “relent” (niḥām נִחַם) is also translated around the act of comforting (2 Samuel 13:39; Isaiah 49:13, 51:3, 52:9). As Amos has seen all of the wickedness of Israel. God may be changing the perception of Amos towards a merciful God which is very comforting.

### Read Amos 7:4-6 ... The Judgment of Fire

7:4 The judgment of fire could have occurred in any number of ways: drought, attack, raining fire like Sodom and Gomorrah.

- The “great deep” may reference an underground water source (Genesis 1:2, 7:11, 49:25; Psalm 36:6; Isaiah 51:10).
- Israel is located on the Syrian-African rift, a break in the earth’s crust that extends the length of the border separating Israel and Jordan. The fire may be in reference to an earthquake and following fire from this rift.

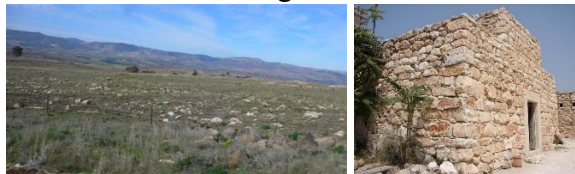
7:5 This second vision of fire resulted in another intercession by Amos (much like the first vision).

7:6 God relents a second time against the conflagration of fire. It is as if God is showing Amos the judgment that should occur as well as the mercy of Himself.

### Read Amos 7:7-9 ... Israel’s Sin Revealed by A Plumbline

7:7 Throughout the prophets, Jesus is always the one who is attributed as being the judge with the measuring line. The “plumb line” is used to see what is “out of line” or “out of plumb” contrasted to God’s perfect standard. A plumb line is dropped vertically (as if from heaven).

- The landscape of Israel is riddled with rocks, so the inhabitants gather the rocks from the fields to build fences and homes by stacking the rocks. Over time, the rock constructions begin to shift and lean.



- In the Old Testament, the root word for “righteousness” is “measuring reed” which means that God is the perfect standard while sin is the deviation from that standard. (Matthew 5:48)

- 7:8 Twice, the Lord asks Amos to describe what he sees in his own words (Amos 8:1). Prior to the plumb line (judgment), God had shown mercy (twice) on His people, but now they had been judged leading to punishment in the fourth and fifth visions.
- In the Old Testament, the plumb line is often used to describe judgment (2 Kings 21:13; Isaiah 28:17, 34:11; Lamentations 2:8)
  - Once the Lord reveals to Amos the plumb line assessment of God’s people, Amos does not intercede again on Israel’s behalf as judgment ensues.
- 7:9 The double-minded, hypocritical nature of Israel is shown as Isaac (who was the type of Christ the Son given for sacrifice) is said to have “high places” which were hill tops used for idolatry while Israel’s places of worship were also polluted.
- During the times of Judges, the high places were used to worship God, but over time, the high places devolved into Canaanite Baal worship.
  - The term “sanctuaries” refer to Dan (in the north) and Bethel (in the south) where Jeroboam I first established the worship of idols (1 Kings 12:28-33). This is a possible reason that Dan is not mentioned in the end times listing of the tribes (Rev 7:4).

**Read Amos 7:10-13 ... The False Prophet Amaziah Complains About Amos**

- 7:10 In this same vein, Amaziah was a false priest set up by man (1 Kings 12:31-32). Amaziah, the false priest, worked at the national shrine in Bethel.
- 7:11 Amaziah misquotes Amos as having said that the house of Jeroboam II will die by the sword when Amos truly foresaw the house of Jeroboam II (Zechariah & son Shallom – 2 Kings 15:8-10) in conflict with the sword (Amos 7:9 → 2 Kings 14:29).

<b>Amaziah’s Accusations of Amos (Amos 7:10-13)</b>	
Political Subversion	Amos 7:10
Foreigner from Judah (not Israel)	Amos 7:12
Preaching for Pay/Food	Amos 7:12
No One Asked You to Come	Amos 7:13

- 7:12-13 The credentialed Amaziah told Amos to preach God’s Word elsewhere instead of the “king’s sanctuary.” Amaziah explicitly states the problem with the national shrine – it is the worldly king’s shrine instead of God’s Temple.
- This is similar to a church being used for man’s worldly devices instead of God’s heavenly kingdom.
  - Many Biblical laymen (“men of God”) have been discounted because they are not being paid by God’s people and have not been polluted by worldly seminaries.

**Read Amos 7:14-17 ... The Calling of Amos & the Judgment of Amaziah**

- 7:14 Amos contrasts himself with clerics/preachers that have titles, degrees, vestments, and collars.
- In Hebrew, this verse does not contain any verbs; the verbs are supplemented by the translation.
  - As a caretaker of Sycamore trees, Amos fed the poor people with a fruit of the common man.
- 7:15 Amos was a blue-collar worker who had been called by God – not man.
- 7:16 God’s punishment of Israel in general (and Amaziah in specific) would fit the crime.

- The Hebrew word for “preach” (nataph נָטַף) also means to “drip” (Judges 5:4; Job 29:22; Psalm 68:8; Joel 3:18; Ezekiel 21:2), so prophets can be referenced as “drippers.” (Ezekiel 20:46, 21:2; Amos 7:16, 9:13; Micah 2:6, 11)
- The Hebrew word “nataph” can also be used for seductive speech (Proverbs 5:3; Song of Solomon 4:11). Similar to the “drip” of a honeycomb or even dripping wine (Amos 9:13).

7:17 Amaziah’s wife would become a prostitute (as Israel pursued idolatry) and ultimately be exiled to Assyria while Amaziah’s children would die to Assyrian warriors.

### **Read Amos 8:1-3 ... The End of Summer Fruit Compared to the End of Israel**

8:1 “Summer fruit” is at the end of the harvest and is close to spoiling (Jeremiah 8:20).

The summer fruit was the very last produce available in the market until the following year’s crop.

8:2 God seems to have waited until the iniquity of Israel was “complete” (Genesis 15:16).

8:3 God would turn the worship choruses into wailing for the dead.

- The temples referenced in this verse are national shrines that grew out of idolatrous acts. (Amos 4:4, 5:5)
- Beyond the exile by Assyria, the phrase “in that day” has an eschatological sense of the end times.
- There would be so many corpses that they would lay in the land with possible mass graves (Amos 6:10)

### **Read Amos 8:4-10 ... Israel’s False Religion Itemized & Criticized**

8:4 God condemns Israel for extorting the poor and needy (Deuteronomy 25:13-16; Amos 2:6, 4:1)

8:5 Each new moon was a time of worship to God, but Israel’s focus was on achieving wealth and pursuing business; sitting in church but thinking of their work on the Sabbath (Gen 2:3)

- The Jewish calendar is “Lunar” with the full moon being the first day of the month (Numbers 28:11; 2 Kings 4:23); the root word for “month” is “moon.”
- For merchants who were selling, they would make the ephah smaller which entailed a false bottom in the measuring utensil, so that the poor would not get the full amount of grain.
- For merchants who were buying, the shekel was used to balance the scales, so the merchants would make the shekel weight more in order to drive up the volume of goods; the amount needed to be greater to balance the heavier shekel. (Leviticus 19:35-36; Deuteronomy 25:13-16; Proverbs 20:10)
- The balances (scales) themselves would be inaccurate as well as the size of the weights.
- The statement “business is business” is just like the “separation of church and state.” It is a way of removing God’s ways from daily lives as self-willed people pursue self-indulgence.

8:6 The poor were used as commerce (Amos 2:6); they were not even able to purchase wheat in that all they could afford were the muddy husks and leftovers.

- At times the poor could not afford their own food, so they would sell themselves into slavery in order to have something to eat.
  - A low-price pair of sandals may symbolize the small debt that would force some needy people into slavery.
  - The unethical merchants would include the chaff (husks) with the wheat, so that the consumer was paying for the weight of husk mixed in with grain.
- 8:7 The pride of Jacob refers to their continual self-effort because of their pride. God often swears by Himself because He is such a certain and sure truth; in the same way, the arrogance and wickedness of Israel was so dependable that God could actually swear by them.
- God would never forget the sin of these unrepentant people (Amos 9:4; Jeremiah 17:1; Hosea 7:2).
- 8:8 The questions of this verse are correctly answered in the affirmative (yes). God will shake the nation through an earthquake.
- 8:9 This earthquake and the lack of light (God's light) allude to the Tribulation (Joel 2:2, 10, 31, 3:14-15; Amos 5:18, 20; Zephaniah 1:14-15; Rev 8:12)
- The lack of light (plague of darkness) occurred in Egypt prior to the Exodus (Exodus 10:21-23), and noonday darkness also occurred at Calvary (Matthew 27:45; Mark 15:33; Luke 23:44-45).
- 8:10 God had forbidden shaving of the head by His people because they should be relying on His salvation, but now they were doomed without Him (Deuteronomy 14:1).
- God relates to their mourning (Ex 4:22) as that of an only son which is used three times in scripture to express the depth of grief (Jeremiah 6:26; Zechariah 12:10)
  - The Jewish community tends to be emotionally expressive, so mourning is characterized by wailing.
  - God would remove His word from them since Israel refused to listen while the Word of God was available
  - Jewish men would shave their heads as if bald as a sign of mourning.

### **Read Amos 8:11-14 ... An Upcoming Famine of the Word of God**

- 8:11 *"The days are coming when I will send a famine through the land: not a famine of bread or a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD."* (Matthew 5:6; John 8:48)
- 8:12-13 People would look for God's Word in all of the world's chaotic systems (sea to sea) and parents would not be able to satisfy the answers of their children
- 8:14 "Swear by guilt" in worshipping with idolatrous worship from Dan (top) to Beersheba (bottom)
- If a single vowel is changed in the Hebrew term for "guilt" ('ašmat אָשַׁמַּת) the term represents the false goddess Ashima ('āšîmā אֲשִׁימָה). (2 Kings 17:30) This verse may infer Israelites swearing by the false goddess as more certain than the one true God.
  - Jeroboam had placed a golden calf in northern Israel (the Tribe of Dan). (Judges 18:30; 1 Kings 12:28-29; 2 Kings 10:28-29)
  - Beersheba was a shrine of worship to false gods (Amos 5:5).



## Read Amos 9:1-10 ... Certain Desolation Assured for the Religious Ritualistic

9:1 The term “Lord” stems from the word “Adonai” that means “Master.” The Lord stood by the altar as He comes in judgment.

- The actions of God towards Israel parallel Samson’s actions towards the Philistines (Judges 16:27-29). Israel’s shrines were similar to the Philistine’s Dagan temples where God killed everyone associated with it.
- The reference to the “shaking of thresholds” may be a reference to an earthquake (Amos 1:1, 8:8)

9:2 Man may try to hide in a number of places, but God would find them.

- Sheol is the holding place of the dead. Sheol is synonymous with the New Testament concept of hades (Luke 16:23). This is not “hell” as no one is hell until after the Judgment Day (Revelation 19:20; 20:10, 14-15); another New Testament name for “hell” would be Gehenna.

9:3 Mt. Carmel was a high mountain (1,700 feet above sea level) with many caves



- The Pacific averages a depth of 14,000 feet deep while the Mediterranean Sea is 4,900 feet (the Mediterranean Sea is the deepest off the coast of Greece at 16,800 feet deep). The deepest point of an ocean is the Mariana Trench that is 7 miles below the surface.
- Being bitten by the “sea serpent” was tantamount to being delivered into the hand of Satan (Job 41:1; Ps 71:13-14, 104:26; Is 27:1; Rev 12:9, 20:2)

9:4 *“I will fix My eyes on them for harm and not for good.”*

- *“It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”* (Hebrews 10:31)
- *“These people approach Me with their mouths to honor Me with lip-service, yet their hearts are far from Me, and their worship consists of man-made rules learned by rote”* (Isaiah 29:13)

9:5 The title “the Lord God of hosts” identifies God as the commander of the heavenly armies; He is ready to take military action against His people.

- Adonai (the Lord) Yahweh (God) שֶׁבַּאֲדֹנָי (of hosts)

9:6 Amos discusses the hydrologic cycle of evaporation then precipitation (Job 26:8; 36:27-28, 38:25-27; Ps 135:7; Eccl 1:6-7, 11:3).

9:7 God is responsible for establishing the enemies of Israel. The Israelites had become just like the pagan nations of the Cushites, Philistines, and Syrians (Arameans).

- Cush was the son of Ham with Canaan as his brother (Genesis 10:6).
- Philistines originally left Crete to attack Egypt, but they were unsuccessful and settled in southwest Israel.
- Kir was a city possibly in Assyria or Media.

9:8 God will judge His people, but He will not totally destroy them – He will leave a remnant.

9:9 The pebble is the remnant preserved by God (Matthew 16:18). The shaking could (once again) refer to the upcoming earthquake. This may be a sifting of the wicked (or the chaff) while the kernel/pebble will be retained.

- The Hebrew word שָׂרֵר (שָׂרֵר) can mean pebble or kernel.

9:10 Israel was trusting in their covenant and unique position with God while they abused His grace to flaunt sinful lifestyles and idolatrous worship. Many in modern times “play church” and feel safe with their empty rituals. (Matthew 7:23)

**Read Amos 9:11-15 ... The Restoration of the Temple in the Millennium**

9:11 Although the Tabernacle would be annihilated by Babylon (586BC), God would restore the royal lineage of David. Jesus will rule as King on earth in the millennial reign. James quotes this in Acts 15:16-18.

9:12 Edomites were the descendants of Esau, and “all the nations” is a reference to those outside of Israel as God will extend His salvation to the Gentiles. (Ephesians 2-3)

9:13 There would be a time when God blesses His people as they live faithful lives towards Him.

9:14 God’s people would experience the blessings promised by God as a result of their faithful walks (Deuteronomy 28:1-14).

9:15 There will be abundance in the millennium. God’s people will not need to be exiled because of their sin.