

## THE BOOK OF

# AMOS

Commentary by **A. R. FAUSSETT**

## INTRODUCTION

AMOS (meaning in *Hebrew* “a burden”) was (<sup>300E</sup>Amos 1:1) a shepherd of Tekoa, a small town of Judah, six miles southeast from Beth-lehem, and twelve from Jerusalem, on the borders of the great desert (<sup>400E</sup>2 Chronicles 20:20; compare <sup>400E</sup>2 Chronicles 11:6). The region being sandy was more fit for pastoral than for agricultural purposes. Amos therefore owned and tended flocks, and collected sycamore figs; not that the former was a menial office, kings themselves, as Mesha of Moab (<sup>000E</sup>2 Kings 3:4), exercising it. Amos, however (from <sup>3074</sup>Amos 7:14,15), seems to have been of humble rank.

Though belonging to Judah, he was commissioned by God to exercise his prophetic function in Israel; as the latter kingdom abounded in impostors, and the prophets of God generally fled to Judah through fear of the kings of Israel, a true prophet from Judah was the more needed in it. His name is not to be confounded with that of Isaiah’s father, Amoz.

The time of his prophesying was in the reigns of Uzziah king of Judea, and Jeroboam II, son of Joash, king of Israel (<sup>300E</sup>Amos 1:1), that is, in part of the time in which the two kings were contemporary; probably in Jeroboam’s latter years, after that monarch had recovered from Syria “the coast of Israel from the entering of Hamath to the sea of the plain” (<sup>324E</sup>2 Kings 14:25-27); for Amos foretells that these same coasts, “from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of the wilderness,” should be the scene of Israel’s being afflicted (<sup>3064</sup>Amos 6:14); also his references to the state of luxurious security then existing (<sup>300E</sup>Amos 6:1,4,13), and to the speedy termination of it by the Assyrian foe (Amos 1:5 3:12,15 5:27 8:2), point to the latter part of Jeroboam’s reign, which terminated in 784 B.C., the twenty-seventh year of Uzziah’s reign, which continued down to 759 B.C. He was contemporary with Hosea, only that the latter continued to prophesy in reigns subsequent to Uzziah (<sup>300E</sup>Hosea 1:1); whereas Amos ceased to prophesy in the reign of that monarch. The scene of his ministry

was Beth-el, where the idol calves were set up (<sup><3070></sup>Amos 7:10-13). There his prophecies roused Amaziah, the idol priest, to accuse him of conspiracy and to try to drive him back to Judah.

The first six chapters are without figure; the last three symbolical, but with the explanation subjoined. He first denounces the neighboring peoples, then the Jews, then Israel (from the third chapter to the end), closing with the promise or restoration under Messiah (<sup><3091></sup>Amos 9:11-15). His style is thought by JEROME to betray his humble origin; but though not sublime, it is regular, perspicuous, and energetic; his images are taken from the scenes in nature with which he was familiar; his rhythms are flowing, his parallelisms exact, and his descriptions minute and graphic. Some peculiar expressions occur: “cleanness of teeth,” that is, *want of bread* (<sup><3006></sup>Amos 4:6); “the excellency of Jacob” (<sup><3068></sup>Amos 6:8 8:7); “the high places of Isaac” (<sup><3009></sup>Amos 7:9); “the house of Isaac” (<sup><3076></sup>Amos 7:16); “he that createth the wind” (<sup><3043></sup>Amos 4:13).

HENGSTENBERG draws an able argument for the genuineness of the Mosaic records from the evidence in Amos, that the existing institutions in Israel as well as Judah (excepting the calves of Jeroboam), were framed according to the Pentateuch rules.

Two quotations from Amos occur in the New Testament (compare <sup><4072></sup>Acts 7:42,43, with <sup><3025></sup>Amos 5:25,26; and <sup><4156></sup>Acts 15:16,17, with <sup><3091></sup>Amos 9:11).

PHILO, JOSEPHUS, MELITO’S catalogue, JEROME, JUSTIN MARTYR (*Dialogue with Trypho*, 22, quoting the fifth and six chapters of Amos as “one of the twelve minor prophets”), and the sixtieth canon of the Laodicean council support the canonicity of the book of Amos.

# CHAPTER 1

## <3000>AMOS 1:1-15.

### GOD'S JUDGMENTS ON SYRIA, PHILISTIA, TYRE, EDOM, AND AMMON.

1. *The words of Amos* — that is, Amos' *oracular communications*. A heading found only in <3000>Jeremiah 1:1.

*among the herdmen* — rather, “shepherds”; both owning and tending sheep; from an *Arabic* root, “to mark with pricks,” namely, to select the best among a species of sheep and goats *ill-shapen and short-footed* (as others explain the name from an *Arabic* root), but distinguished by their wool [MAURER]. God chooses “the weak things of the world to confound the mighty,” and makes a humble shepherd reprove the arrogance of Israel and her king arising from prosperity (compare <3070>1 Samuel 17:40).

*which he saw* — in supernatural *vision* (<3000>Isaiah 1:1).

*two years before the earthquake* — mentioned in Zechariah 14:5. The earthquake occurred in Uzziah's reign, at the time of his being stricken with leprosy for usurping the priest's functions [JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities*, 9:10.4]. This clause must have been inserted by Ezra and the compilers of the Jewish canon.

2. *will roar* — as a lion (<3016>Joel 3:16). Whereas Jehovah is there represented roaring in Israel's behalf, here He roars against her (compare <3013>Psalm 18:13 <3053>Jeremiah 25:30).

*from Zion ... Jerusalem* — the seat of the theocracy, from which ye have revolted; not from Daniel and Beth-el, the seat of your idolatrous worship of the calves.

*habitations ... mourn* — poetical personification. Their *inhabitants* shall mourn, imparting a sadness to the very *habitations*.

*Carmel* — the mountain promontory north of Israel, in Asher, abounding in rich pastures, olives, and vines. The name is the symbol of *fertility*. When Carmel itself “withers,” how utter the desolation! (So 7:5 <3017>Isaiah 33:9 35:2 <3019>Jeremiah 50:19 Na 1:4).

3. Here begins a series of threatenings of vengeance against six other states, followed by one against Judah, and ending with one against Israel, with whom the rest of the prophecy is occupied. The eight predictions are in symmetrical stanzas, each prefaced by “Thus saith the Lord.” Beginning with the sin of others, which Israel would be ready enough to recognize, he proceeds to bring home to Israel her own guilt. Israel must not think hereafter, because she sees others visited similarly to herself, that such judgments are matters of chance; nay, they are divinely foreseen and foreordered, and are confirmations of the truth that God will not clear the guilty. If God spares not the nations that know not the truth, how much less Israel that sins wilfully (<sup><0137></sup>Luke 12:47,48 <sup><5047></sup>James 4:17)!

**for three transgressions ... and for four** — If Damascus had only sinned once or twice, I would have spared them, but since, after having been so often pardoned, they still persevere *so continually*, I will no longer “turn away” *their punishment*. The *Hebrew* is simply, “I will not reverse it,” namely, the sentence of punishment which follows; the negative expression implies more than it expresses; that is, “I will *most surely execute* it”; God’s fulfillment of His threats being more awful than human language can express. “Three and four” imply sin *multiplied on sin* (compare <sup><0216></sup>Exodus 20:5 <sup><0165></sup>Proverbs 30:15,18,21; “six and seven,” <sup><0659></sup>Job 5:19; “once and twice,” <sup><0314></sup>Job 33:14; “twice and thrice,” *Margin*; “oftentimes,” *English Version*, <sup><0329></sup>Job 33:29; “seven and also eight,” <sup><2110></sup>Ecclesiastes 11:2). There may be also a reference to *seven*, the product of *three* and *four* added; *seven* expressing the *full completion* of the measure of their guilt (<sup><0658></sup>Leviticus 26:18,21,24; compare <sup><0132></sup>Matthew 23:32).

**threshed** — the very term used of the Syrian king Hazael’s oppression of Israel under Jehu and Jehoahaz (<sup><0102></sup>2 Kings 10:32,33 13:7). The victims were thrown before the threshing sledges, the teeth of which tore their bodies. So David to Ammon (<sup><0121></sup>2 Samuel 12:31; compare <sup><0337></sup>Isaiah 28:27).

4. **Hazael ... Ben-hadad** — A black marble obelisk found in the central palace of Nimroud, and now in the British Museum, is inscribed with the names of Hazael and Ben-hadad of Syria, as well as Jehu of Israel, mentioned as tributaries of “Shalmanubar,” king of Assyria. The kind of tribute from Jehu is mentioned: gold, pearls, precious oil, etc. [G. V. SMITH]. The Ben-hadad here is the son of Hazael (<sup><0133></sup>2 Kings 13:3), not the Ben-hadad supplanted and slain by Hazael (<sup><0100></sup>2 Kings 8:7,15). The phrase, “I will send a fire,” that is, the flame of war (<sup><0786></sup>Psalms 78:63), occurs also in Amos 1:7,10,12,14, and <sup><0102></sup>Amos 2:2,5 <sup><0447></sup>Jeremiah 49:27 <sup><0314></sup>Hosea 8:14.

**5. *bar of Damascus*** — that is, the bar of its gates (compare <sup><2613></sup>Jeremiah 51:30).

***the inhabitant*** — *singular for plural*, “inhabitants.” HENDERSON, because of the parallel, “him that holdeth the scepter,” translates, “the ruler.” But the parallelism is that of one clause complementing the other, “the inhabitant” or *subject* here answering to “him that holdeth the scepter” or *ruler* there, both ruler and subject alike being cut off.

***Aven*** — the same as *Oon* or *Un*, a delightful valley, four hours’ journey from Damascus, towards the desert. Proverbial in the East as a place of delight [JOSEPHUS ABASSUS]. It is here parallel to “Eden,” which also means “pleasantness”; situated at Lebanon. As JOSEPHUS ABASSUS is a doubtful authority, perhaps the reference may be rather to the valley between Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, called *El-Bekaa*, where are the ruins of the Baal-bek temple of the sun; so the *Septuagint* renders it *On*, the same name as the city in Egypt bears, dedicated to the sun-worship (<sup><0445></sup>Genesis 41:45; *Heliopolis*, “the city of the sun,” <sup><2507></sup>Ezekiel 30:17, *Margin*). It is termed by Amos “the valley of Aven,” or “vanity,” from the worship of idols in it.

***Kir*** — a region subject to Assyria (<sup><2207></sup>Isaiah 22:6) in Iberia, the same as that called now in *Armenian Kur*, lying by the river Cyrus which empties itself into the Caspian Sea. Tiglath-pileser fulfilled this prophecy when Ahaz applied for help to him against Rezin king of Syria, and the Assyrian king took Damascus, slew Rezin, and carried away its people captive to Kir.

**6. *Gaza*** — the southernmost of the five capitals of the five divisions of Philistia, and the key to Palestine on the south: hence put for the whole Philistine nation. Uzziah commenced the fulfillment of this prophecy (see <sup><4006></sup>2 Chronicles 26:6).

***because they carried away ... the whole captivity*** — that is, they left none. Compare with the phrase here, <sup><2439></sup>Jeremiah 13:19, “Judah ... carried captive *all* of it ... *wholly* carried away.” Under Jehoram already the Philistines had carried away all the substance of the king of Judah, and his wives and his sons, “so that there was never a son left to him, save Jehoahaz”; and after Amos’ time (if the reference includes the *future*, which to the prophet’s eye is as if already done), under Ahaz (<sup><4088></sup>2 Chronicles 28:18), they seized on all the cities and villages of the low country and south of Judah.

***to deliver them up to Edom*** — Judah’s bitterest foe; as slaves (Amos 1:9; compare <sup><2401></sup>Joel 3:1,3,6). GROTIUS refers it to the fact (<sup><2504></sup>Isaiah 16:4) that on Sennacherib’s invasion of Judah, many fled for refuge to neighboring

countries; the Philistines, instead of hospitably sheltering the refugees, sold them, as if captives in war, to their enemies, the Idumeans.

**7. fire** — that is, the flame of war (<sup>-02128</sup>Numbers 21:28 <sup>-2301H</sup>Isaiah 26:11). Hezekiah fulfilled the prophecy, smiting the Philistines unto Gaza (<sup>-128082</sup>Kings 18:8). Foretold also by <sup>-23409</sup>Isaiah 14:29,31.

**8. Ashdod**, etc. — Gath alone is not mentioned of the five chief Philistine cities. It had already been subdued by David; and it, as well as Ashdod, was taken by Uzziah (<sup>-430192</sup>2 Chronicles 26:6). Gath perhaps had lost its position as one of the five primary cities before Amos uttered this prophecy, whence arose his omission of it. So Zephaniah 2:4,5. Compare <sup>-34708</sup>Jeremiah 47:4 <sup>-35216</sup>Ezekiel 25:16. Subsequently to the subjugation of the Philistines by Uzziah, and then by Hezekiah, they were reduced by Psammetichus of Egypt, Nebuchadnezzar, the Persians, Alexander, and lastly the Asmoneans.

**9. Tyrus ... delivered up the ... captivity to Edom** — the same charge as against the Philistines (Amos 1:6).

**remembered not the brotherly covenant** — the league of Hiram of Tyre with David and Solomon, the former supplying cedars for the building of the temple and king's house in return for oil and corn (<sup>-105112</sup>2 Samuel 5:11 <sup>-105101</sup>1 Kings 5:2-6 9:11-14,27 10-22 <sup>-334011</sup>1 Chronicles 14:1 <sup>-403882</sup>2 Chronicles 8:18 9:10).

**10. fire** — (Compare Amos 1:4,7 <sup>-23201</sup>Isaiah 23:1-18 <sup>-33011</sup>Ezekiel 26:1-28:26). Many parts of Tyre were burnt by fiery missiles of the Chaldeans under Nebuchadnezzar. Alexander of Macedon subsequently overthrew it.

**11. Edom ... did pursue his brother** — (<sup>-23405</sup>Isaiah 34:5). The chief aggravation to Edom's violence against Israel was that they both came from the same parents, Isaac and Rebekah (compare <sup>-02504</sup>Genesis 25:24-26 <sup>-65207</sup>Deuteronomy 23:7,8 <sup>-30010</sup>Obadiah 1:10,12 Malachi 1:2).

**cast off all pity** — literally, “destroy compassions,” that is, did suppress all the natural feeling of pity for a brother in distress.

**his wrath for ever** — As Esau kept up his grudge against Jacob, for having twice supplanted him, namely, as to the birthright and the blessing (<sup>-02741</sup>Genesis 27:41), so Esau's posterity against Israel (<sup>-00304</sup>Numbers 20:14,21). Edom first showed his spite in not letting Israel pass through his borders when coming from the wilderness, but threatening to “come out against him with the sword”; next, when the Syrians attacked Jerusalem under Ahaz (compare <sup>-43872</sup>2 Chronicles 28:17, with <sup>-216152</sup>2 Kings 16:5); next, when Nebuchadnezzar assailed Jerusalem (<sup>-110107</sup>Psalms 137:7,8). In each case

Edom chose the day of Israel's calamity for venting his grudge. This is the point of Edom's guilt dwelt on in <sup><310D></sup>Obadiah 1:10-13. God punishes the children, not for the sin of their fathers, but for their own filling up the measure of their fathers' guilt, as children generally follow in the steps of, and even exceed, their fathers' guilt (compare <sup><121B></sup>Exodus 20:5).

**12. Teman** — a city of Edom, called from a grandson of Esau (<sup><106A></sup>Genesis 36:11,15 <sup><310B></sup>Obadiah 1:8,9); situated five miles from Petra; south of the present Wady Musa. Its people were famed for wisdom (<sup><247E></sup>Jeremiah 49:7).

**Bozrah** — a city of Edom (<sup><250E></sup>Isaiah 63:1). Selah or Petra is not mentioned, as it had been overthrown by Amaziah (<sup><1247E></sup>2 Kings 14:7).

**13. Ammon** — The Ammonites under Nahash attacked Jabesh-gilead and refused to accept the offer of the latter to save them, unless the Jabesh-gileadites would put out all their right eyes (<sup><1910E></sup>1 Samuel 11:1, etc.). Saul rescued Jabesh-gilead. The Ammonites joined the Chaldeans in their invasion of Judea for the sake of plunder.

**ripped up ... women with-child** — as Hazael of Syria also did (<sup><128E2></sup>2 Kings 8:12; compare <sup><2830E></sup>Hosea 13:16). Ammon's object in this cruel act was to leave Israel without "heir," so as to seize on Israel's inheritance (<sup><240E></sup>Jeremiah 49:1).

**14. Rabbah** — the capital of Ammon: meaning "the Great." Distinct from Rabbah of Moab. Called *Philadelphia*, afterwards, from Ptolemy Philadelphus.

**tempest** — that is, with an onset swift, sudden, and resistless as a hurricane.

**day of the whirlwind** — parallel to "the day of battle"; therefore meaning "the day of the foe's tumultuous assault."

**15. their king ... princes** — or else, "their Molech (the idol of Ammon) and his priests" [GROTIUS and *Septuagint*]. <sup><363E></sup>Isaiah 43:28 so uses "princes" for "priests." So "your Molech," <sup><315E></sup>Amos 5:26; and <sup><247E></sup>Jeremiah 49:3, *Margin. English Version*, however, is perhaps preferable both here and in <sup><247E></sup>Jeremiah 49:3; see on <sup><247E></sup>Jeremiah 49:3.

## CHAPTER 2

### AMOS 2:1-16.

#### CHARGES AGAINST MOAB, JUDAH, AND LASTLY ISRAEL, THE CHIEF SUBJECT OF AMOS' PROPHECIES.

1. *burned ... bones of ... king of Edom into lime* — When Jehoram of Israel, Jehoshaphat of Judah, and the king of Edom, combined against Mesha king of Moab, the latter failing in battle to break through to the king of Edom, took the oldest son of the latter and offered him as a burnt offering on the wall (<sup>2488</sup>2 Kings 3:27) [MICHAELIS]. Thus, “king of Edom” is taken as *the heir to the throne of Edom*. But “his son” is rather the *king of Moab’s own son*, whom the father offered to Molech [JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities*, 9.3]. Thus the reference here in Amos is not to that fact, but to the revenge which probably the king of Moab took on the king of Edom, when the forces of Israel and Judah had retired after their successful campaign against Moab, leaving Edom without allies. The Hebrew tradition is that Moab in revenge tore from their grave and burned the bones of the king of Edom, the ally of Jehoram and Jehoshaphat, who was already buried. Probably the “burning of the bones” means, “he burned the king of Edom alive, reducing his very bones to lime” [MAURER].

2. *Kirioth* — the chief city of Moab, called also Kir-Moab (<sup>2150</sup>Isaiah 15:1). The form is *plural* here, as including both the acropolis and town itself (see <sup>2488</sup>Jeremiah 48:24,41, *Margin*).

*die with tumult* — that is, amid the tumult of battle (<sup>2304</sup>Hosea 10:14).

3. *the judge* — the chief magistrate, the supreme source of justice. “King” not being used, it seems likely a change of government had before this time substituted for *kings*, supreme *judges*.

4. From foreign kingdoms he passes to Judah and Israel, lest it should be said, he was strenuous in denouncing sins abroad, but connived at those of his own nation. Judah’s guilt differs from that of all the others, in that it was directly against God, not merely against man. Also because Judah’s sin was wilful and wittingly against light and knowledge.

*law* — the Mosaic code in general.



**commandments** — or *statutes*, the ceremonies and civil laws.

**their lies** — their lying idols (<sup><3906></sup>Psalm 40:4 <sup><3469></sup>Jeremiah 16:19), from which they drew false hopes. The order is to be observed. The Jews first cast off the divine *law*, then fall into *lying errors*; God thus visiting them with a righteous retribution ( <sup><4129></sup>Romans 1:25,26,28 <sup><3011></sup>2 Thessalonians 2:11,12). The pretext of a *good intention* is hereby refuted: the “lies” that mislead them are “*their* (own) lies” [CALVIN].

**after ... which their fathers ... walked** — We are not to follow the fathers in error, but must follow the word of God alone. It was an aggravation of the Jews’ sin that it was not confined to preceding generations; the sins of the sons rivalled those of their fathers ( <sup><1232></sup>Matthew 23:32 <sup><4075></sup>Acts 7:51) [CALVIN].

**5. a fire** — Nebuchadnezzar.

**6. Israel** — the ten tribes, the main subject of Amos’ prophecies.

**sold the righteous** — Israel’s judges for a bribe are induced to condemn in judgment him who has a righteous cause; in violation of <sup><5669></sup>Deuteronomy 16:19.

**the poor for a pair of shoes** — literally, “sandals” of wood, secured on the foot by leather straps; less valuable than shoes. Compare the same phrase, for “the most paltry bribe,” <sup><3086></sup>Amos 8:6 <sup><3339></sup>Ezekiel 13:19 <sup><3983></sup>Joel 3:3. They were not driven by poverty to such a sin; beginning with suffering themselves to be tempted by a large bribe, they at last are so reckless of all shame as to prostitute justice for the merest trifle. Amos convicts them of injustice, incestuous unchastity, and oppression first, as these were so notorious that they could not deny them, before he proceeds to reprove their contempt of God, which they would have denied on the ground that they worshipped God in the form of the calves.

**7. pant after ... dust of ... earth on ... head of ... poor** — that is, eagerly thirst for this object, by their oppression to prostrate the poor so as to cast the dust on their heads in mourning on the earth (compare <sup><1002></sup>2 Samuel 1:2 <sup><4022></sup>Job 2:12 <sup><3273></sup>Ezekiel 27:30).

**turn aside ... way of ... meek** — pervert their cause ( <sup><3152></sup>Amos 5:12 <sup><3344></sup>Job 24:4 [GROTIUS]; <sup><3019></sup>Isaiah 10:2).

**a man and his father** — a crime “not so much as named among the Gentiles” ( <sup><4001></sup>1 Corinthians 5:1). When God’s people sin in the face of light, they often fall lower than even those who know not God.

*go in unto the same maid* — from <sup><3018></sup>Amos 2:8 it seems likely “the damsel” meant is one of the prostitutes attached to the idol Astarte’s temple: prostitution being part of her filthy worship.

*to profane my ... name* — Israel in such abominations, as it were, *designedly* seeks to insult God.

**8. lay themselves ... upon clothes laid to pledge** — the *outer garment*, which <sup><0225></sup>Exodus 22:25-27 ordered to be restored to the poor man before sunset, as being his only covering. It aggravated the crime that they lay on these clothes in an idol temple.

*by every altar* — They partook in a recumbent posture of their idolatrous feasts; the ancients being in the habit of reclining at full length in eating, the upper part of the body resting on the left elbow, not sitting as we do.

*drink ... wine of the condemned* — that is, wine bought with the money of those whom they unjustly fined.

**9. Yet** — My former benefits to you heighten your ingratitude.

*the Amorite* — the most powerful of all the Canaanite nations, and therefore put for them all (<sup><01516></sup>Genesis 15:16 48:22 <sup><01011></sup>Deuteronomy 1:20 <sup><01002></sup>Joshua 7:7).

*height ... like ... cedars* — (<sup><01332></sup>Numbers 13:32,33).

*destroyed his fruit ... above ... roots ... beneath* — that is, destroyed him utterly (<sup><03816></sup>Job 18:16 <sup><03709></sup>Ezekiel 17:9 Malachi 4:1).

**10. brought you up from ... Egypt** — “brought up” is the phrase, as Egypt was low and flat, and Canaan hilly.

*to possess the land of the Amorite* — The Amorites strictly occupied both sides of the Jordan and the mountains afterward possessed by Judah; but they here, as in <sup><3019></sup>Amos 2:9, stand for *all* the Canaanites. God kept Israel forty years in the wilderness, which tended to discipline them in His statutes, so as to be the better fitted for entering on the possession of Canaan.

**11. Additional obligations under which Israel lay to God; the *prophets* and *Nazarites*, appointed by Him, to furnish religious instruction and examples of holy self-restraint.**

*of your young men* — It was a specimen of Israel’s highly favored state, that, of the class most addicted to pleasures, God chose those who by a solemn vow bound themselves to abstinence from all produce of the vine,

and from all ceremonial and moral defilement. The Nazarite was not to shave (<sup><000E></sup>Numbers 6:2, etc.). God left nothing undone to secure the purity of their worship and their faithfulness to it (<sup><200E></sup>Lamentations 4:7). The same comes from a *Hebrew* root, *nazar*, “to set apart.” Samson, Samuel, and John the Baptist were Nazarites.

***Is it not even thus*** — Will any of you dare to deny it is so?

**12.** Ye so despised these My favors, as to tempt the Nazarite to break his vow; and forbade the prophets prophesying (<sup><200E></sup>Isaiah 30:10). So Amaziah forbade Amos (<sup><300E></sup>Amos 7:12,13,14).

**13. *I am pressed under you*** — so CALVIN (Compare <sup><2014></sup>Isaiah 1:14). The *Margin* translates actively, “I will depress your place,” that is, “I will make it narrow,” a metaphor for *afflicting* a people; the opposite of *enlarging*, that is, relieving (<sup><300E></sup>Psalm 4:1 <sup><300E></sup>Proverbs 4:12). MAURER translates, “I will press you *down*” (not as *Margin*, “your place”; so the *Hebrew*, <sup><300E></sup>Job 40:12; or <sup><300E></sup>Amos 2:7 in *Hebrew* text). Amos, as a shepherd, appropriately draws his similes from rustic scenes.

**14. *flight shall perish from ... swift*** — Even the swift shall not be able to escape.

***strong shall not strengthen his force*** — that is, shall not be able to use his strength.

***himself*** — literally, “his life.”

**16. *flee ... naked*** — If any escape, it must be with the loss of accoutrements, and all that would impede rapid flight. They must be content with saving their life alone.

# CHAPTER 3

## <300E>AMOS 3:1-15.

**GOD’S EXTRAORDINARY LOVE, BEING REPAID BY ISRAEL WITH INGRATITUDE, OF NECESSITY CALLS FOR JUDGMENTS, WHICH THE PROPHETS ANNOUNCE, NOT AT RANDOM, BUT BY GOD’S COMMISSION, WHICH THEY CANNOT BUT FULFIL. THE OPPRESSION PREVALENT IN ISRAEL WILL BRING DOWN RUIN ON ALL SAVE A SMALL REMNANT.**

**1. *children of Israel*** — not merely the ten tribes, but “the *whole family* brought up from Egypt”; all the descendants of Jacob, including Judah and Benjamin. Compare <300B>Jeremiah 8:3, and <300B>Micah 2:3, on “family” for the nation. However, as the prophecy following refers to the ten tribes, *they* must be chiefly, if not solely, meant: they were the majority of the nation; and so Amos concedes what they so often boasted, that they were the elect people of God [CALVIN], *but* implies that this only heightens their sins.

**2. *You only have I known*** — that is, acknowledged as My people, and treated with peculiar favor (<300B>Exodus 19:5 <300B>Deuteronomy 4:20). Compare the use of “know,” <300B>Psalm 1:6 144:3 <300B>John 10:14 <300B>2 Timothy 2:19.

***therefore I will punish*** — the greater the privileges, the heavier the punishment for the abuse of them; for to the other offenses there is added, in this case, ingratitude. When God’s people do not glorify Him, He glorifies Himself by punishing them.

**3-6.** Here follow several questions of a parable-like kind, to awaken conviction in the people.

***Can two walk together, except they be agreed?*** — Can God’s prophets be so unanimous in prophesying against you, if God’s Spirit were not joined with them, or if their prophecies were false? The Israelites were “at ease,” not believing that God was with the prophets in their denunciations of coming ruin to the nation (<300B>Amos 6:1,3; compare <300B>1 Kings 22:18,24,27 <300B>Jeremiah 43:2). This accords with <300B>Amos 3:7,8. So “I will be with thy mouth” (<300B>Exodus 4:12 <300B>Jeremiah 1:8 <300B>Matthew 10:20). If the prophets and God were not agreed, the former could not predict the future

as they do. In <sup><312></sup>Amos 2:12 He had said, the Israelites forbade the prophets prophesying; therefore, in <sup><313></sup>Amos 3:3,8, He asserts the agreement between the prophets and God who spake by them against Israel [ROSENMULLER]. Rather, “I once walked with you” (<sup><314></sup>Leviticus 26:12) as a Father and Husband (<sup><2515></sup>Isaiah 54:5 <sup><314></sup>Jeremiah 3:14); but now your way and Mine are utterly diverse; there can therefore be no fellowship between us such as there was (<sup><315></sup>Amos 3:2); I will walk with you only to “punish you”; as a “lion” walks with his “prey” (<sup><316></sup>Amos 3:4), as a bird-catcher with a bird [TARNOVIUS]. The prophets, and all servants of God, can have no fellowship with the ungodly (<sup><317></sup>Psalms 119:63 <sup><318></sup>2 Corinthians 6:16,17 <sup><319></sup>Ephesians 5:11 <sup><320></sup>James 4:4).

4. The same idea as in <sup><321></sup>Matthew 24:28. Where a corrupt nation is, there God’s instruments of punishment are sure also to be. The lion roars loudly only when he has prey in sight.

***Will a young lion cry out ... if he*** — the “lion,” not the “young lion.”

***have taken nothing?*** — The young lion just weaned lies silent, until the old lion brings the prey near; then the scent rouses him. So, the prophet would not speak against Israel, if God did not reveal to him Israel’s sins as requiring punishment.

5. When a bird trying to fly upwards is made to fall upon the earth snare, it is a plain proof that the snare is there; so, Israel, now that thou art falling, infer thence, that it is in the snare of the divine judgment that thou art entangled [LUDOVICUS DE DIEU].

***shall one take up a snare from the earth, and have taken nothing*** — The bird-catcher does not remove his snare off the ground till he has caught some prey; so God will not withdraw the Assyrians, etc., the instruments of punishment, until they have had the success against you which God gives them. The foe corresponds to the “snare,” suddenly *springing* from the ground and enclosing the bird on the latter touching it; the *Hebrew* is literally, “Shall the snare *spring* from the earth?” Israel entangled in judgments answers to the bird “taken.”

6. When the sound of alarm is trumpeted by the watchman in the city, the people are sure to *run to and fro in alarm* (*Hebrew*, literally). Yet Israel is not alarmed, though God threatens judgments.

***shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?*** — This is the explanation of the preceding similes: God is the Author of all the calamities which come upon you, and which are foretold by His prophets. The evil of

sin is from ourselves; the evil of trouble is from God, whoever be the instruments.

**7. *his secret*** — namely, His purpose hidden from all, until it is revealed to His prophets (compare <sup><1887></sup>Genesis 18:17). In a wider sense, God’s will is revealed to all who love God, which it is not to the world (<sup><1254></sup>Psalm 25:14 <sup><815></sup>John 15:15 17:25,26).

***unto his servants*** — who being *servants* cannot but obey their Lord in setting forth His purpose (namely, that of judgment against Israel) (<sup><209></sup>Jeremiah 20:9 <sup><391></sup>Ezekiel 9:11). Therefore the fault which the ungodly find with them is groundless (<sup><1187></sup>1 Kings 18:17). It aggravates Israel’s sin, that God is not about to inflict judgment, without having fully warned the people, if haply they might repent.

**8.** As when “the lion roars” (compare <sup><302></sup>Amos 1:2 <sup><304></sup>Amos 3:4), none can help but “fear,” so when Jehovah communicates His awful message, the prophet cannot but prophesy. Find not fault with me for prophesying; I must obey God. In a wider sense true of all believers (<sup><403></sup>Acts 4:20 5:29).

**9. *Publish in ... palaces*** — as being places of greatest resort (compare <sup><1027></sup>Matthew 10:27); and also as it is the sin of *princes* that he arraigns, he calls on princes (the occupants of the “palaces”) to be the witnesses.

***Ashdod*** — put for all Philistia. Convene the Philistine and the Egyptian magnates, from whom I have on various occasions rescued Israel. (The opposite formula to “Tell it not in Gath,” namely, lest the heathen should glory over Israel). Even these idolaters, in looking on your enormities, will condemn you; how much more will the holy God?

***upon the mountains of Samaria*** — on the hills surrounding and commanding the view of Samaria, the metropolis of the ten tribes, which was on a lower hill (<sup><301></sup>Amos 4:1 <sup><1163></sup>1 Kings 16:24). The mountains are to be the tribunal on which the Philistines and Egyptians are to sit aloft to have a view of your crimes, so as to testify to the justice of your punishment (<sup><303></sup>Amos 3:13).

***tumults*** — caused by the violence of the princes of Israel in “oppressions” of the poor (<sup><819></sup>Job 35:9 <sup><201></sup>Ecclesiastes 4:1).

**10. *know not to do*** — Their moral corruption blinds their power of discernment so that they cannot do right (<sup><302></sup>Jeremiah 4:22). Not simple intellectual ignorance; the defect lay in the heart and will.

***store up violence and robbery*** — that is, treasures obtained by “violence and robbery” (<sup><302></sup>Proverbs 10:2).

**11.** Translate, “An adversary (the abruptness produces a startling effect)! *and that too*, from every side of the land.” So in the fulfillment, <sup><1276></sup>2 Kings 17:5: “The king of Assyria (Shalmaneser) came up *throughout all the land*, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it three years.”

***bring down thy strength from thee*** — that is, bring thee down from thy strength (the strength on which thou didst boast thyself): all thy resources (<sup><3005></sup>Proverbs 10:15).

***palaces shall be spoiled*** — a just retribution in kind (<sup><3180></sup>Amos 3:10). *The palaces* in which spoils of robbery were *stored up*, “shall be spoiled.”

**12. shepherd** — a pastoral image, appropriately used by Amos, a shepherd himself.

***piece of ... ear*** — brought by the shepherd to the owner of the sheep, so as not to have to pay for the loss (<sup><10134></sup>Genesis 31:39 <sup><10213></sup>Exodus 22:13). So if aught of Israel escapes, it shall be a miracle of God’s goodness. It shall be but a scanty remnant. There is a kind of goat in the East the ears of which are a foot long, and proportionally broad. Perhaps the reference is to this. Compare on the image <sup><10734></sup>1 Samuel 17:34,35 <sup><30472></sup>2 Timothy 4:17.

***that dwell in Samaria in the corner of a bed*** — that is, that live luxuriously in Samaria (compare <sup><3180></sup>Amos 6:1,4). “A bed” means here the Oriental divan, a raised part of the room covered with cushions.

***in Damascus in a couch*** — Jeroboam II had lately restored Damascus to Israel (<sup><12425></sup>2 Kings 14:25,28). So the Israelites are represented as not merely in “the corner of a bed,” as in Samaria, but “in a (whole) couch,” at Damascus, living in luxurious ease. Of these, now so luxurious, soon but a remnant shall be left by the foe. The destruction of Damascus and that of Samaria shall be conjoined; as here their luxurious lives, and subsequently under Pekah and Rezin their inroads on Judah, were combined (<sup><2301></sup>Isaiah 7:1-8 8:4,9 17:3). The parallelism of “Samaria” to “Damascus,” and the *Septuagint* favor *English Version* rather than GESENIUS: “on a *damask* couch.” The *Hebrew* pointing, though generally expressing *damask*, may express the city “Damascus”; and many manuscripts point it so. Compare for Israel’s overthrow, <sup><1276></sup>2 Kings 17:5,6 18:9-12.

**13. testify in the house**, etc. — that is, *against* the house of Jacob. God calls on the same persons as in <sup><3180></sup>Amos 3:9, namely, the heathen Philistines and the Egyptians to witness with their own eyes Samaria’s corruptions above described, so that none may be able to deny the justice of Samaria’s punishment [MAURER].

**God of hosts** — having all the powers of heaven and earth at His command, and therefore One calculated to strike terror into the hearts of the guilty whom He threatens.

**14. That** — rather, “since,” or “for.” This verse is not, as *English Version* translates, the thing which the witnesses cited are to “testify” (<sup><3183></sup>Amos 3:13), but the reason why God calls on the heathen to witness Samaria’s guilt; namely, in order to justify the punishment which He declares He will inflict.

**I will also visit ... Beth-el** — the golden calves which were the source of all “the transgressions of Israel” (<sup><1123></sup>1 Kings 12:32 13:2 <sup><1236></sup>2 Kings 23:15,16), though Israel thought that by them their transgressions were atoned for and God’s favor secured.

**horns of the altar** — which used to be sprinkled with the blood of victims. They were horn-like projecting points at the corners of ancient altars. The *singular*, “altar,” refers to the great altar erected by Jeroboam to the calves. The “altars,” *plural*, refer to the lesser ones made in imitation of the great one (<sup><1615></sup>2 Chronicles 34:5, compare with <sup><1132></sup>1 Kings 13:2 <sup><3811></sup>Hosea 8:11 10:1).

**15. winter ... summer house** — (<sup><1030></sup>Judges 3:20 <sup><2622></sup>Jeremiah 36:22). Winter houses of the great were in sheltered positions facing the south to get all possible sunshine, summer houses in forests and on hills, facing the east and north.

**houses of ivory** — having their walls, doors, and ceilings inlaid with ivory. So Ahab’s house (<sup><1229></sup>1 Kings 22:39 <sup><1618></sup>Psalms 45:8).



# CHAPTER 4

## <300E>AMOS 4:1-13.

### DENUNCIATION OF ISRAEL'S NOBLES FOR OPPRESSION; AND OF THE WHOLE NATION FOR IDOLATRY; AND FOR THEIR BEING UNREFORMED EVEN BY GOD'S JUDGMENTS: THEREFORE THEY MUST PREPARE FOR THE LAST AND WORST JUDGMENT OF ALL.

1. *king of Bashan* — fat and wanton cattle such as the rich pasture of Bashan (east of Jordan, between Hermon and Gilead) was famed for (<4634>Deuteronomy 32:14 <4921>Psalm 22:12 <4348>Ezekiel 39:18). Figurative for those luxurious nobles mentioned, <3089>Amos 3:9,10,12,15. The feminine, *kine*, or *cows*, not *bulls*, expresses their effeminacy. This accounts for masculine forms in the *Hebrew* being intermixed with feminine; the latter being figurative, the former the real persons meant.

*say to their masters* — that is to *their king*, with whom the princes indulged in potations (<3005>Hosea 7:5), and whom here they importune for more wine. “Bring” is *singular*, in the *Hebrew* implying that *one* “master” alone is meant.

2. *The Lord* — the same *Hebrew* as “masters” (<3041>Amos 4:1). Israel’s nobles say to their master or lord, Bring us drink: but “the Lord” of him and them “hath sworn,” etc.

*by his holiness* — which binds Him to punish the guilty (<3405>Psalm 89:35).

*he will take you away* — that is God by the instrumentality of the enemy.

*with hooks* — literally, “thorns” (compare <4312>2 Chronicles 33:11). As fish are taken out of the water by hooks, so the Israelites are to be taken out of their cities by the enemy (<3504>Ezekiel 29:4; compare <3801>Job 41:1,2 <4036>Jeremiah 16:16 <3015>Habakkuk 1:15). The image is the more appropriate, as anciently captives were led by their conquerors by a hook made to pass through the nose (<4292>2 Kings 19:28), as is to be seen in the Assyrian remains.

3. *go out at the breaches* — namely, of the city walls broken by the enemy.

*every cow at that which is before her* — figurative for *the once luxurious nobles* (compare “kine of Bashan,” <sup><300></sup>Amos 4:1) shall go out *each one right before her*; not through the gates, but *each at the breach before him*, not turning to the right or left, apart from one another.

*ye shall cast them into the palace* — “them,” that is, “your posterity,” from <sup><300></sup>Amos 4:2. You yourselves shall escape through the breaches, after having cast your little children into the palace, so as not to see their destruction, and to escape the more quickly. Rather, “ye shall cast *yourselves* into the palace,” so as to escape from it out of the city [CALVIN]. The palace, the scene of the princes riots (<sup><3180></sup>Amos 3:10,15 4:1), is to be the scene of their ignominious flight. Compare in the similar case of *Jerusalem’s* capture, the king’s escape by way of the palace, through a breach in the wall (<sup><3116></sup>Ezekiel 12:5,12). GESENIUS translates, “Ye shall be cast (as captives) into the (enemy’s) stronghold”; in this view, the enemy’s stronghold is called “palace,” in retributive contrast to the “palaces” of Israel’s nobles, the *store houses* of their *robberies* (<sup><3180></sup>Amos 3:10).

4. God gives them up to their self-willed idolatry, that they may see how unable their idols are to save them from their coming calamities. So <sup><3319></sup>Ezekiel 20:39.

*Beth-el* — (<sup><3084></sup>Amos 3:14).

*Gilgal* — (<sup><3045></sup>Hosea 4:15 9:15 12:11).

*sacrifices every morning* — as commanded in the law (<sup><0208></sup>Numbers 28:3,4). They imitated the letter, while violating by calf-worship the spirit, of the Jerusalem temple-worship.

*after three years* — every third year; literally, “after three (years of) days” (that is, the fullest complement of days, or *a year*); “after three full years.” Compare <sup><0251></sup>Leviticus 25:20 <sup><0770></sup>Judges 17:10, and “the days” for the *years*, <sup><2002></sup>Joel 1:2. So *a month of days* is used for *a full month*, wanting no day to complete it (<sup><0134></sup>Genesis 29:14, *Margin*; <sup><0412></sup>Numbers 11:20,21). The Israelites here also kept to the letter of the law in bringing in the tithes of their increase every third year (<sup><0543></sup>Deuteronomy 14:28 26:12).

5. *offer* — literally, “burn incense”; that is, “offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with *burnt incense* and with leavened bread.” The frankincense was laid on the meat offering, and taken by the priest from it to burn on the altar (<sup><0818></sup>Leviticus 2:1,2,8-11). Though *unleavened cakes* were to accompany the peace offering sacrifice of animals, *leavened bread* was also commanded (<sup><0812></sup>Leviticus 7:12,13), but not as a “meat offering” (<sup><0811></sup>Leviticus 2:11).

*this liketh you* — that is, this is what ye like.

**6-11.** Jehovah details His several chastisements inflicted with a view to reclaiming them: but adds to each the same sad result, “yet have ye not returned unto Me” (<sup><219></sup>Isaiah 9:13 <sup><248></sup>Jeremiah 5:3 <sup><207></sup>Hosea 7:10); the monotonous repetition of the same burden marking their pitiable obstinacy.

*cleanness of teeth* — explained by the parallel, “want of bread.” The famine alluded to is that mentioned in <sup><131></sup>2 Kings 8:1 [GROTIUS]. Where there is no food to masticate, the teeth are free from uncleanness, but it is the cleanness of want. Compare <sup><140></sup>Proverbs 14:4, “Where no oxen are, the crib is clean.” So spiritually, where all is outwardly smooth and clean, it is often because there is no solid religion. Better fighting and fears with real piety, than peace and respectable decorum without spiritual life.

**7.** *withholden ... rain ... three months to ... harvest* — the time when rain was most needed, and when usually “the latter rain” fell, namely, in spring, the latter half of February, and the whole of March and April (<sup><218></sup>Hosea 6:3 <sup><102></sup>Joel 2:23). The drought meant is that mentioned in <sup><117></sup>1 Kings 17:1 [GROTIUS].

*rain upon one city ... not ... upon another* — My rain that fell was only partial.

**8.** *three cities wandered* — that is, *the inhabitants* of three cities (compare <sup><244></sup>Jeremiah 14:1-6). GROTIUS explains this verse and <sup><301></sup>Amos 4:7, “The rain fell on neighboring countries, but not on Israel, which marked the drought to be, not accidental, but the special judgment of God.” The Israelites were obliged to leave their cities and homes to seek water at a distance [CALVIN].

**9.** *blasting* — the blighting influence of the east wind on the corn (<sup><406></sup>Genesis 41:6).

*when ... gardens ... increased* — In vain ye multiplied your gardens, etc., for I destroyed their produce. BOCHART supports *Margin*, “the *multitude* of your gardens.”

*palmer worm* — A species of *locust* is here meant, hurtful to fruits of trees, not to herbage or corn. The same east wind which brought the drought, blasting, and mildew, brought also the locusts into Judea [BOCHART], (<sup><103></sup>Exodus 10:13).

**10.** *pestilence after the manner of Egypt* — such as I formerly sent on the Egyptians (<sup><108></sup>Exodus 9:3,8, etc. <sup><112></sup>Exodus 12:29 <sup><132></sup>Deuteronomy 28:27,60). Compare the same phrase, <sup><314></sup>Isaiah 10:24.

**have taken away your horses** — literally, “accompanied with the captivity of your horses”; I have given up your young men to be slain, and their horses to be taken by the foe (compare <sup><2137></sup>2 Kings 13:7).

**stink of your camps** — that is, of your slain men (compare <sup><2348></sup>Isaiah 34:3 <sup><2123></sup>Joel 2:20).

**to come up unto your nostrils** — The *Hebrew* is more emphatic, “to come up, and that unto your nostrils.”

**11. some of you** — some parts of your territory.

**as God overthrew Sodom** — (<sup><1622></sup>Deuteronomy 29:23 <sup><2339></sup>Isaiah 13:19 <sup><2498></sup>Jeremiah 49:18 50:40 <sup><6119></sup>2 Peter 2:6 <sup><6007></sup>Jude 1:7). “God” is often repeated in *Hebrew* instead of “I.” The earthquake here apparently alluded to is not that in the reign of Uzziah, which occurred “two years” later (<sup><3100></sup>Amos 1:1). Traces of earthquakes and volcanic agency abound in Palestine. The allusion here is to some of the effects of these in previous times. Compare the prophecy, <sup><1625></sup>Deuteronomy 28:15-68, with <sup><3105></sup>Amos 4:6-11 here.

**as a firebrand plucked out of ... burning** — (Compare <sup><2310></sup>Isaiah 7:4 Zechariah 3:2). The phrase is proverbial for a narrow escape from utter extinction. Though Israel revived as a nation under Jeroboam II, it was but for a time, and that after an almost utter destruction previously (<sup><2145></sup>2 Kings 14:26).

**12. Therefore** — as all chastisements have failed to make thee “return unto Me.”

**thus will I do unto thee** — as I have threatened (<sup><3102></sup>Amos 4:2,3).

**prepare to meet thy God** — God is about to inflict the last and worst judgment on thee, the extinction of thy nationality; consider then what preparation thou canst make for encountering Him as thy foe (<sup><2434></sup>Jeremiah 46:14 <sup><2431></sup>Luke 14:31,32). But as that would be madness to think of (<sup><2310></sup>Isaiah 27:4 <sup><3224></sup>Ezekiel 22:14 <sup><3103></sup>Hebrews 10:31), see what can be done towards mitigating the severity of the coming judgment, by penitence (<sup><2310></sup>Isaiah 27:5 <sup><4113></sup>1 Corinthians 11:31). This latter exhortation is followed up in <sup><3104></sup>Amos 5:4,6,8,14,15.

**13. The God whom Israel is to “prepare to meet”** (<sup><3102></sup>Amos 4:12) is here described in sublime terms.

**wind** — not as the *Margin*, “spirit.” The God with whom thou hast to do is the Omnipotent Maker of things *seen*, such as the stupendous mountains,

and of things *too subtle* to be seen, though of powerful agency, as the “wind.”

***declareth unto man ... his thought*** — (<sup><49D0E></sup>Psalm 139:2). Ye think that your secret thoughts escape My cognizance, but I am the searcher of hearts.

***maketh ... morning darkness*** — (<sup><30E8></sup>Amos 5:8 8:9). Both literally turning the sunshine into darkness, and figuratively turning the prosperity of the ungodly into sudden adversity (<sup><4975D></sup>Psalm 73:12,18,19; compare <sup><24E6></sup>Jeremiah 13:16).

***treadeth upon ... high places*** — God treadeth down the proud of the earth. He subjects to Him all things however high they be (<sup><300E></sup>Micah 1:3). Compare <sup><E2D></sup>Deuteronomy 32:13 33:29, where the same phrase is used of God’s people, elevated by God above every other human height.

# CHAPTER 5

## AMOS 5:1-27.

**ELEGY OVER THE PROSTRATE KINGDOM: RENEWED EXHORTATIONS TO REPENTANCE: GOD DECLARES THAT THE COMING DAY OF JUDGMENT SHALL BE TERRIBLE TO THE SCORNERS WHO DESPISE IT: CEREMONIAL SERVICES ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE TO HIM WHERE TRUE PIETY EXISTS NOT: ISRAEL SHALL THEREFORE BE REMOVED FAR EASTWARD.**

1. *lamentation* — an elegy for the destruction coming on you. Compare <sup><3910></sup>Ezekiel 32:2, “take up,” namely, as a mournful *burden* (<sup><3910></sup>Ezekiel 19:1 27:2).
2. *virgin of Israel* — the Israelite state heretofore unsubdued by foreigners. Compare <sup><2312></sup>Isaiah 23:12 <sup><4113></sup>Jeremiah 18:13 31:4,21 <sup><2113></sup>Lamentations 2:13; may be interpreted, Thou who wast once the “virgin daughter of Zion.” Rather, “virgin” as applied to a state implies its beauty, and the delights on which it prides itself, its luxuries, power, and wealth [CALVIN].
- no more rise* — in the existing order of things: in the Messianic dispensation it is to rise again, according to many prophecies. Compare <sup><1123></sup>2 Kings 6:23 24:7, for the restricted sense of “no more.”
- forsaken upon her land* — or, “prostrated upon,” etc. (compare <sup><2915></sup>Ezekiel 29:5 32:4) [MAURER].
3. *went out by a thousand* — that is, “the city from which there used to go out a thousand” equipped for war. “City” is put for “the inhabitants of the city,” as in <sup><1018></sup>Amos 4:8.
- shall leave ... hundred* — shall have only a hundred left, the rest being destroyed by sword and pestilence (<sup><1512></sup>Deuteronomy 28:62).
4. *Seek ye me, and ye shall live* — literally, “Seek ... Me, and live.” The second imperative expresses the *certainty* of “life” (escape from judgment) resulting from obedience to the precept in the first imperative. If they perish, it is their own fault; God would forgive, if they would repent (<sup><2313></sup>Isaiah 55:3,6).

5. *seek not Beth-el* — that is, the calves at Beth-el.

*Gilgal* — (See on <sup><3004></sup>Amos 4:4).

*Beer-sheba* — in Judah on the southern frontier towards Edom. Once “the well of the oath” by Jehovah, ratifying Abraham’s covenant with Abimelech, and the scene of his calling on “the Lord, the everlasting God” (<sup><0231></sup>Genesis 21:31,33), now a stronghold of idolatry (<sup><3084></sup>Amos 8:14).

*Gilgal shall surely go into captivity* — a play on similar sounds in the Hebrew, *Gilgal, galoh, yigleh*: “Gilgal (the place of *rolling*) shall rolling be rolled away.”

*Beth-el shall come to naught* — Beth-el (that is, the “house of God”), called because of its vain idols Beth-aven (that is, “the house of vanity,” or “naught,” <sup><3045></sup>Hosea 4:15 10:5,8), shall indeed “come to naught.”

6. *break out like fire* — bursting through everything in His way. God is “a consuming fire” (<sup><0904></sup>Deuteronomy 4:24 <sup><3007></sup>Isaiah 10:17 <sup><3088></sup>Lamentations 2:3).

*the house of Joseph* — the kingdom of Israel, of which the tribe of Ephraim, Joseph’s son, was the chief tribe (compare <sup><3576></sup>Ezekiel 37:16).

*none to quench it in Beth-el* — that is, none in Beth-el to quench it; none of the Beth-el idols on which Israel so depended, able to remove the divine judgments.

7. *turn judgment to wormwood* — that is, pervert it to most bitter wrong. As justice is sweet, so injustice is bitter to the injured. “Wormwood” is from a Hebrew root, to “execrate,” on account of its noxious and bitter qualities.

*leave on righteousness in ... earth* — MAURER translates, “cast righteousness to the ground,” as in <sup><3302></sup>Isaiah 28:2 <sup><3782></sup>Daniel 8:12.

8. *the seven stars* — literally, the *heap* or cluster of *seven* larger stars and others smaller (<sup><3809></sup>Job 9:9 38:31). The former whole passage seems to have been in Amos mind. He names the stars well known to shepherds (to which class Amos belonged), Orion as the precursor of the tempests which are here threatened, and the Pleiades as ushering in spring.

*shadow of death* — Hebraism for *the densest darkness*.

*calleth for the waters of the sea* — both to send *deluges* in judgment, and the ordinary *rain* in mercy (<sup><1184></sup>1 Kings 18:44).

**9. *strengtheneth the spoiled*** — literally, “spoil” or “devastation”: hence the “person spoiled.” WINER, MAURER, and the best modern critics translate, “*maketh devastation (or destruction) suddenly to arise,*” literally, “maketh it to gleam forth like the dawn.” Ancient versions support *English Version*. The *Hebrew* is elsewhere used, *to make, to shine, to make glad*: and as *English Version* here (<sup><4913></sup>Psalm 39:13), “recover strength.”

***the spoiled shall come*** — “devastation,” or “destruction shall come upon” [MAURER]. *English Version* expresses that, strong as Israel fancies herself after the successes of Jeroboam II (<sup><1245></sup>2 Kings 14:25), even the *weakest* can be made by God to prevail against the strong.

**10. *him that rebuketh in the gate*** — the *judge* who condemns their iniquity *in the place of judgment* (<sup><2321></sup>Isaiah 29:21).

***abhor him that speaketh uprightly*** — the *prophet* telling them the unwelcome truth: answering in the parallelism to the *judge*, “that rebuketh in the gate” (compare <sup><1218></sup>1 Kings 22:8 <sup><1098></sup>Proverbs 9:8 12:1 <sup><3823></sup>Jeremiah 36:23).

**11. *burdens of wheat*** — *burdensome taxes* levied in kind from the *wheat* of the needy, to pamper the lusts of the great [HENDERSON]. Or wheat advanced in time of scarcity, and exacted again at a burdensome interest [RABBI SALOMON].

***built houses ... but not dwell in them ... vineyards, ... but not drink wine of them*** — according to the original prophecy of Moses (<sup><6331></sup>Deuteronomy 28:30,38,39). The converse shall be true in restored Israel (<sup><3094></sup>Amos 9:14 <sup><3521></sup>Isaiah 65:21,22).

**12. *they afflict ... they take*** — rather, “(ye) who afflict ... take.”

***bribe*** — literally, a *price* with which one who has an unjust cause *ransoms* himself from your sentence (<sup><0113></sup>1 Samuel 12:3, *Margin*; <sup><1065></sup>Proverbs 6:35).

***turn aside the poor in the gate*** — refuse them their right *in the place of justice* (<sup><3117></sup>Amos 2:7 <sup><2321></sup>Isaiah 29:21).

**13. *the prudent*** — the spiritually wise.

***shall keep silence*** — not mere silence of tongue, but the prudent shall keep himself quiet from taking part in any public or private affairs which he can avoid: as it is “an evil time,” and one in which all law is set at naught. <sup><4156></sup>Ephesians 5:16 refers to this. Instead of impatiently agitating against irremediable evils, the godly wise will not cast pearls before swine, who would trample these, and rend the offerers (<sup><4106></sup>Matthew 7:6), but will



patiently wait for God's time of deliverance in silent submission (<sup>3909</sup>Psalm 39:9).

**14. *and so*** — on condition of your “seeking good.”

***shall be with you, as ye have spoken*** — as ye have boasted; namely, that God is with you, and that you are His people (<sup>3381</sup>Micah 3:11).

**15. *Hate ... evil ... love ... good*** — (<sup>2016</sup>Isaiah 1:16,17 <sup>6129</sup>Romans 12:9).

***judgment in the gate*** — *justice* in the place where causes are tried.

***it may be that the Lord ... will be gracious*** — so, “peradventure” (<sup>4023</sup>Exodus 32:30). Not that men are to come to God with an *uncertainty* whether or no He will be gracious: the expression merely implies the difficulty in the way, because of the want of true repentance on man's part, so as to stimulate the zealous earnestness of believers in seeking God (compare <sup>4160</sup>Genesis 16:2 <sup>2184</sup>Joel 2:14 <sup>4182</sup>Acts 8:22).

***the remnant of Joseph*** — (see <sup>3086</sup>Amos 5:6). Israel (represented by “Ephraim,” the leading tribe, and descendant of Joseph) was, as compared to what it once was, now but a remnant, Hazael of Syria having smitten all the coasts from Jordan eastward, Gilead and Bashan, Gad, Reuben, and Manasseh (<sup>2082</sup>2 Kings 10:32,33) [HENDERSON]. Rather, “the remnant of Israel that shall have been left after the wicked have been destroyed” [MAURER].

**16. *Therefore*** — resumed from <sup>3083</sup>Amos 5:13. God foresees they will not obey the exhortation (<sup>3084</sup>Amos 5:14,15), but will persevere in the unrighteousness stigmatized (<sup>3087</sup>Amos 5:7,10,12).

***the Lord*** — JEHOVAH.

***the God of hosts, the Lord*** — an accumulation of titles, of which His lordship over all things is the climax, to mark that from His judgment there is no appeal.

***streets ... highways*** — the *broad open spaces* and the *narrow streets* common in the East.

***call the husbandman to mourning*** — The citizens shall call the inexperienced *husbandmen* to act the part usually performed by professional mourners, as there will not be enough of the latter for the universal mourning which prevails.

**such as are skillful of lamentation** — professional mourners hired to lead off the lamentations for the deceased; alluded to in <sup>-1126</sup>Ecclesiastes 12:5; generally women (<sup>-2497</sup>Jeremiah 9:17-19).

**17. in all vineyards ... wailing** — where usually songs of joy were heard.

**pass through thee** — taking vengeance (<sup>-1020</sup>Exodus 12:12,23 <sup>-112</sup>Na 1:12). “Pass over” and “pass by,” on the contrary, are used of God’s *forgiving* (<sup>-1023</sup>Exodus 12:23 <sup>-2378</sup>Micah 7:18; compare <sup>-3078</sup>Amos 7:8).

**18. Woe unto you who do not scruple to say in irony, “We desire that the day of the Lord would come,”** that is, “Woe to you who treat it as if it were a mere dream of the prophets” (<sup>-2359</sup>Isaiah 5:19 <sup>-2475</sup>Jeremiah 17:15 <sup>-2422</sup>Ezekiel 12:22).

**to what end is it for you!** — Amos taking their ironical words in earnest: for God often takes the blasphemer at his own word, in righteous retribution making the scoffer’s jest a terrible reality against himself. Ye have but little reason to desire the day of the Lord; for it will be to you calamity, and not joy.

**19. As if a man did flee ... a lion, and a bear met him** — Trying to escape one calamity, he falls into another. This perhaps implies that in <sup>-3058</sup>Amos 5:18 their ironical desire for the day of the Lord was as if it would be an escape from existing calamities. The coming of the day of the Lord would be good news to us, if true: for we have served God (that is, the golden calves). So do hypocrites flatter themselves as to death and judgment, as if these would be a relief from existing ills of life. The lion may from generosity spare the prostrate, but the *bear* spares none (compare <sup>-1814</sup>Job 20:24 <sup>-2348</sup>Isaiah 24:18).

**leaned ... on the wall** — on the side wall of the house, to support himself from falling. Snakes often hid themselves in fissures in a wall. Those not reformed by God’s judgments will be pursued by them: if they escape one, another is ready to seize them.

**21. I hate, I despise** — The two verbs joined without a conjunction express God’s strong abhorrence.

**your feast days** — *yours*; not *Mine*; I do not acknowledge them: unlike those in Judah, yours are of human, not divine institution.

**I will not smell** — that is, I will take *no delight in* the sacrifices offered (<sup>-1002</sup>Genesis 8:21 <sup>-1036</sup>Leviticus 26:31).

**in your solemn assemblies** — literally, “days of restraint.” <sup><2010></sup>Isaiah 1:10-15 is parallel. Isaiah is fuller; Amos, more condensed. Amos condemns Israel not only on the ground of their thinking to satisfy God by sacrifices without obedience (the charge brought by Isaiah against the Jews), but also because even their external ritual was a mere corruption, and unsanctioned by God.

**22. meat offerings** — flour, etc. Unbloody offerings.

**peace offerings** — offerings for obtaining from God peace and prosperity. Hebrew, “thank offerings.”

**23. Take ... away from me** — literally, “Take away, *from upon* Me”; the idea being that of a *burden* pressing *upon* the bearer. So <sup><2014></sup>Isaiah 1:14, “They are a trouble unto Me (literally, ‘a burden *upon* Me’): I am weary to bear them.”

**the noise of thy songs** — The hymns and instrumental music on sacred occasions are to Me nothing but a disagreeable *noise*.

**I will not hear** — Isaiah substitutes “prayers” (<sup><2015></sup>Isaiah 1:15) for the “songs” and “melody” here; but, like Amos, closes with “I will not hear.”

**24. judgment** — justice.

**run down** — literally, “roll,” that is, flow abundantly (<sup><2018></sup>Isaiah 48:18). Without the desire to fulfill righteousness in the offerer, the sacrifice is hateful to God (<sup><0952></sup>1 Samuel 15:22 <sup><0968></sup>Psalms 66:18 <sup><2016></sup>Hosea 6:6 Micah 6:8).

**25, 26. Have ye offered?** etc. — Yes: ye have. “But (all the time with strange inconsistency) ye have borne (aloft in solemn pomp) the tabernacle (that is, the portable shrine, or model *tabernacle*: small enough not to be detected by Moses; compare <sup><4424></sup>Acts 19:24) of your Molech” (that idol is “*your*” god; I am not, though ye go through the form of presenting offerings to Me). The question, “Have ye,” is not a denial (for they *did* offer in the wilderness to Jehovah sacrifices of the cattle which they took with them in their nomad life there, <sup><0204></sup>Exodus 24:4 <sup><0407></sup>Numbers 7:1-89 9:1, etc.), but a strong affirmation (compare <sup><0027></sup>1 Samuel 2:27,28 <sup><0820></sup>Jeremiah 31:20 <sup><0204></sup>Ezekiel 20:4). The sin of Israel in Amos’ time is the very sin of their forefathers, mocking God with worship, while at the same time worshipping idols (compare <sup><0209></sup>Ezekiel 20:39). It was clandestine in Moses’ time, else he would have put it down; he was aware generally of their unfaithfulness, though not knowing the particulars (<sup><0521></sup>Deuteronomy 31:21,27).

**Molech ... Chiun** — “Molech” means “king” answering to *Mars* [BENGEI]; *the Sun* [JABLONSKI]; *Saturn*, the same as “Chiun” [MAURER]. The *Septuagint* translates “Chiun” into *Remphan*, as Stephen quotes it (<sup><417></sup>Acts 7:42,43). The same god often had different names. *Molech* is the Ammonite name; *Chiun*, the Arabic and Persian name, written also *Chevan*. In an Arabic lexicon *Chiun* means “austere”; so astrologers represented *Saturn* as a planet baleful in his influence. Hence the Phoenicians offered human sacrifices to him, children especially; so idolatrous Israel also. *Rimmon* was the Syrian name (<sup><178></sup>2 Kings 5:18); pronounced as *Remvan*, or “Remphan,” just as *Chiun* was also *Chevan*. Molech had the form of a king; Chevan, or Chiun, of a star [GROTIUS]. Remphan was the Egyptian name for *Saturn*: hence the *Septuagint* translator of Amos gave the Egyptian name for the *Hebrew*, being an Egyptian. [HODIUS II, *Deuteronomy Bibliorum Textibus Originalibus*. 4.115]. The same as the Nile, of which the Egyptians made the star *Saturn* the representative [HARENBERG]. BENGEI considers *Remphan* or *Rephan* akin to *Teraphim* and *Remphis*, the name of a king of Egypt. The Hebrews became infected with Sabeanism, the oldest form of idolatry, the worship of the *Saba* or starry hosts, in their stay in the Arabian desert, where Job notices its prevalence (<sup><826></sup>Job 31:26); in opposition, in <sup><177></sup>Amos 5:27, Jehovah declares Himself “the God of *hosts*.”

**the star of your god** — R. ISAAC CARO says all the astrologers represented Saturn as *the star of Israel*. Probably there was a figure of a star on the head of the image of the idol, to represent the planet Saturn; hence “images” correspond to “star” in the parallel clause. A star in hieroglyphics represents God (<sup><047></sup>Numbers 24:17). “Images” are either a Hebraism for “image,” or refer to the many images made to represent Chiun.

**27. beyond Damascus** — In <sup><478></sup>Acts 7:43 it is “beyond *Babylon*,” which includes *beyond Damascus*. In Amos time, Damascus was the object of Israel’s fear because of the Syrian wars. Babylon was not yet named as the place of their captivity. Stephen supplies this name. Their place of exile was in fact, as he states, “beyond Babylon,” in Halah and Habor by the river Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes (<sup><276></sup>2 Kings 17:6; compare here Amos 1:5 4:3 6:14). The road to Assyria lay through “Damascus.” It is therefore specified, that not merely shall they be carried captives to Damascus, as they had been by Syrian kings (<sup><170></sup>2 Kings 10:32,33 13:7), but, beyond that, to a region whence a return was not so possible as from Damascus. They were led captive by Satan into idolatry, therefore God caused them to go captive among idolaters. Compare <sup><259></sup>2 Kings 15:29 16:9 <sup><306></sup>Isaiah 8:4, whence it appears Tiglath-pileser attacked Israel and Damascus at the same time at Ahaz’ request (<sup><108></sup>Amos 3:1).

# CHAPTER 6

## <306>AMOS 6:1-14.

### DENUNCIATION OF BOTH THE SISTER NATIONS (ESPECIALLY THEIR NOBLES) FOR WANTON SECURITY — ZION, AS WELL AS SAMARIA: THREAT OF THE EXILE: RUIN OF THEIR PALACES AND SLAUGHTER OF THE PEOPLE: THEIR PERVERSE INJUSTICE.

1. *named chief of the nations* — that is, you nobles, so eminent in influence, that your names are celebrated among the chief nations [LUDOVICUS DE DIEU]. *Hebrew*, “Men designated by name among the first-fruits of the nations,” that is, men of note in Israel, the people chosen by God as first of the nations (<1295>Exodus 19:5; compare <1007>Numbers 24:20) [PISCATOR].

*to whom ... Israel came* — that is, the princes to whom the Israelites used to repair for the decision of controversies, recognizing their authority [MAURER]. I prefer to refer “which” to the antecedent “Zion” and “Samaria”; these were esteemed “chief” strongholds among the heathen nations “to whom ... Israel came” when it entered Canaan; <306>Amos 6:2 accords with this.

2. *Calneh* — on the east bank of the Tigris. Once powerful, but recently subjugated by Assyria (<2309>Isaiah 10:9; about 794 B.C.).

*Hameth* — subjugated by Jeroboam II (<1405>2 Kings 14:25). Also by Assyria subsequently (<1284>2 Kings 18:34). Compare <3064>Amos 6:14.

*Gath* — subjugated by Uzziah (<406>2 Chronicles 26:6).

*be they better* — no. Their so recent subjugation renders it needless for Me to tell you they *are* not. And yet they *once were*; still they could not defend themselves against the enemy. How vain, then, *your* secure confidence in the strength of Mounts Zion and Samaria! He takes cities respectively east, north, south, and west of Israel (compare Na 3:8).

3. Ye persuade yourselves that “the evil day” foretold by the prophets is “far off,” though they declare it near (<3022>Ezekiel 12:22,27). Ye in your imagination put it far off, and therefore bring near *violent oppression*,

suffering it to *sit enthroned*, as it were, among you (<sup><1901></sup>Psalm 94:20). The notion of judgment being far off has always been an incentive to the sinner's recklessness of living (<sup><1082></sup>Ecclesiastes 8:12,13 <sup><1048></sup>Matthew 24:48). Yet that very recklessness brings near the evil day which he puts far off. "Ye bring on fever by your intemperance, and yet would put it far off" [CALVIN].

4. (See <sup><1008></sup>Amos 2:8).

***beds of ivory*** — that is, adorned, or inlaid, with ivory (<sup><1085></sup>Amos 3:15).

***stretch themselves*** — in luxurious self-indulgence.

***lambs out of the flock*** — picked out as the choicest, for their owners selfish gratification.

5. ***chant*** — literally, "mark distinct sounds and tones."

***viol*** — the lyre, or lute.

***invent ... instruments ... like David*** — They fancy they equal David in musical skill (<sup><1325></sup>1 Chronicles 23:5 <sup><1026></sup>Nehemiah 12:36). They defend their luxurious passion for music by his example: forgetting that *he* pursued this study when at peace and free from danger, and that for the praise of God; but *they* pursue for their own self-gratification, and that when God is angry and ruin is imminent.

6. ***drink ... in bowls*** — in the *large vessels* or basins in which wine was mixed; not satisfied with the smaller *cups* from which it was ordinarily drunk, after having been poured from the large mixer.

***chief ointments*** — that is, the most costly: not for health or cleanliness, but wanton luxury.

***not grieved for the affliction of Joseph*** — literally, "the breach," that is, the national wound or calamity (<sup><1902></sup>Psalm 60:2 <sup><1046></sup>Ezekiel 34:4) of the house of *Joseph* (<sup><1086></sup>Amos 5:6); resembling in this the heartlessness of their forefathers, the sons of Jacob, towards Joseph, "eating bread" while their brother lay in the pit, and then selling him to Ishmaelites.

7. ***Therefore ... shall they go captive with the first*** — As they were first among the people in rank (<sup><1081></sup>Amos 6:1), and anointed themselves "with the chief ointments" (<sup><1086></sup>Amos 6:6), so shall they be among the foremost in going into captivity.

**banquet** — literally, the “merry-making shout of revellers”; from an Arabic root, “to cry out.” In the Hebrew, *marzeach*; here, there is an allusion to *mizraq*, “bowls” (<sup>3066</sup>Amos 6:6).

**them that stretched themselves** — on luxurious couches (<sup>3064</sup>Amos 6:4).

**8. the excellency of Jacob** — (<sup>3904</sup>Psalms 47:4). The *sanctuary* which was the great glory of the covenant-people [VATABLUS], (<sup>3902</sup>Ezekiel 24:21). The priesthood, and kingdom, and dignity, conferred on them by God. These, saith God, are of no account in My eyes towards averting punishment [CALVIN].

**hate his palaces** — as being the storehouses of “robbery” (<sup>3180</sup>Amos 3:10,15). How sad a change from God’s *love* of Zion’s gates (<sup>3870</sup>Psalms 87:2) and palaces (<sup>3988</sup>Psalms 48:3,13), owing to the people’s sin!

**the city** — collectively: both Zion and Samaria (Amos 6: 1).

**all that is therein** — literally, “its fullness”; the *multitude* of men and of riches in it (compare <sup>3240</sup>Psalms 24:1).

**9. If as many as ten** (<sup>0835</sup>Leviticus 26:26 <sup>3025</sup>Zechariah 8:23) remain in a house (a rare case, and only in the scattered villages, as there will be scarcely a house in which the enemy will leave any), they shall all, to a man, die of the plague, a frequent concomitant of war in the East (<sup>3240</sup>Jeremiah 24:10 44:13 <sup>3161</sup>Ezekiel 6:11).

**10. a man’s uncle** — The nearest relatives had the duty of burying the dead (<sup>0239</sup>Genesis 25:9 35:29 <sup>0763</sup>Judges 16:31). No nearer relative was left of this man than an *uncle*.

**and he that burneth him** — the uncle, who is *also* at the same time the one that burneth him (one of the “ten,” <sup>3069</sup>Amos 6:9). Burial was the usual Hebrew mode of disposing of their dead. But in cases of necessity, as when the men of Jabesh-gilead took the bodies of Saul and his three sons from the walls of Beth-shan and burned them to save them from being insulted by the Philistines, burning was practiced. So in this case, to prevent contagion.

**the bones** — that is, the dead *body* (<sup>0475</sup>Genesis 50:25). Perhaps here there is an allusion in the phrase to the *emaciated* condition of the body, which was little else but skin and bones.

**say unto him that is by the sides of the house** — that is, to the only one left of the ten *in the interior of the house* [MAURER] (compare *Note*, see on <sup>2343</sup>Isaiah 14:13).



**Hold thy tongue ... we may not ... mention ... the Lord** — After receiving the reply, that none is left besides the one addressed, when the man outside fancies the man still surviving inside to be on the point, as was customary, of expressing devout gratitude to God who spared him, the man outside interrupts him, “Hold thy tongue! for there is not now cause for mentioning with praise (<sup>4623B</sup>Joshua 23:7) the name of Jehovah”; for *thou* also must die; as all the ten are to die to the last man (<sup>308B</sup>Amos 6:9; compare <sup>308B</sup>Amos 8:3). Formerly ye boasted in the name of Jehovah, as if ye were His peculiar people; now ye shall be silent and shudder at His name, as hostile to you, and as one from whom ye wish to be hidden (<sup>666B</sup>Revelation 6:16), [CALVIN].

**11. commandeth, and he will smite** — His word of command, when once given, cannot but be fulfilled (<sup>2551I</sup>Isaiah 55:11). His mere word is enough to smite with destruction.

**great house ... little house** — He will spare none, great or small (<sup>3085</sup>Amos 3:15). JEROME interprets “the great house” as Israel, and “the small house” as Judah: the former being reduced to branches or ruins, literally, “small drops”; the latter, though injured with “clefts” or rents, which threaten its fall, yet still permitted to stand.

**12.** In turning “judgment (justice) into gall (poison), and ... righteousness into hemlock” (or wormwood, bitter and noxious), ye act as perversely as if one were to make “horses run upon the rock” or to “plough with oxen there” [MAURER]. As horses and oxen are useless on a rock, so ye are incapable of fulfilling justice [GROTIUS]. Ye impede the course of God’s benefits, because ye are as it were a hard rock on which His favor cannot run. “Those that will not be tilled as fields, shall be abandoned as rocks” [CALVIN].

**13. rejoice in a thing of naught** — that is, in your vain and fleeting riches.

**Have we not taken to us horns** — that is, acquired power, so as to conquer our neighbors (<sup>14252</sup>2 Kings 14:25). *Horns* are the Hebrew symbol of *power*, being the instrument of strength in many animals (<sup>4950I</sup>Psalms 75:10).

**14. from the entering in of Hamath** — the point of entrance for an invading army (as Assyria) into Israel from the north; specified here, as Hamath had been just before subjugated by Jeroboam II (<sup>308B</sup>Amos 6:2). Do not glory in your recently acquired city, for it shall be the starting-point for the foe to afflict you. How sad the contrast to the feast of Solomon attended by a congregation *from* this same *Hamath*, the most northern boundary of Israel, *to* the Nile, the *river of Egypt*, the most southern boundary!



*unto the river of the wilderness* — that is, to Kedron, which empties itself into the north bay of the Dead Sea below Jericho (<sup><42815></sup>2 Chronicles 28:15), the southern boundary of the ten tribes (<sup><12425></sup>2 Kings 14:25, “from the entering of Hamath unto the sea of the plain”) [MAURER]. *To the river Nile*, which skirts the Arabian wilderness and separates Egypt from Canaan [GROTIUS]. If this verse includes Judah, as well as Israel (compare <sup><3001></sup>Amos 6:1, “Zion” and “Samaria”), GROTIUS’ view is correct; and it agrees with <sup><1085></sup>1 Kings 8:65.

# CHAPTER 7

## THE SEVENTH, EIGHTH, AND NINTH CHAPTERS CONTAIN VISIONS, WITH THEIR EXPLANATIONS.

The seventh chapter consists of two parts. First (<sup><307></sup>Amos 7:1-9):  
PROPHECIES ILLUSTRATED BY THREE SYMBOLS:

- (1) A vision of *grasshoppers* or young locusts, which devour the grass, but are removed at Amos' entreaty;
- (2) *Fire* drying up even the deep, and withering part of the land, but removed at Amos' entreaty;
- (3) A *plumb-line* to mark the buildings for destruction. Secondly (<sup><307></sup>Amos 7:10-17): NARRATIVE OF AMAZIAH'S INTERRUPTION OF AMOS IN CONSEQUENCE OF THE FOREGOING PROPHECIES, AND PREDICTION OF HIS DOOM.

1. *showed ... me; and, behold* — The same formula prefaces the three visions in this chapter, and the fourth in <sup><300></sup>Amos 8:1.

*grasshoppers* — rather, “locusts” in the caterpillar state, from a *Hebrew* root, “to creep forth.” In the autumn the eggs are deposited in the earth; in the spring the young come forth [MAURER].

*the latter growth* — namely, of grass, which comes up after the mowing. They do not in the East mow their grass and make hay of it, but cut it off the ground as they require it.

*the king's mowings* — the first-fruits of the mown grass, tyrannically exacted by the king from the people. The literal locusts, as in Joel, are probably symbols of human foes: thus the “growth” of grass “after the king's mowings” will mean the political revival of Israel under Jeroboam II (<sup><1245></sup>2 Kings 14:25), after it had been mown down, as it were, by Hazael and Ben-hadad of Syria (<sup><1238></sup>2 Kings 13:3), [GROTIUS].

2. *by whom shall Jacob arise?* — If Thou, O God, dost not spare, how can *Jacob maintain his ground*, reduced as he is by repeated attacks of the Assyrians, and ere long about to be invaded by the Assyrian Pul (<sup><1259></sup>2 Kings 15:19,20)? Compare <sup><2519></sup>Isaiah 51:19. The mention of “Jacob” is a plea that God should “remember for them His covenant” with their forefather, the patriarch (<sup><1946></sup>Psalms 106:45).

**he is small** — reduced in numbers and in strength.

**3. repented for this** — that is, of this. The change was not in the mind of God (<sup><0129></sup>Numbers 2:19 <sup><3017></sup>James 1:17), but in the effect outwardly. God unchangeably does what is just; it is just that He should hear intercessory prayer (<sup><3016></sup>James 5:16-18), as it would have been just for Him to have let judgment take its course at once on the guilty nation, but for the prayer of one or two righteous men in it (compare <sup><0182></sup>Genesis 18:23-33 <sup><0151></sup>1 Samuel 15:11 <sup><3401></sup>Jeremiah 42:10). The repentance of the sinner, and God's regard to His own attributes of mercy and covenanted love, also cause God outwardly to deal with him as if he repented (Jon 3:10), whereas the change in outward dealing is in strictest harmony with God's own unchangeableness.

**It shall not be** — Israel's utter overthrow now. Pul was influenced by God to accept money and withdraw from Israel.

**4. called to contend** — that is with Israel judicially (<sup><3003></sup>Job 9:3 <sup><2766></sup>Isaiah 66:16 <sup><3322></sup>Ezekiel 38:22). He ordered to come at His call the infliction of punishment by "fire" on Israel, that is, drought (compare <sup><3046></sup>Amos 4:6-11), [MAURER]. Rather, *war* (<sup><0218></sup>Numbers 21:28), namely, Tiglath-pileser [GROTIUS].

**devoured the ... deep** — that is a great part of Israel, whom he carried away. *Waters* are the symbol for *many people* (<sup><0675></sup>Revelation 17:15).

**did eat up a part** — namely, all the *land* (compare <sup><3047></sup>Amos 4:7) of Israel east of Jordan (<sup><3355></sup>1 Chronicles 5:26 <sup><2304></sup>Isaiah 9:1). This was a worse judgment than the previous one: the locusts ate up the grass: the fire not only affects the surface of the ground, but burns up the very roots and reaches even to the deep.

**7. wall made by a plumb-line** — namely, perpendicular.

**8. plumb-line in ... midst of ... Israel** — No longer are the symbols, as in the former two, stated generally; this one is expressly applied to Israel. God's long-suffering is worn out by Israel's perversity: so Amos ceases to intercede (compare <sup><0183></sup>Genesis 18:33). The plummet line was used not only in building, but in destroying houses (<sup><1213></sup>2 Kings 21:13 <sup><2307></sup>Isaiah 28:17 <sup><3411></sup>Lamentations 2:8). It denotes that God's judgments are measured out by the most exact rules of justice. Here it is placed "in the midst" of Israel, that is, the judgment is not to be confined to an outer part of Israel, as by Tiglath-pileser; it is to reach the very center. This was fulfilled when Shalmaneser, after a three years' siege of Samaria, took it and carried away Israel captive finally to Assyria (<sup><1703></sup>2 Kings 17:3,5,6,23).

*not ... pass by ... any more* — not forgive them any more (<sup><3182></sup>Amos 8:2 <sup><1091></sup>Proverbs 19:11 <sup><3178></sup>Micah 7:18).

**9. high places** — dedicated to idols.

*of Isaac* — They boasted of their following the example of their forefather Isaac, in erecting high places at Beer-sheba (<sup><3185></sup>Amos 5:5; compare <sup><1073></sup>Genesis 26:23,24 46:1); but he and Abraham erected them before the temple was appointed at Jerusalem — and to God; whereas they did so, after the temple had been fixed as the only place for sacrifices — and to idols. In the *Hebrew* here “Isaac” is written with *s*, instead of the usual *ts*; both forms mean “laughter”; the change of spelling perhaps expresses that their “high places of Isaac” may be well so called, but not as they meant by the name; for they are only fit to be *laughed at* in scorn. Probably, however, the mention of “Isaac” and “Israel” simply expresses that these names, which their degenerate posterity boasted in as if ensuring their safety, will not save them and their idolatrous “sanctuaries” on which they depended from ruin (compare <sup><3084></sup>Amos 8:14).

*house of Jeroboam with ... sword* — fulfilled in the extinction of Zachariah, son of Jeroboam II, the last of the descendants of Jeroboam I, who had originated the idolatry of the calves (<sup><1257></sup>2 Kings 15:8-10).

## <sup><3170></sup>AMOS 7:10-17.

### AMAZIAH’S CHARGE AGAINST AMOS: HIS DOOM FORETOLD.

**10. priest of Beth-el** — chief priest of the royal sanctuary to the calves at Beth-el. These being a device of state policy to keep Israel separate from Judah. Amaziah construes Amos words against them as treason. So in the case of Elijah and Jeremiah (<sup><1187></sup>1 Kings 18:17 <sup><2573></sup>Jeremiah 37:13,14). So the antitype Jesus was charged (<sup><3912></sup>John 19:12); political expediency being made in all ages the pretext for dishonoring God and persecuting His servants (<sup><6148></sup>John 11:48-50). So in the case of Paul (<sup><4176></sup>Acts 17:6,7 24:5).

*in the midst of ... Israel* — probably alluding to Amos’ own words, “in the midst of ... Israel” (<sup><3108></sup>Amos 7:8), foretelling the state’s overthrow *to the very center*. Not secretly, or in a corner, but openly, in *the very center of the state*, so as to upset the whole utterly.

*land is not able to bear all his words* — They are so many and so intolerable. A sedition will be the result. The mention of his being “priest of

Beth-el” implies that it was for his own priestly gain, not for the king or state, he was so keen.

**11. *Jeroboam shall die***, etc. — Amos had not said this: but that “the *house* of Jeroboam” should fall “with the sword” (<sup><3079></sup>Amos 7:9). But Amaziah exaggerates the charge, to excite Jeroboam against him. The king, however, did not give ear to Amaziah, probably from religious awe of the prophet of Jehovah.

**12. *Also*** — Besides informing the king against Amos, lest that course should fail, as it did, Amaziah urges the troublesome prophet himself to go back to his own land Judah, pretending to advise him in friendliness.

*seer* — said contemptuously in reference to Amos *visions* which precede.

***there eat bread*** — You can earn a livelihood there, whereas remaining here you will be ruined. He judges of Amos by his own selfishness, as if regard to one’s own safety and livelihood are the paramount considerations. So the false prophets (<sup><2439></sup>Ezekiel 13:19) were ready to say whatever pleased their hearers, however false, for “handfuls of barley and pieces of bread.”

**13. *prophesy not again*** — (<sup><3122></sup>Amos 2:12).

***at Beth-el*** — Amaziah wants to be let alone at least in his own residence.

***the king’s chapel*** — Beth-el was preferred by the king to Dan, the other seat of the calf-worship, as being nearer Samaria, the capital, and as hallowed by Jacob of old (<sup><1236></sup>Genesis 28:16,19 35:6,7). He argues by implication against Amos’ presumption, as a private man, in speaking against the worship sanctioned by the king, and that in the very place consecrated to it for the king’s own devotions.

***king’s court*** — that is, residence: the seat of empire, where the king holds his court, and which thou oughtest to have revered. Samaria was the usual king’s residence: but for the convenience of attending the calf-worship, a royal palace was at Beth-el also.

**14. *I was no prophet*** — in answer to Amaziah’s insinuation (<sup><3172></sup>Amos 7:12), that he discharged the prophetic office to earn his “bread” (like Israel’s mercenary prophets). So far from being rewarded, Jehovah’s prophets had to expect imprisonment and even death as the result of their prophesying in Samaria or Israel: whereas the prophets of Baal were maintained at the king’s expense (compare <sup><1189></sup>1 Kings 18:19). I was not, says Amos, of the order of prophets, or educated in their schools, and deriving a livelihood from exercising the public functions of a prophet. I am a *shepherd* (compare <sup><3075></sup>Amos 7:15, “flock”; the *Hebrew* for “herdsman”

includes the meaning, *shepherd*, compare <sup><300></sup>Amos 1:1) in humble position, who did not even think of prophesying among you, until a divine call impelled me to it.

**prophet's son** — that is, disciple. Schools of prophets are mentioned first in First Samuel; in these youths were educated to serve the theocracy as public instructors. Only in the kingdom of the ten tribes is the continuance of the schools of the prophets mentioned. They were missionary stations near the chief seats of superstition in Israel, and associations endowed with the Spirit of God; none were admitted but those to whom the Spirit had been previously imparted. Their spiritual fathers traveled about to visit the training schools, and cared for the members and even their widows (<sup><1100></sup>2 Kings 4:1,2). The pupils had their common board in them, and after leaving them still continued members. The offerings which in Judah were given by the pious to the Levites, in Israel went to the schools of the prophets (<sup><1100></sup>2 Kings 4:42). Prophecy (for example, Elijah and Elisha) in Israel was more connected with extraordinary events than in Judah, inasmuch as, in the absence of the legal hierarchy of the latter, it needed to have more palpable divine sanction.

**sycamore** — abounding in Palestine. The fruit was like the fig, but inferior; according to PLINY, a sort of compound, as the name expresses, of the fig and the mulberry. It was only eaten by the poorest (compare <sup><1100></sup>1 Kings 10:27).

**gatherer** — one occupied with their cultivation [MAURER]. To cultivate it, an incision was made in the fruit when of a certain size, and on the fourth day afterwards it ripened [PLINY, *Natural History*, 13.7,14]. GROTIUS from JEROME says, if it be not plucked off and “gathered” (which favors *English Version*), it is spoiled by gnats.

**15. took me as I followed the flock** — So David was taken (<sup><1000></sup>2 Samuel 7:8 <sup><1000></sup>Psalms 78:70,71). Messiah is the antitypical *Shepherd* (<sup><1000></sup>Psalms 23:1-6 <sup><1000></sup>John 10:1-18).

**unto my people** — “against” [MAURER]; so <sup><1000></sup>Amos 7:16. Jehovah claims them still as *His* by right, though slighting His authority. God would recover them to His service by the prophet’s ministry.

**16. drop** — distil as the refreshing drops of rain (<sup><1000></sup>Deuteronomy 32:2 <sup><1000></sup>Ezekiel 21:2; compare <sup><1000></sup>Micah 2:6,11).

**17. Thy wife shall be an harlot in the city** — that is, shall be forced by the enemy, while thou art looking on, unable to prevent her dishonor (<sup><1000></sup>Isaiah

13:16 <sup><2516></sup>Lamentations 5:11). The words, “saith the Lord,” are in striking opposition to “*Thou sayest*” (<sup><3076></sup>Amos 7:16).

*divided by line* — among the foe.

*a polluted land* — Israel regarded every foreign land as that which really her own land was now, “polluted” (<sup><2316></sup>Isaiah 24:5 <sup><2416></sup>Jeremiah 2:7).

# CHAPTER 8

## <300E>AMOS 8:1-14.

**VISION OF A BASKET OF SUMMER FRUIT SYMBOLICAL OF ISRAEL'S END. RESUMING THE SERIES OF SYMBOLS INTERRUPTED BY AMAZIAH, AMOS ADDS A FOURTH. THE AVARICE OF THE OPPRESSORS OF THE POOR: THE OVERTHROW OF THE NATION: THE WISH FOR THE MEANS OF RELIGIOUS COUNSEL, WHEN THERE SHALL BE A FAMINE OF THE WORD.**

1. **summer fruit** — *Hebrew, kitz*. In <300E>Amos 8:2 “end” is in *Hebrew, keetz*. The similarity of sounds implies that, as the *summer* is the *end* of the year and the time of the ripeness of fruits, so Israel is *ripe* for her *last* punishment, *ending* her national existence. As the fruit is plucked when ripe from the tree, so Israel from her land.

2. **end** — (<300E>Ezekiel 7:2,6).

3. **songs of ... temple** — (<30E3>Amos 5:23). The joyous hymns in the temple of Judah (or rather, in the *Beth-el* “royal temple,” <300E>Amos 7:13; for the allusion is to *Israel*, not Judah, throughout this chapter) shall be changed into “howlings.” GROTIUS translates, “palace”; compare <300E>Amos 6:5, as to the songs there. But <30E3>Amos 5:23, and <300E>Amos 7:13, favor *English Version*.

**they shall cast them forth with silence** — not as the *Margin*, “be silent.” It is an adverb, “silently.” There shall be such great slaughter as even to prevent the bodies being buried [CALVIN]. There shall be none of the usual professional mourners (<300E>Amos 5:16), but the bodies will be cast out in silence. Perhaps also is meant that terror, both of God (compare <300E>Amos 6:10) and of the foe, shall close their lips.

4. **Hear** — The nobles needed to be urged thus, as hating to *hear* reproof.

**swallow up the needy** — or, “gape after,” that is, pant for their goods; so the word is used, <300E>Job 7:2, *Margin*.

**to make the poor ... to fail** — “that they (themselves) may be placed alone in the midst of the earth” (<200E>Isaiah 5:8).



5. So greedy are they of unjust gain that they cannot spare a single day, however sacred, from pursuing it. They are strangers to God and enemies to themselves, who love market days better than sabbath days; and they who have lost piety will not long keep honesty. The new-moons (<sup><4100></sup>Numbers 10:10) and sabbaths were to be kept without working or trading (<sup><4301></sup>Nehemiah 10:31).

*set forth wheat* — literally, “open out” stores of wheat for sale.

*ephah* — containing three seahs, or above three pecks.

*making ... small* — making it below the just weight to purchasers.

*shekel great* — taking from purchasers a greater weight of money than was due. Shekels used to be *weighed out* in payments (<sup><4236></sup>Genesis 23:16). Thus they committed a double fraud against the law (<sup><4253></sup>Deuteronomy 25:13,14).

6. *buy ... poor for silver ... pair of shoes* — that is, that we may compel the needy for money, or any other thing of however little worth, to sell themselves to us as bondmen, in defiance of <sup><4259></sup>Leviticus 25:39; the very thing which brings down God’s judgment (<sup><3106></sup>Amos 2:6).

*sell the refuse of ... wheat* — which contains no nutriment, but which the poor eat at a low price, being unable to pay for flour.

7. *Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob* — that is by Himself, in whom Jacob’s seed glory [MAURER]. Rather, by the spiritual privileges of Israel, the adoption as His peculiar people [CALVIN], the temple, and its Shekinah symbol of His presence. Compare <sup><3108></sup>Amos 6:8, where it means Jehovah’s *temple* (compare <sup><3102></sup>Amos 4:2).

*never forget* — not *pass by* without punishing (<sup><3102></sup>Amos 8:2 <sup><3083></sup>Hosea 8:13 9:9).

8. *the land ... rise up wholly as a flood* — The land will, as it were, be wholly turned into a flooding river (a flood being the image of overwhelming calamity, <sup><2102></sup>Daniel 9:26).

*cast out and drowned*, etc. — swept away and overwhelmed, as the land adjoining the Nile is by it, when flooding (<sup><3105></sup>Amos 9:5). The Nile rises generally twenty feet. The waters then “cast out” mire and dirt (<sup><2570></sup>Isaiah 57:20).

9. “Darkness” made to rise “at noon” is the emblem of great calamities (<sup><2459></sup>Jeremiah 15:9 <sup><2507></sup>Ezekiel 32:7-10).

**10. *baldness*** — a sign of mourning (<sup><2342></sup>Isaiah 15:2 <sup><2487></sup>Jeremiah 48:37 <sup><3078></sup>Ezekiel 7:18).

***I will make it as ... mourning of an only son*** — “it,” that is, “the earth” (<sup><3089></sup>Amos 8:9). I will reduce the land to such a state that there shall be the same occasion for mourning as when parents mourn for an only son (<sup><2463></sup>Jeremiah 6:26 <sup><3210></sup>Zechariah 12:10).

**11. *famine of ... hearing the words of the Lord*** — a just retribution on those who now will not hear the Lord’s prophets, nay even try to drive them away, as Amaziah did (<sup><3072></sup>Amos 7:12); they shall look in vain, in their distress, for divine counsel, such as the prophets now offer (<sup><3073></sup>Ezekiel 7:26 <sup><3007></sup>Micah 3:7). Compare as to the Jews’ rejection of Messiah, and their consequent rejection by Him (<sup><4046></sup>Matthew 21:43); and their desire for Messiah too late (<sup><4072></sup>Luke 17:22 <sup><4074></sup>John 7:34 8:21). So, the prodigal when he had sojourned awhile in the “far-off country, began to be in want” in the “mighty famine” which arose (<sup><4054></sup>Luke 15:14; compare <sup><0001></sup>1 Samuel 3:1 7:2). It is remarkable that the Jews’ religion is almost the only one that *could* be abolished *against the will of the people themselves*, on account of its being dependent on a particular *place*, namely, the temple. When that was destroyed, the Mosaic ritual, which could not exist without it, necessarily ceased. Providence designed it, that, as the law gave way to the Gospel, so all men should perceive it was so, in spite of the Jews’ obstinate rejection of the Gospel.

**12. *they shall wander from sea to sea*** — that is, from the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean, from east to west.

***from ... north ... to ... east*** — where we might expect “from north to south.” But so alienated was Israel from Judah, that no Israelite even then would think of repairing *southward*, that is, to Jerusalem for religious information. The circuit is traced as in <sup><0603></sup>Numbers 34:3, etc., except that the south is omitted. Their “seeking the word of the Lord” would not be from a sincere desire to obey God, but under the pressure of punishment.

**13. *faint for thirst*** — namely, thirst for hearing the words of the Lord, being destitute of all other comfort. If even the young and strong faint, how much more the infirm (<sup><2400></sup>Isaiah 40:30,31)!

**14. *swear by the sin of Samaria*** — namely, the calves (<sup><0802></sup>Deuteronomy 9:21 <sup><3045></sup>Hosea 4:15). “Swear by” means to *worship* (<sup><0611></sup>Psalms 63:11).

***The manner*** — that is, as “the way” is used (<sup><4009></sup>Psalms 139:24 <sup><4002></sup>Acts 9:2), *the mode of worship*.

***Thy god, O Daniel*** — the other golden calf at Daniel (~~1226~~ 1 Kings 22:26-30).

***liveth ... liveth*** — rather, “May thy god ... live ... may the manner ... live.” Or, “As (surely as) thy god, O Dan, liveth.” This is their formula when they swear; not “May Jehovah live!” or, “As Jehovah liveth!”

# CHAPTER 9

## <3100>AMOS 9:1-15.

### FIFTH AND LAST VISION.

None can escape the coming judgment in any hiding-place: for God is omnipresent and irresistible (<3100>Amos 9:1-6). As a kingdom, Israel shall perish as if it never was in covenant with Him: but as individuals the house of Jacob shall not utterly perish, nay, not one of the least of the righteous shall fall, but only all the sinners (<3100>Amos 9:7-10). Restoration of the Jews finally to their own land after the re-establishment of the fallen tabernacle of David; consequent conversion of all the heathen (<3100>Amos 9:11-15).

1. *Lord ... upon the altar* — namely, in the idolatrous temple at Beth-el; the calves which were spoken of in <3104>Amos 8:14. Hither they would flee for protection from the Assyrians, and would perish in the ruins, with the vain object of their trust [HENDERSON]. Jehovah stands here to direct the destruction of it, them, and the idolatrous nation. He demands many victims on the altar, but they are to be human victims. CALVIN and FAIRBAIRN, and others, make it in the *temple at Jerusalem*. Judgment was to descend both on Israel and Judah. As the services of both alike ought to have been offered on the Jerusalem temple-altar, it is there that Jehovah ideally stands, as if the whole people were assembled there, their abominations lying unpardoned there, and crying for vengeance, though in fact committed elsewhere (compare <3100>Ezekiel 8:1-18). This view harmonizes with the similarity of the vision in Amos to that in <3100>Isaiah 6:1-13, *at Jerusalem*. Also with the end of this chapter (<3100>Amos 9:11-15), which applies both to *Judah* and Israel: “the tabernacle of David,” namely, at Jerusalem. His attitude, “standing,” implies fixity of purpose.

*lintel* — rather, the sphere-like *capital* of the column [MAURER].

*posts* — rather, “thresholds,” as in <3100>Isaiah 6:4, *Margin*. The temple is to be smitten below as well as above, to ensure utter destruction.

*cut them in the head* — namely, with the broken fragments of the capitals and columns (compare <3102>Psalm 68:21 <3103>Habakkuk 3:13).

*slay the last of them* — their posterity [HENDERSON]. The survivors [MAURER]. Jehovah's directions are addressed to His angels, ministers of judgment (compare <sup><3108></sup>Ezekiel 9:1-11).

*he that fleeth ... shall not flee away* — He who fancies himself safe and out of reach of the enemy shall be taken (<sup><3104></sup>Amos 2:14).

2. *Though they dig into hell* — though they hide ever so deeply in the earth (<sup><3108></sup>Psalm 139:8).

*though they climb up to heaven* — though they ascend the greatest heights (<sup><3106></sup>Job 20:6,7 <sup><3153></sup>Jeremiah 51:53 <sup><3104></sup>Obadiah 1:4).

3. *Carmel* — where the forests, and, on the west side, the caves, furnished hiding-places (<sup><3100></sup>Amos 1:2 <sup><3102></sup>Judges 6:2 <sup><3136></sup>1 Samuel 13:6).

*the sea* — the Mediterranean, which flows at the foot of Mount Carmel; forming a strong antithesis to it.

*command the serpent* — the sea-serpent, a term used for any great water monster (<sup><3204></sup>Isaiah 27:1). The symbol of *cruel and oppressive kings* (<sup><3143></sup>Psalm 74:13,14).

4. *though they go into captivity* — hoping to save their lives by voluntarily surrendering to the foe.

5. As Amos had threatened that nowhere should the Israelites be safe from the divine judgments, he here shows God's omnipotent ability to execute His threats. So in the case of the threat in <sup><3088></sup>Amos 8:8, God is here stated to be the first cause of the mourning of "all that dwell" in the land, and of its rising "like a flood, and of its being "drowned, as by the flood of Egypt."

6. *stories* — literally, "ascents," that is, upper chambers, to which the ascent is by steps [MAURER]; evidently referring to the words in <sup><3143></sup>Psalm 104:3,13. GROTIUS explains it, *God's royal throne*, expressed in language drawn from Solomon's throne, to which the ascent was by steps (compare <sup><3108></sup>1 Kings 10:18,19).

*founded his troop* — namely, all animate creatures, which are God's *troop*, or *host* (<sup><3101></sup>Genesis 2:1), doing His will (<sup><3137></sup>Psalm 103:20,21 <sup><3111></sup>Joel 2:11). MAURER translates, "His *vault*," that is, the vaulted sky, which seems to rest on the earth supported by the horizon.

7. *unto me* — however great ye seem *to yourselves*. Do not rely on past privileges, and on My having delivered you from Egypt, as if therefore I never would remove you from Canaan. I make no more account of you

than of “the Ethiopian” (compare <sup><24123></sup>Jeremiah 13:23). “Have not I (who) brought you out of Egypt,” done as much for other peoples? For instance, did I not bring “the Philistines (see on <sup><23429></sup>Isaiah 14:29, etc.) from Caphtor (compare <sup><18123></sup>Deuteronomy 2:23; see on <sup><24704></sup>Jeremiah 47:4), where they had been bond-servants, and the Syrians from Kir?” It is appropriate, that as the Syrians migrated into Syria from Kir (compare *Note*, see on <sup><22716></sup>Isaiah 22:6), so they should be carried back captive into the same land (see on <sup><3001></sup>Amos 1:15; <sup><2169></sup>2 Kings 16:9), just as elsewhere Israel is threatened with a return to Egypt whence they had been delivered. The “Ethiopians,” *Hebrew*, “Cushites,” were originally akin to the race that founded Babylon: the cuneiform inscriptions in this confirming independently the Scripture statement (<sup><1106></sup>Genesis 10:6,8,10).

**8. eyes ... upon the sinful kingdom** — that is, I am watching all its sinful course in order to punish it (compare <sup><3004></sup>Amos 9:4 <sup><1845></sup>Psalms 34:15,16).

**not utterly destroy the house of Jacob** — Though as a “kingdom” the nation is now utterly to perish, a remnant is to be spared for “Jacob,” their forefather’s sake (compare <sup><24117></sup>Jeremiah 30:11); to fulfill the covenant whereby “the seed of Israel” is hereafter to be “a nation for ever” (<sup><24337></sup>Jeremiah 31:36).

**9. sift** — I will cause the Israelites to be tossed about through all nations as corn is shaken about in a sieve, in such a way, however, that while the chaff and dust (the wicked) fall through (perish), all the solid grains (the godly elect) remain (are preserved), (<sup><5123></sup>Romans 11:26; compare *Note*, see on <sup><1844></sup>Jeremiah 3:14). So spiritual Israel’s final safety is ensured (<sup><1223></sup>Luke 22:32 <sup><608></sup>John 10:28 6:39).

**10. All the sinners** — answering to the chaff in the image in <sup><109></sup>Amos 9:9, which falls on the earth, in opposition “to the grain” that does not “fall.”

**overtake ... us** — “come on us from behind” [MAURER].

**11. In that day** — quoted by James (<sup><4456></sup>Acts 15:16,17), “After this,” that is, in the dispensation of Messiah (<sup><1490></sup>Genesis 49:10 <sup><3704></sup>Hosea 3:4,5 <sup><1223></sup>Joel 2:28 3:1).

**tabernacle of David** — not “the house of David,” which is used of his affairs when prospering (<sup><1081></sup>2 Samuel 3:1), but the *tent* or *booth*, expressing the low condition to which his kingdom and family had fallen in Amos’ time, and subsequently at the Babylonian captivity before the restoration; and secondarily, in the last days preceding Israel’s restoration under Messiah, the antitype to David (<sup><19213></sup>Psalms 102:13,14 <sup><2410></sup>Jeremiah 30:9 <sup><3524></sup>Ezekiel 34:24 37:24; see on <sup><2311></sup>Isaiah 12:1). The type is taken from

architecture (<sup><402></sup>Ephesians 2:20). The restoration under Zerubbabel can only be a partial, temporary fulfillment; for it did not include Israel, which nation is the main subject of Amos prophecies, but only Judah; also Zerubbabel's kingdom was not independent and settled; also all the prophets end their prophecies with Messiah, whose advent is the cure of all previous disorders. "Tabernacle" is appropriate to Him, as His human nature is the tabernacle which He assumed in becoming Immanuel, "God with us" (<sup><4014></sup>John 1:14). "Dwelt," literally, *tabernacled* "among us" (compare <sup><4218></sup>Revelation 21:3). Some understand "the tabernacle of David" as that which David pitched for the ark in Zion, after bringing it from Obed-edom's house. It remained there all his reign for thirty years, till the temple of Solomon was built, whereas the "tabernacle of the congregation" remained at Gibeon (<sup><4002></sup>2 Chronicles 1:3), where the priests ministered in sacrifices (<sup><1369></sup>1 Chronicles 16:39). Song and praise was the service of David's attendants before the ark (Asaph, etc.): a type of the gospel separation between the sacrificial service (*Messiah's* priesthood now *in heaven*) and the access of *believers on earth* to the presence of God, apart from the former (compare <sup><4012></sup>2 Samuel 6:12-17 <sup><1367></sup>1 Chronicles 16:37-39 <sup><4002></sup>2 Chronicles 1:3).

***breaches thereof*** — literally, "of them," that is, of the *whole* nation, Israel as well as Judah.

***as in ... days of old*** — as it was formerly in the days of David and Solomon, when the kingdom was in its full extent and undivided.

**12. *That they may possess ... remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen*** — "Edom," the bitter foe, though the brother, of Israel; therefore to be punished (<sup><3001></sup>Amos 1:11,12), Israel shall be lord of the "remnant" of Edom left after the punishment of the latter. James quotes it, "That *the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles,*" etc. For "all the heathen" nations stand on the same footing as *Edom*: Edom is the representative of them all. The *residue* or *remnant* in both cases expresses those left after great antecedent calamities (<sup><4127></sup>Romans 9:27 <sup><3446></sup>Zechariah 14:16). Here the conversion of "all nations" (of which the earnest was given in James's time) is represented as only to be realized on the re-establishment of the theocracy under Messiah, the Heir of the throne of David (<sup><1011></sup>Amos 9:11). The possession of the heathen nations by Israel is to be spiritual, the latter being the ministers to the former for their conversion to Messiah, King of the Jews; just as the first conversions of pagans were through the ministry of the apostles, who were Jews. Compare <sup><2501></sup>Isaiah 54:3, "thy seed shall *inherit the Gentiles*" (compare <sup><2408></sup>Isaiah 49:8 <sup><4013></sup>Romans 4:13). A remnant of Edom became Jews under John Hyrcanus,

and the rest amalgamated with the Arabians, who became Christians subsequently.

***which are called by my name*** — that is, who belong to Me, whom I claim as Mine (<sup><4008></sup>Psalm 2:8); in the purposes of electing grace, God terms them already *called by His name*. Compare the title, “the children,” applied by anticipation, <sup><3024></sup>Hebrews 2:14. Hence as an act of sovereign grace, fulfilling His promise, it is spoken of God. Proclaim His title as sovereign, “the Lord that doeth this” (“all these things,” <sup><4457></sup>Acts 15:17, namely, all these and such like acts of sovereign love).

**13. *the days come*** — at the future restoration of the Jews to their own land.

***ploughman shall overtake ... reaper ... treader of grapes him that soweth*** — fulfilling <sup><4318></sup>Leviticus 26:5. Such shall be the abundance that the harvest and vintage can hardly be gathered before the time for preparing for the next crop shall come. Instead of the greater part of the year being spent in war, the whole shall be spent in sowing and reaping the fruits of earth. Compare <sup><3521></sup>Isaiah 65:21-23, as to the same period.

***soweth seed*** — literally, “draweth it forth,” namely, from the sack in order to sow it.

***mountains ... drop sweet wine*** — an appropriate image, as the vines in Palestine were trained on *terraces at the sides of the hills*.

**14. *build the waste cities*** — (<sup><2304></sup>Isaiah 61:4 <sup><2653></sup>Ezekiel 36:33-36).

**15. *plant them ... no more be pulled up*** — (<sup><2434></sup>Jeremiah 32:41).

***thy God*** — Israel’s; this is the ground of their restoration, God’s original choice of them as His.