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COMMENTARY ON THE WHOLE BIBLE

Amos

by Matthew Henry

To the Students of the Words, Works and Ways of God:

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AN EXPOSITION, WITH PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS, OF

THE PROPHECY OF

AMOS

Though this prophet appeared a little before Isaiah, yet he was not, as some have mistaken, that Amos who was the father of Isaiah (~~200~~ Isaiah 1:1), for in the Hebrew their names are very different; their families too were of a different character, for Isaiah was a courtier, Amos a country-farmer. Amos signifies a *burden*, whence the Jews have a tradition that he was of a slow tongue and spoke with stammering lips; we may rather, in allusion to his name, say that his speech was *weighty* and his word the *burden of the Lord*. He was (as most think) of Judah, yet prophesied chiefly against Israel, and at Bethel, 7:13. Some think his style savours of his extraction, and is more plain and rustic than that of some other of the prophets; I do not see it so; but it is plain that his matter agreed with that of his contemporary Hosea, that *out of the mouth of these two witnesses the word might be established*. It appears by his contest with Amaziah the priest of Bethel that he met with opposition in his work, but was a man of undaunted resolution in it, faithful and bold in reproofing sin and denouncing the judgments of God for it, and pressing in his exhortations to repentance and reformation. He begins with threatenings against the neighbouring nations that were enemies to Israel, Amos 1 and 2. He then calls Israel to account, and judges them for their idolatry, their unworthy walking under the favours God had bestowed upon them, and their incorrigibleness under his judgments, Amos 3 and 4. He calls them to repentance (Amos 5), rejecting their hypocritical sacrifices unless they did repent. He foretels the desolations that were coming upon them notwithstanding their security (Amos 6), some particular judgments (Amos 7), particularly on Amaziah; and, after other reproofs and threatenings (Amos 8 and 9), concludes with a promise of the setting up of the Messiah's kingdom and the happiness of God's spiritual Israel therein, just as the prophecy of Joel concluded. These prophets, having opened the wound in their reproofs and threatenings, which show all wrong, in the

promises of gospel-grace open the remedy, which alone will set all to rights.