

Amos

¹ The message of Amos, one of the sheep breeders of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the reign of King Uzziah of Judah, and in the reign of Jeroboam the son of King Joash of Israel, two years before the earthquake.

² Amos said:
Whenever the LORD roars from Zion,
and utters his voice from Jerusalem,
the pastures of the shepherds dry up,
the top of Carmel becomes arid.

God's Judgment on Israel's Neighbours

³ The LORD says:

For Damascus' three crimes – no, four! –
I will not rescind my judgment.
They have threshed Gilead
with threshing instruments of iron.

⁴ Therefore I will send fire on Hazael's house,
it will devour the palaces of Ben-hadad.

⁵ I will break open the gate of Damascus,
I will wipe out those who live in the valley of Aven
and the sceptred ruler of Beth-Eden.
The people of Aram will go into captivity in Kir,
says the LORD.

⁶ The LORD says:

For Gaza's three crimes – no, four! –
I will not rescind my judgment.
They carried away captive a whole nation,

sold them as slaves to Edom.

⁷ Therefore I will send fire on the wall of Gaza,
and it will devour her palaces.

⁸ And I will wipe out those who live in Ashdod,
and the sceptred ruler of Askelon.

I will turn my hand against Ekron,
and the remnant of the Philistines will perish,
says the LORD.

⁹ The LORD says:

For Tyre's three crimes – no, four! –

I will not rescind my judgment.

They carried away captive a whole people into
exile in Edom,

and did not remember the brotherly covenant.

¹⁰ So I will send fire on the walls of Tyre.

It will devour her palaces.

¹¹ The LORD says:

For Edom's three crimes – no, four! –

I will not rescind my judgment.

They pursued their relatives with the sword,
stilled their pity,

cherished their anger continually,

retained their fury forever.

¹² So I will send a fire into Teman.

It will destroy the palaces of Bozrah.

¹³ The LORD says:

For Ammonites' three crimes – no, four! –

I will not rescind my judgment.

They have ripped open pregnant women in
Gilead,
in their lust for land.

¹⁴ So I will kindle a fire on the wall of Rabbah.
It will destroy her palaces,
with a war-cry in the day of battle,
with a tempest in the day of the whirlwind.

¹⁵ Their king will go into exile,
he and his nobles together,
says the LORD.

2

¹ The LORD says:

For Moab's three crimes – no, four! –
I will not rescind my judgment.
They have burned to lime the bones of the king of
Edom,

² to desecrate the dead.
So I will send a fire into Moab.
It will devour the palaces of Kirioth,
with a war-cry,
with the sound of trumpets.

³ I will kill the ruler,
all his nobles I will slay with him,
says the LORD.

⁴ The LORD says:

For Judah's three crimes – no, four! –
I will not rescind my judgment.
They have rejected the law of the LORD
and have not kept his statutes.

Instead their false gods their ancestors followed,
have led them astray.

⁵ So I will send a fire on Judah.
It will devour the palaces of Jerusalem.

God's Judgment on Israel

⁶ The LORD says:

For Israel's three crimes – no, four! –
I will not rescind my judgment.
They sell the righteous for money,
the needy for a pair of shoes.

⁷ They trample on the head of the poor,
push the humble out of the way.
Father and son go to the same temple girl,
and so profane my holy name.

⁸ They stretch themselves
on garments taken in pledges beside every altar,
and they drink the wine
of those who have been fined in the house of their
God.

⁹ It was I who destroyed the Amorites for your
sake,
whose height was like that of the cedars,
as strong as oaks.
I destroyed their fruit from above
and their roots from below.

¹⁰ It was I who brought you up from the land of
Egypt,
led you forty years in the wilderness,
brought you here to possess the land of the Amor-
ites.

11 I raised up some of your sons to be prophets
some of your youths to be Nazirites.
Is not this indeed so, Israelites?
says the LORD.

12 But you made the Nazirites drink wine
and banned the prophets from prophesying.

13 Listen!
It is I who will make you groan in your places,
as a wagon groans under its load of grain.

14 Then flight will fail the swift,
and the strength of the strongest will be useless.
The warrior will not save his life,
15 the archer will not stand firm,
the swift of foot will not escape,
the horseman will not save his life.
16 The bravest of warriors
will flee away naked in that day,
says the LORD.

3

A Warning to Israel

1 Listen to this message, Israelites,
which the LORD has spoken against you,
against the whole nation that I brought out of
Egypt:

2 You alone have I cared for of all the nations of the
world,
this is why I will punish you for your crimes.

3 Do two walk together
unless they agreed to meet?

4 Does a lion roar in the forest

when there is no prey for him?
Does a young lion cry out in his den
unless he has caught something?

⁵ Does a bird swoop down into a trap
if no bait is set for it?
Does a trap spring up from the ground
if nothing sets it off?

⁶ Can a trumpet be blown in a city
and the people not tremble?
Can disaster strike a city
and the LORD not have caused it?

⁷ Surely the Lord GOD does nothing
without revealing his purpose to his servants the
prophets.

⁸ The lion has roared; who does not fear?
The Lord GOD has spoken; who will not prophesy?

⁹ Proclaim over the palaces in Ashdod,
and over the palaces in the land of Egypt:
Gather upon the mountain of Samaria,
and see the violent turmoil,
the acts of oppression in her midst.

¹⁰ For they do not know how to do right.
They are heaping up violence
and oppression in their palaces,
says the LORD.

¹¹ Therefore the Lord GOD says:

An enemy will surround the land,
he will strip your strength from you.
and your palaces will be looted.

¹² The LORD says:

Just as a shepherd rescues from the jaws of a lion
two shinbones or a piece of an ear,
so the Israelites living in Samaria will be rescued

—
with the corner of a couch,
and the damask of a divan!

¹³ Listen and testify against the house of Jacob,
says the Lord GOD, the God of hosts.

¹⁴ On the day when I punish Israel for their crimes,
I will also visit in judgment the altars of Bethel,
the horns of the altar will be hacked off,
and they will fall to the ground.

¹⁵ I will destroy the winter houses
together with the summer houses
and the houses of ivory will perish.
Many great houses will be swept away,
says the LORD.

4

¹ Listen to this message, women of Samaria,
you well-fed cows of Bashan,
who oppress the poor and crush the needy,
who say to your husbands, 'Bring us another
drink!'

² The Lord GOD has sworn by his holiness:
The time is coming when you will be carried away
in baskets,

your children carried away in fish-baskets,
³ and through the breaches in the city wall you will
go,

thrown out on the garbage dump,
says the LORD.

⁴ Come to Bethel and transgress,
at Gilgal increase your transgression.
Bring your sacrifices in the morning,
every third day your tithes!

⁵ Burn some leavened bread as a thank-offering,
proclaim aloud your voluntary offerings,
for you love to do this, Israelites!
says the Lord GOD.

⁶ But it was I who gave to you
empty stomachs in all your cities,
and lack of bread in all your towns,
yet you have not returned to me,
says the LORD.

⁷ It was I who withheld from you the rain,
sending rain on one city,
while on another I allowed no rain.
One field received rain,
while a field without rain withered.

⁸ People from two or three cities
ranged as far as another city
for drinking water,
and still they did not have enough,
yet you did not return to me,
says the LORD.

⁹ I struck you with blight and mildew,
I laid waste your gardens and vineyards.

The swarming locust devoured your fig and your
olive trees,
yet you did not return to me,
says the LORD.

¹⁰ I sent plague among you like the plagues of
Egypt,
I slew your youths with the sword, your horses
raided away,
I caused the stench of your camps to rise in your
nostrils,
yet you did not return to me,
says the LORD.

¹¹ I wrought a destruction among you,
as God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.
You were like a stick snatched from the fire,
yet you did not return to me,
says the LORD.

¹² Therefore this is what I will do to you, Israel,
and because I am about to do this to you,
prepare to meet your God, Israel.

¹³ He is here!
He who forms the mountains,
creates the wind,
declares to his thoughts to mortals,
makes dawn and darkness,
treads upon the heights of the earth,
the LORD, the God of hosts, is his name!

5

A Funeral Song for Israel

¹ Listen to the words of the funeral song
I am singing for you, Israel:

² Fallen, no more to rise, is the virgin Israel!
Hurlled down upon her own soil she lies,
with no one to lift her up!

³ For the Lord GOD says this:
The city that marches out with a thousand soldiers
has only a hundred left,
and the one that marches out with a hundred
has only ten left.

⁴ For the LORD says this to Israel:
Seek me and live,
⁵ But do not seek Bethel,
do not enter Gilgal,
do not go over to Beer-sheba.
For Gilgal will enter exile,
and Bethel will go to destruction.

⁶ Seek the LORD and live,
or he will cast fire on the house of Joseph,
and it will devour
and there will be no one to quench it for Bethel.

⁷ You who turn judgment to bitter wormwood,
and cast righteousness into the dirt:

⁸ He who made the Pleiades and Orion,
who turns deep darkness into dawn,
who darkens day again into night,
who summons the waters of the sea,
and pours them out on the earth's surface,
the LORD is his name!

⁹ He causes destruction to burst over the strong.
He brings devastation on the fortress.

¹⁰ You who hate the arbiters at the city gate,
and abhor anyone who speaks the truth:

¹¹ Because you trample on the weak,
and tax their grain,
although you have built houses of hewn stone,
you will not live in them,
although you have planted charming vineyards,
you will not drink their wine.

¹² For I know how many are your crimes,
and how great are your sins!
You persecutors of the righteous, takers of bribes!
You deny the poor their justice at the city gate.

¹³ It would be wise to keep quiet in such an evil
time.

¹⁴ Seek good and not evil,
that you may live,
so the LORD, God of hosts,
may be with you, as you have claimed he is.

¹⁵ Hate evil and love good,
establish justice at the city gate.
Perhaps the LORD, the God of hosts,
will be gracious to a surviving remnant of Joseph.

¹⁶ Therefore the LORD, the God of hosts, says:
In all the public squares there will be wailing,
in every street the sound of mourning.
They will summon the farmers to mourning,

and professional mourners to wailing.

¹⁷ In all vineyards there will be lamenting,
when I pass through your midst,
says the LORD.

¹⁸ Fools who long for the day of the LORD!
What does the day of the LORD mean to you?
It is darkness, and not light.

¹⁹ It is as when one flees from a lion,
and is attacked by a bear,
as when one reaches home, leans his hand on the
wall,
and a snake bites him.

²⁰ Won't the LORD's day be darkness and not light,
murky darkness without a ray of light in it?

²¹ I hate, I despise your feasts,
I will not smell the savour of your festivals,

²² I will not be pleased with your burnt offerings,
your grain offerings,
I will not accept the peace offerings
of your fattened calves.

²³ Spare me the noise of your songs,
I will not listen to the melody of your lyres.

²⁴ But let justice roll on as a flood of waters,
and righteousness like an unfailing stream.

²⁵ Was it only sacrifices and grain offerings
you brought me
during the forty years in the wilderness, Israel?

²⁶ But now you will lift up your "king" Sikkuth
and "star god" Kiyyun,
your idols which you have made for yourselves,

²⁷ as I drive you into exile beyond Damascus,
says the LORD, whose name is the God of hosts.

6

The Destruction of Israel

¹ Sorrow awaits who are carefree in Zion,
overconfident on the mountain of Samaria!
The elite of this, the best of nations,
on whom the people of Israel rest their hopes!

² You say to the people:
Cross over to Calneh and see,
go from there to Hamath the great,
then go down to Gath of the Philistines:
Are they better than these kingdoms?
Is their territory larger than yours?

³ You push away all thoughts of the evil day,
yet have instituted a rule of violence.

⁴ They lie on ivory couches,
sprawl on their divans,
eat choice lambs from the flock,
and fattened calves from the stall.

⁵ They idly sing to the sound of the lyre,
thinking themselves songwriters like David,

⁶ they drink bowlfuls of wine,
and anoint themselves with the finest of oil.
But they do not grieve over the ruin of Joseph.

⁷ Therefore now they must go into exile
at the head of the captives,
and hushed will be the revelry of the sprawlers.

⁸ The Lord GOD,
the LORD, the God of hosts, has sworn by himself:
I abhor the pride of Jacob,
I hate his palaces,
therefore I will deliver up the city
and all that is in it to their enemies.

⁹ If ten people remain in one house, then they
will die.

¹⁰ When the uncle and another member of the
family of a dead man come to carry the body out
of the house for burial, they will call to someone in
a corner of the house, "Any more there?" and he
will answer, "No", and then he will add, "Be quiet!"
– for the name of the LORD must not be mentioned.

¹¹ Look! The LORD is giving the command!
He will smash the large house to bits,
the small house into fragments.

¹² Do horses gallop on crags?
Does one plough the sea with oxen?
Yet you turn justice into poison weed,
and the fruit of righteousness into bitter worm-
wood.

¹³ You who are so proud
of capturing Lo-debar,
who say, "Have we not by our own strength
taken Karnaim for ourselves?"

¹⁴ I am now raising up against you,
Israel, a nation,
says the LORD, the God of hosts.
They will oppress you,
from the entrance of Hamath
to the brook of the Arabah.

7

A Vision of Locusts

¹ This is what the Lord GOD showed me: he was forming a swarm of locusts, when the late spring grass began to come up after the king's share had been harvested.

² And when they had finished devouring all the land's vegetation, I said:
'Lord GOD, forgive, I beg you!
How can Jacob survive,
for he is so helpless?'

³ The LORD relented. This will not happen,' said the LORD.

A Vision of Fire

⁴ This is what he showed me: the Lord GOD was giving command to execute judgment by fire. It burned up the great deep, and had begun to devour the fields, and I said:

⁵ 'Lord GOD, forgive, I beg you!
How can Jacob survive,
for he is so helpless?'

⁶ The LORD relented. 'This will not happen either,' said the LORD.

A Vision of a Plumb Line

⁷ This is what the Lord GOD showed me: the Lord was standing beside a wall built with a plumb line, with a plumb line in his hand.

⁸ And the LORD said to me,
'What do you see, Amos?'

And I answered,
'A plumb line,'
Then the Lord said,

‘Watch: I am setting a plumb line
in the midst of my people Israel,
I will no longer overlook their crookedness.

⁹ And the high places of Isaac
will be desolate,
the sanctuaries of Israel
will be laid waste,
and I will rise up against the house of Jeroboam
with the sword.’

Amaziah and Amos

¹⁰ Then Amaziah, chief priest of Bethel sent this
message to King Jeroboam of Israel: ‘Amos has
conspired against you right in the heart of Israel.
The country cannot survive all his words.

¹¹ Amos has said, “Jeroboam will die by the
sword, and Israel will be led away captive out of
their land.” ’

¹² And Amaziah said to Amos, ‘Leave, you who
see visions, go to the land of Judah. Earn your
bread there and prophesy there,

¹³ but don’t prophesy any more at Bethel, for it is
the king’s sanctuary, and it is the royal residence.’

¹⁴ ‘I am no prophet,’ Amos answered Amaziah,
‘nor trained as one. I am a shepherd and a keeper
of sycamores fig trees.

¹⁵ But the LORD took me away from following the
flock, and the LORD said to me, “Go, prophesy to
my people Israel.”

¹⁶ Now therefore listen to the LORD’s message:
“You say not to prophesy against Israel,
nor to preach against the house of Isaac.

¹⁷ But the LORD says:

Your wife will become a prostitute in the city,

your sons and your daughters will fall by the sword,
your land will be divided up,
you will die on unclean soil,
and Israel will be led away captive out of their land.” ’

8

The Time is Ripe

¹ The Lord GOD showed me this: a basket of summer fruit.

² ‘What do you see, Amos?’ he asked. I replied, ‘A basket of ripe summer fruit.’ Then the LORD said to me:

The time is ripe for my people Israel,
I will no longer overlook their crimes.

³ The singing women in the palace will howl on that day,

says the LORD:

Corpses everywhere,
thrown out in silence.

⁴ Listen to this, you who trample on the needy,
who oppress the poor of the earth,

⁵ saying:

When will the feast of the new moon be over
so that we may sell grain?

And the sabbath ended
so that we may offer wheat for sale?

Reducing the measure and increasing the price,
cheating with false scales,

⁶ mixing the sweepings in with the wheat.

Then we can buy the poor for money,
the needy for a pair of shoes.

⁷ Now the LORD has taken an oath
by the Pride of Jacob:

I will never forget all their deeds!

⁸ Because of this won't the land quake,
and all its inhabitants mourn?
Won't the whole of it rise like the Nile,
churn and subside like the Nile in Egypt?

⁹ On that day, says the Lord GOD,
I will make the sun set at noon
and darken the earth in broad daylight.

¹⁰ I will turn your feasts into mourning,
all your songs into dirges.

I will cause you to dress in sackcloth,
every head shaved.

I will make you mourn like you have lost your only
son,
all that happens will end in bitterness.

¹¹ The day is coming, says the Lord GOD,
when I will send hunger in the land.
Not a famine of bread or thirst for water,
but for hearing the message of the LORD.

¹² Then they will wander from sea to sea,
from the north to the east,
to seek a message from the LORD,
but they will not find it.

¹³ In that day beautiful girls and strong young men
will faint from thirst.

¹⁴ Those who take oaths by the shameful idol of
Samaria,
who swear, "As surely as your God lives, O Dan!"
and, "By the sacred way to Beer-sheba!" –

they will fall and never rise again.

9

¹ I saw the Lord towering above the altar, and he commanded:

Strike the tops of the pillars
so that the foundations may shake,
bring them down on the heads of the people below.

The rest of them I will slay with the sword:
no one will get away,
no one will escape.

² If they dig down to Sheol,
there will my hand take them.
If they climb up to the heavens,
from there will I bring them down.

³ If they hide themselves on the top of Carmel,
there will I search them out and take them.
If they hide out of my sight at the bottom of the sea,
there will I command the sea serpent to bite them.

⁴ If they are taken into captivity by their enemies,
there will I command the sword to slay them.
I will keep my eye on them
but for evil and not for good.

⁵ It is the Lord the GOD of hosts,
who touches the earth and it trembles,
all who live on it mourn.
The earth rises up like the Nile,
and sinks like the Nile of Egypt.

⁶ The one who builds in the heavens,
who sets the dome of the sky over the earth,
who summons the waters of the sea

and pours them out on the face of the earth:
the LORD is his name.

⁷ To me, Israelites, you are
just like the Cushites,
says the LORD.

Yes, I brought Israel up out of the land of Egypt,
but also the Philistines from Caphtor,
and the Arameans from Kir!

⁸ Behold the eyes of the Lord GOD
are on the sinful kingdom:
I will destroy it from the face of the earth!
But I will not completely destroy the house of
Jacob,
says the LORD.

⁹ For behold I am about to give the command,
and I will shake the house of Israel among all the
nations
just as one shakes grain in a sieve,
but not a pebble will fall to the ground.

¹⁰ All the sinners of my people,
who deny that disaster will touch or befall them,
will die by the sword.

A Promise of Restoration

¹¹ On that day I will raise up the fallen house of
David,
I will wall up its gaps and raise up its ruins,
I will rebuild it as it was long ago.

¹² They will possess again the rest of Edom,
and all the nations which once you ruled for me,
says the LORD, who will do this.

¹³ Listen! The days are coming, says the LORD,
when the harvest is too big to reap
before it is time to plough,
when the grapes cannot be all trod
before it is time to sow,
when the mountains will run with sweet wine,
and every hill will flow with it.

¹⁴ I will bring back my people Israel,
they will rebuild waste cities and inhabit them,
plant vineyards and drink their wine,
make gardens and eat their fruit.

¹⁵ I will plant them on their own soil,
and they will never again be uprooted from their
land
which I have given them,
says the LORD your God.

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