

# AN EXPOSITION, WITH PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS, OF

## THE PROPHECY OF

# AMOS

Amos was a herdsman, and engaged in agriculture. But the same Divine Spirit influenced Isaiah and Daniel in the court, and Amos in the sheep-folds, giving to each the powers and eloquence needful for them. He assures the twelve tribes of the destruction of the neighboring nations; and as they at that time gave themselves up to wickedness and idolatry, he reproves the Jewish nation with severity; but describes the restoration of the church by the Messiah, extending to the latter days.

## CHAPTER 1

*Judgments against the Syrians, Philistines, Tyrians, Edomites, and Ammonites.*

**Amos 1:1**

GOD employed a shepherd, a herdsman, to reprove and warn the people. Those to whom God gives abilities for his services, ought not to be despised for their origin, or their employment. Judgments are denounced against the neighboring nations, the oppressors of God's people. The number of transgressions does not here mean that exact number, but many: they had filled the measure of their sins, and were ripe for vengeance. The method in dealing with these nations is, in part, the same, yet in each there is something peculiar. In all ages this bitterness has been shown against the Lord's people. When the Lord reckons with his enemies, how tremendous are his judgments!

## CHAPTER 2

*Judgments against Moab and Judah. (1-8) The ingratitude and ruin of Israel. (9-16)*

### <img alt="decorative icon" data-bbox="102 204 135 225"/> **Amos 2:1**

**Vs. 1-8:** The evil passions of the heart break out in various forms; but the Lord looks to our motives, as well as our conduct. Those that deal cruelly, shall be cruelly dealt with. Other nations were reckoned with for injuries done to men; Judah is reckoned with for dishonor done to God. Judah despised the law of the Lord; and he justly gave them up to strong delusion; nor was it any excuse for their sin, that they were the lies, the idols, after which their fathers walked. The worst abominations and most grievous oppressions have been committed by some of the professed worshippers of the Lord. Such conduct leads many to unbelief and vile idolatry.

### <img alt="decorative icon" data-bbox="102 492 135 513"/> **Amos 2:9**

**Vs. 9-16:** We need often to be reminded of the mercies we have received; which add much to the evil of the sins we have committed. They had helps for their souls, which taught them how to make good use of their earthly enjoyments, and were therefore more valuable. Faithful ministers are great blessings to any people; but it is God that raises them up to be so. Sinners' own consciences will witness that he has not been wanting to them in the means of grace. They did what they could to lead believers aside. Satan and his agents are busy to corrupt the minds of young people who look heavenward; they overcome many by drawing them to the love of mirth and pleasure, and into drinking company. Multitudes of young men who bade fair as professors of religion, have erred through strong drink, and have been undone for ever. The Lord complains of sin, especially the sins of his professing people, as a burden to him. And though his long-suffering be tired, his power is not, and so the sinner will find to his cost. When men reject God's word, adding obstinacy to sin, and this becomes the general character of a people, they will be given up to misery, notwithstanding all their boasted power and resources. May we

then humble ourselves before the Lord, for all our ingratitude and unfaithfulness.

## CHAPTER 3

*Judgments against Israel. (1-8) The like to other nations. (9-15)*

### **Amos 3:1**

**Vs. 1-8:** The distinguishing favors of God to us, if they do not restrain from sin, shall not exempt from punishment. They could not expect communion with God, unless they first sought peace with him. Where there is not friendship, there can be no fellowship. God and man cannot walk together, except they are agreed. Unless we seek his glory, we cannot walk with him. Let us not presume on outward privileges, without special, sanctifying grace. The threatenings of the word and providence of God against the sin of man are certain, and certainly show that the judgments of God are at hand. Nor will God remove the affliction he has sent, till it has done its work. The evil of sin is from ourselves, it is our own doing; but the evil of trouble is from God, and is his doing, whoever are the instruments. This should engage us patiently to bear public troubles, and to study to answer God's meaning in them. The whole of the passage shows that natural evil, or troubles, and not moral evil, or sin, is here meant. The warning given to a careless world will increase its condemnation another day. Oh the amazing stupidity of an unbelieving world, that will not be wrought upon by the terrors of the Lord, and that despise his mercies!

### **Amos 3:9**

**Vs. 9-15:** That power which is an instrument of unrighteousness, will justly be brought down and broken. What is got and kept wrongfully, will not be kept long. Some are at ease, but there will come a day of visitation, and in that day, all they are proud of, and put confidence in, shall fail them. God will inquire into the sins of which they have been guilty in their houses, the robbery they have stored up, and the luxury in which they lived. The pomp and pleasantness of men's houses, do not fortify against God's judgments, but make sufferings the more grievous and vexatious. Yet a remnant, according to the election of grace, will be secured by our great and good Shepherd, as from the jaws of destruction, in the worst times.

## CHAPTER 4

*Israel is reproved. (1-5) Their impenitence shown. (6-13)*

### **Amos 4:1**

**Vs. 1-5:** What is got by extortion is commonly used to provide for the flesh, and to fulfill the lusts thereof. What is got by oppression cannot be enjoyed with satisfaction. How miserable are those whose confidence in unscriptural observances only prove that they believe a lie! Let us see to it that our faith, hope, and worship, are warranted by the Divine word.

### **Amos 4:6**

**Vs. 6-13:** See the folly of carnal hearts; they wander from one creature to another, seeking for something to satisfy, and labor for that which satisfies not; yet, after all, they will not unequal their ear to Him in whom they might find all they can want. Preaching the gospel is as rain, and every thing withers where this rain is wanting. It were well if people were as wise for their souls as they are for their bodies; and, when they have not this rain near, would go and seek it where it is to be had. As the Israelites persisted in rebellion and idolatry, the Lord was coming against them as an adversary. Ere long, we must meet our God in judgment; but we shall not be able to stand before him, if he tries us according to our doings. If we would prepare to meet our God with comfort, at the awful period of his coming, we must now meet him in Christ Jesus, the eternal Son of the Father, who came to save lost sinners. We must seek him while he is to be found.

## CHAPTER 5

*Israel is called to seek the Lord. (1-6) Earnest exhortations to repentance. (7-17) Threatenings respecting idolatries. (18-27)*

### <101> **Amos 5:1**

**Vs. 1-6:** The convincing, awakening word must be heard and heeded, as well as words of comfort and peace; for whether we hear or forbear, the word of God shall take effect. The Lord still proclaims mercy to men, but they often expect deliverance from such self-invented forms as make their condemnation sure. While they refuse to come to Christ and to seek mercy in and by him, that they may live, the fire of Divine wrath breaks forth upon them. Men may make an idol of the world, but will find it cannot protect.

### <102> **Amos 5:7**

**Vs. 7-17:** The same almighty power can, for repenting sinners, easily turn affliction and sorrow into prosperity and joy, and as easily turn the prosperity of daring sinners into utter darkness. Evil times will not bear plain dealing; that is, evil men will not. And these men were evil men indeed, when wise and good men thought it in vain even to speak to them. Those who will seek and love that which is good, may help to save the land from ruin. It behooves us to plead God's spiritual promises, to beseech him to create in us a clean heart, and to renew a right spirit within us. The Lord is ever ready to be gracious to the souls that seek him; and then piety and every duty will be attended to. But as for sinful Israel, God's judgments had often passed by them, now they shall pass through them.

### <103> **Amos 5:18**

**Vs. 18-27:** Woe unto those that desire the day of the Lord's judgments, that wish for times of war and confusion; as some who long for changes, hoping to rise upon the ruins of their country! but this should be so great a desolation, that nobody could gain by it. The day of the Lord will be a dark, dismal, gloomy day to all impenitent sinners. When God makes a day

dark, all the world cannot make it light. Those who are not reformed by the judgments of God, will be pursued by them; if they escape one, another stands ready to seize them. A pretense of piety is double iniquity, and so it will be found. The people of Israel copied the crimes of their forefathers. The law of worshipping the Lord our God, is, Him only we must serve. Professors thrive so little, because they have little or no communion with God in their duties. They were led captive by Satan into idolatry, therefore God caused them to go into captivity among idolaters.

## CHAPTER 6

*The danger of luxury and false security. (1-7) Punishments of sins. (8-14)*

### <101> **Amos 6:1**

**Vs. 1-7:** Those are looked upon as doing well for themselves, who do well for their bodies; but we are here told what their ease is, and what their woe is. Here is a description of the pride, security, and sensuality, for which God would reckon. Careless sinners are every where in danger; but those at ease in Zion, who are stupid, vainly confident, and abusing their privileges, are in the greatest danger. Yet many fancy themselves the people of God, who are living in sin, and in conformity to the world. But the examples of others' ruin forbid us to be secure. Those who are set upon their pleasures are commonly careless of the troubles of others, but this is great offense to God. Those who placed their happiness in the pleasures of sense, and set their hearts upon them, shall be deprived of those pleasures. Those who try to put the evil day far from them, find it nearest to them.

### <108> **Amos 6:8**

**Vs. 8-14:** How dreadful, how miserable, is the case of those whose eternal ruin the Lord himself has sworn; for he can execute his purpose, and none can alter it! Those hearts are wretchedly hardened that will not be brought to mention God's name, and to worship him, when the hand of God is gone out against them, when sickness and death are in their families. Those that will not be tilled as fields, shall be abandoned as rocks. When our services of God are soured with sin, his providences will justly be made bitter to us. Men should take warning not to harden their hearts, for those who walk in pride, God will destroy.



## CHAPTER 7

*Visions of judgments to come upon Israel. (1-9) Amaziah threatens Amos. (10-17)*

### <img alt="decorative icon" data-bbox="102 204 135 225"/> **Amos 7:1**

**Vs. 1-9:** God bears long, but he will not bear always with a provoking people. The remembrance of the mercies we formerly received, like the produce of the earth of the former growth, should make us submissive to the will of God, when we meet with disappointments in the latter growth. The Lord has many ways of humbling a sinful nation. Whatever trouble we are under, we should be most earnest with God for the forgiveness of sin. Sin will soon make a great people small. What will become of Israel, if the hand that should raise him be stretched out against him? See the power of prayer. See what a blessing praying people are to a land. See how ready, how swift God is to show mercy; how he waits to be gracious. Israel was a wall, a strong wall, which God himself reared as a defense to his sanctuary. The Lord now seems to stand upon this wall. He measures it; it appears to be a bowing, bulging wall. Thus God would bring the people of Israel to the trial, would discover their wickedness; and the time will come, when those who have been spared often, shall be spared no longer. But the Lord still calls Israel his people. The repeated prayer and success of the prophet should lead us to seek the Savior.

### <img alt="decorative icon" data-bbox="102 659 135 681"/> **Amos 7:10**

**Vs. 10-17:** It is no new thing for the accusers of the brethren, to misrepresent them as enemies to the king and kingdom, as traitors to their prince, and troublers of the land, when they are the best friends to both. Those who make gain their godliness, and are governed by the hopes of wealth and preferment, are ready to think these the most powerful motives with others also. But those who have a warrant from God, like Amos, ought not to fear the face of man. If God, that sent him, had not strengthened him, he could not thus have set his face as a flint. The Lord often chooses the weak and foolish things of the world to confound the wise and mighty. But no fervent prayers, or self-denying labors, can bring proud sinners to bear faithful reproofs and warnings. And all who oppose

or despise the Divine word, must expect fatal effects to their souls, unless they repent.

## CHAPTER 8

*The near approach of the ruin of Israel. (1-3) Oppression reprov'd. (4-10) A famine of the word of God. (11-14)*

### ~~<100>~~ **Amos 8:1**

**Vs. 1-3:** Amos saw a basket of summer fruit gathered, and ready to be eaten; which signified, that the people were ripe for destruction, that the year of God's patience was drawing towards a conclusion. Such summer fruits will not keep till winter, but must be used at once. Yet these judgments shall not draw from them any acknowledgment, either of God's righteousness or their own unrighteousness. Sinners put off repentance from day to day, because they think the Lord thus delays his judgments.

### ~~<100>~~ **Amos 8:4**

**Vs. 4-10:** The rich and powerful of the land were the most guilty of oppression, as well as the foremost in idolatry. They were weary of the restraints of the Sabbaths and the new moons, and wished them over, because no common work might be done therein. This is the character of many who are called Christians. The Sabbath day and Sabbath work are a burden to carnal hearts. It will either be profaned or be accounted a dull day. But can we spend our time better than in communion with God? When employed in religious services, they were thinking of marketings. They were weary of holy duties, because their worldly business stood still the while. Those are strangers to God, and enemies to themselves, who love market days better than Sabbath days, who would rather be selling corn than worshipping God. They have no regard to man: those who have lost the savor of piety, will not long keep the sense of common honesty. They cheat those they deal with. They take advantage of their neighbor's ignorance or necessity, in a traffic which nearly concerns the laboring poor. Could we witness the fraud and covetousness, which, in such numerous forms, render trading an abomination to the Lord, we should not wonder to see many dealers backward in the service of God. But he who thus despises the poor, reproaches his Maker; as it regards Him, rich and poor meet together. Riches that are got by the ruin of the poor, will bring ruin on those that get them. God will remember their sin against them. This

speaks the case of such unjust, unmerciful men, to be miserable indeed, miserable for ever. There shall be terror and desolation every where. It shall come upon them when they little think of it. Thus uncertain are all our creature-comforts and enjoyments, even life itself; in the midst of life we are in death. What will be the wailing in the bitter day which follows sinful and sensual pleasures!

**Amos 8:11**

**Vs. 11-14:** Here was a token of God's highest displeasure. At any time, and most in a time of trouble, a famine of the word of God is the heaviest judgment. To many this is no affliction, yet some will feel it very much, and will travel far to hear a good sermon; they feel the loss of the mercies others foolishly sin away. But when God visits a backsliding church, their own plans and endeavors to find out a way of salvation, will stand them in no stead. And the most amiable and zealous would perish, for want of the water of life, which Christ only can bestow. Let us value our advantages, seek to profit by them, and fear sinning them away.

## CHAPTER 9

*The ruin of Israel. (1-10) The restoration of the Jews and the gospel blessing. (11-15)*

### <img alt="decorative icon" data-bbox="102 204 135 226"/> **Amos 9:1**

**Vs. 1-10:** The prophet, in vision, saw the Lord standing upon the idolatrous altar at Bethel. Wherever sinners flee from God's justice, it will overtake them. Those whom God brings to heaven by his grace, shall never be cast down; but those who seek to climb thither by vain confidence in themselves, will be cast down and filled with shame. That which makes escape impossible and ruin sure, is, that God will set his eyes upon them for evil, not for good. Wretched must those be on whom the Lord looks for evil, and not for good. The Lord would scatter the Jews, and visit them with calamities, as the corn is shaken in a sieve; but he would save some from among them. The astonishing preservation of the Jews as a distinct people, seems here foretold. If professors make themselves like the world, God will level them with the world. The sinners who thus flatter themselves, shall find that their profession will not protect them.

### <img alt="decorative icon" data-bbox="102 564 135 586"/> **Amos 9:11**

**Vs. 11-15:** Christ died to gather together the children of God that were scattered abroad, here said to be those who were called by his name. The Lord saith this, who doeth this, who can do it, who has determined to do it, the power of whose grace is engaged for doing it. Verses 13-15 may refer to the early times of Christianity, but will receive a more glorious fulfillment in the events which all the prophets more or less foretold, and may be understood of the happy state when the fullness both of the Jews and the Gentiles come into the church. Let us continue earnest in prayer for the fulfillment of these prophecies, in the peace, purity, and the beauty of the church. God marvelously preserves his elect amidst the most fearful confusions and miseries. When all seems desperate, he wonderfully revives his church, and blesses her with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus. And great shall be the glory of that period, in which not one good thing promised shall remain unfulfilled.