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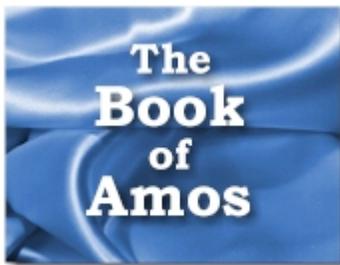
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## The Book of Amos

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Read the accompanying [Newsletter for February 2013](#)



**The Book of Amos is one of the least understood in the Holy Scriptures. It is a prophecy for the period just ahead of us, a prophecy dealing with a specific two-year span of time just prior to the Second Advent of Christ. Yet it is a prophecy which has all of its geographical, political, and chronological parameters solidly situated in the period of the early 8<sup>th</sup> century BC, almost 900 years before the birth of Jesus. One might ask, what does a prophecy written back then, dealing with geographical, political, and chronological matters relevant to that period, have to do with the future, our day today?**

The apostle Paul said in his epistle of First Corinthians that all of the writings in our Scripture today were written for the generation when Christ introduced His message to the world, and secondarily when the conclusion of this message would be announced to the world just prior to the Second Coming of Christ (1 Corinthians 10:11). In other words, there is an end-time relevance to these prophecies.

Solomon wrote, that which once occurred shall occur again (Ecclesiastes 1:9). Many of the prophecies, though they were uttered in ancient times, with geographical and political and chronological matters dealing with the time back then, those prophecies actually have an end-time relevance to them.

Geography too must be taken into account at the end time, just as it was back there in former periods of time. Amos was no exception. It was placed into the canon by Ezra the priest in the late 5<sup>th</sup> century BC within the Minor Prophets.<sup>2</sup> This Book of Amos was placed third in order for a reason within an historical context.

Amos was also *third* in order of the group of *seven* of the twelve Minor Prophets dealing with the Assyrian period. From the Book of Hosea to Nahum, all of those seven books were written when the Assyrian empire was at its height. It was a time before the 10 tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel (also called Samaria) were taken captive by the Assyrian during three different periods.

The chronological period, the political events described, and the geographical areas all relate to and inform us about the early part of the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC.

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<sup>1</sup> This article was originally from an audiotape titled "Amos, a Prophecy for Today." DWS

<sup>2</sup> See Dr. Martin's article "[Minor Prophets for Today](#)." DWS

## *The Importance of Geography in Amos*

To understand Amos, you must understand the geographical terms. There are some terms in Amos which are very strange to us, simply because many of them went out of existence no more than a hundred or two hundred years afterward.

Geographical areas tend to change names, as different circumstances occur. Amos in our Bibles today has nine chapters. It is a long prophecy, though it is a part of the Minor Prophets. It begins with eight different geographical and political areas upon which God was to pronounce judgment. The judgment was to come upon nations centered in and around Canaan, more particularly, in a specific area of the Middle East beginning with Syria, down through Tyre on the coast, then to the Philistine area west of Jerusalem, coming down to a judgment upon Judah, and finally a judgment upon northern Israel.

Most of this prophecy concerns judgments that God was to give to northern Israel (not to Judah) with its geographical headquarters at the city of Samaria. This was the capital established by Jeroboam, after the breakup of the Solomonic Empire. In 1 Kings 11:26 through chapter 14 and in 2 Chronicles chapter 10, after Solomon's death the kingdom of Israel was broken into two parts with Judah in the south (with its kingdom centered at Jerusalem where the Temple was), and the other northern kingdom (with its capital at Samaria). This northern kingdom had two temple areas — one at Bethel north of Jerusalem about 10 miles, where a false idol of a calf was set up, and the second at Dan in the northern perimeter about 100 miles north of Jerusalem, just under Mount Hermon at the springs of Dan.

Amos will discuss those two areas quite a bit, because the idolatrous religious practices at these two sites led Israel to sin. These shrines were built by Jeroboam,<sup>3</sup> and were designed to be temples of YHWH within palaces. They were not designed to be temples of heathen gods. Baal was not to be worshipped there, neither were the gods of the Philistines, the gods of the Babylonians, the Tyrians, or any other god. At first YHWH, the God of Israel was to be worshipped exclusively, but they picked the wrong places. They picked two areas outside the region of Jerusalem. David and Solomon, then Rehoboam, and 19 kings after, down to the last king of Judah, Zedekiah, all ruled from Jerusalem where the real Temple of God was.

In the north the Kingdom of Israel had the two temple or sanctuary areas and a proliferation of altars in other regions of Israel because of the breakdown of spiritual authority in the north. However, they all claimed to worship YHWH. At the same time, they brought in many heathen teachings, customs, ceremonies, and principles of living which were Gentile in origin, and did not come from God. This included sacrificing to the golden calves at Bethel (1 Kings 12:32) and later in the region of Dan (2 Kings 10:29).

## *Amos and Other Prophets*

As a result God raised up a prophet to go to the northern Israelites and teach them what God really expected of them. The prophet God raised up, among several at the time, was Amos. Interestingly, Amos was not from northern Israel. He came from Judah, from an area called Tekoa. (I have been there several times.) It is interesting to see the areas where the historical events took place which Amos talks about, and the prophetic areas where the judgments of God will occur.

Amos was not, as he said in his own writings, amongst the official prophets of YHWH in Israel. There were many prophets up north in Israel. Elijah was one at an earlier time, just before Amos. Remember the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Ashtaroth Judges 2:13? Quite a number of others were prophets of YHWH, even in the north. The northern kingdom had areas which were not proper for worshipping YHWH.<sup>4</sup> After the time of David, only Jerusalem was to be the ritual site, but northern Israel (wanting to

<sup>3</sup> Because of Solomon's sins, YHWH broke up the united kingdom of Israel into two kingdoms. Jeroboam I was YHWH's chosen successor to Solomon in the north (1 Kings 11:26–38). *DWS*

<sup>4</sup> See 1 Kings 18:19, 22, 22:6; and 2 Chronicles 18:5–8. Many of the prophets in Israel may have indeed originally served and appealed to YHWH, but also served other gods. This was strictly forbidden by God's covenant with Israel and Judah under the Mosaic legislation. The true prophets of YHWH were either persecuted, killed, or went south to Judah. Elijah said he was the only prophet of YHWH left in his day (1 Kings 18:22). Later God brought other prophets, including Amos from Judah. *DWS*

maintain their political sovereignty, power and authority) established these two temples, plus other areas, to wean people away from Jerusalem.

So God raised up Amos who was not of the school of the prophets. However, he had the prophetic spirit within him. When God uses any individual with a prophetic spirit, it is just like God Himself speaking.

Look at the prologue of the prophecies of Amos. It is important to comprehend the chronological period in which Amos is prophesying, because it will affect your understanding of the prophecy, even for the end-time in advance of us today. Amos 1:1: **“The words of Amos, who was among the herdmen of Tekoa ...”** Tekoa is ten miles south of Jerusalem, a little farther south than Bethlehem, and a little bit east.

**“The words of Amos, who was among the herdmen of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam [II, the second king of Israel by this name] the son of Joash king of Israel, two years before the earthquake.”**

• **Amos 1:1**

Amos names the kings of Judah and Israel when he gave these prophecies. Amos was not of the school of the prophets. God just picked Amos, saying, I have got a job for you to do.

### **“The Earthquake”**

At the end of verse one Amos makes a most interesting and significant statement about what the prophecy is all about. His prophecies in nine chapters were uttered at a time, **“two years BEFORE the earthquake.”** Is that not an interesting thing to start with? Amos is giving an introduction here to prophecies, and he says these were uttered before a significant earthquake which occurred in the reign of Uzziah, king of Judah.<sup>5</sup>

Israel is subject to earthquakes. They have always occurred in Israel. But Amos says, I presented this prophecy two years before **“the earthquake.”**<sup>6</sup> Commentators on the Bible realize this refers to a devastating earthquake which hit Palestine, one so significant in the living memory of every person there, it was remembered 300 years later by the people. It became proverbial ... **“THE earthquake.”** It became a chronological benchmark which everyone remembered. Amos is trying to show that his prophecies are associated with a time period when God sent a devastating earthquake of an extremely high magnitude, perhaps a 10, 11, or perhaps even a 12 on the Richter Scale. This would mean utter and nearly complete devastation. We do not know how strong, but it was so powerful that those living in an area of earthquakes remembered it as a major event worthy of commemorating.

Three hundred years later in Zechariah chapter 14, an event is mentioned which will take place immediately prior to the Second Coming of our Lord. He is coming to establish His Kingdom on this earth. When His feet touch down on the Mount of Olives,<sup>7</sup> a series of events will occur:

**“Behold, the day of YHWH comes, and your spoil shall be divided in the midst of you ...”**

• **Zechariah 14:1**

This Zechariah passage was written to Judah some three hundred years after Amos. Continuing on:

**“For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and**

<sup>5</sup> The Middle East is susceptible to quite a number of earthquakes. They occur almost on a daily basis. You cannot really feel most of them. In California also, earthquakes occur on a daily basis. But sometimes they get to the 3.0 category on the Richter scale which can be noticed and felt (if you are close to the epicenter). When you get to 4.0, you definitely begin to feel them. Larger than this, damage and injuries can occur. Large quakes can be devastating. My wife and I were up in Alaska some years ago, and people still had pictures of a devastating 9.0 earthquake which tore Anchorage to pieces. *ELM*

<sup>6</sup> Amos refers to another earthquake in Amos 8:8. These were to occur in the future near to Amos. The earthquake in 9:5–6 (also mentioned in Zechariah 14:1) will occur during the Day of YHWH, far in the future from the time of Amos,. *DWS*

<sup>7</sup> He left from there. He shall return there also (Acts 1:9–11). *DWS*

**the residue of the people** [those who are left] **shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall YHWH go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he [YHWH] fought in the day of battle ...**

• *Zechariah 14:2–3*

This **“day of battle”** refers back to the time of King Saul. An important battle took place between Israel and the Philistines. Christ will fight then, as God fought for Israel in that **“day of battle”** (find this in 1 Samuel 13:22–14:13, especially verse 14:15). Do you know what turned the tide of that battle in favor of Israel and sent the Philistines running back to their home areas on the coast? It was God striking Palestine with a major earthquake. This was in the time of King Saul, in the past. Go on in Zechariah:

**“And his feet [YHWH’s feet — Christ with the title of YHWH] shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.”**

• *Zechariah 14:4*

The Mount of Olives is a large mountain with a lot of earth. For it to be cleaved in two, it will be caused by a major earthquake of tremendous proportions.

**“And you shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal [this is in the east]: yea, you shall flee, like as you fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah.”**

• *Zechariah 14:5*

This earthquake prophesied in Zechariah will be even more powerful than the earthquake which routed the Philistines in the time of King Saul. This earthquake of Zechariah chapter 14, at the time Christ is returning will be like the one associated with the time of Amos’ prophecies.

Not only seismic disturbances will come, but celestial events will take place. All types of natural phenomena make it clear to the world that God exists and He is involved with mankind. The prophecies of Amos, presented in the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC, have a relevance through that earthquake of something which will happen in the future. Even people in the days of Zechariah 300 years later were still knowledgeable about the great earthquake in their past.

Do you want the coming earthquake to be further described? John the apostle described it in Revelation chapter 16, at the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> plague, and it describes the Second Coming of Christ, the very time when His feet will touch on the Mount of Olives. The 7<sup>th</sup> plague is associated with what Amos prophesied:

**“And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the Temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts.”**

• *Revelation 16:17–19*

That great city is not Babylon. Babylon is mentioned later on. It is not Tyre. Tyre is mentioned earlier, if you understand it. The great city is Jerusalem. The antichrist is coming, and he will establish his kingdom in Jerusalem, and this earthquake will occur at Jerusalem. It will be so powerful that the only earthquake comparable was in the days of Uzziah, but even that earthquake will be less powerful than the coming one.

### *The First Prophecies of Amos*

Go back to the first prophecies in Amos 1:3–2:16. Remember, Amos received this prophecy two years before the great earthquake and you will understand this prophecy when you consider the events which took place two years before the earthquake will be repeated as mentioned in the Book of Revelation. This chronological indication by Amos was of supreme importance to him. In the first verse Amos explained who he

was, and the timeframe of when he received the prophecies. The earthquake Amos refers to in the time of Uzziah, king of Judah, was associated with (according to Zechariah 14:3–5 and Revelation 16:17–19) the return of Jesus Christ. All are connected.

If this is the case, then we have here prophecies, two years before the earthquake in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, let me put it this way, if you have your prophetic understanding in proper order, you will understand here the code, the secret which God is trying to tell you. This prophecy of Amos will happen two years before the major earthquake that will occur at the end of the age.

After verse 1, Amos directs his prophecy to eight different nations, all in the Middle East, in what we call the Levant or the eastern Mediterranean. It does not include Assyria, though Assyria is mentioned as an adversarial power. It includes the nations from Syria, Lebanon, Tyre, Israel and down to Gaza, in that area. The first six are Gentile nations. He gives short accounts of what will happen to each of them.

The next is Judah but he does not spend much time with Judah because his prophecy is not primarily to Judah. It is primarily directed to Israel in the north, and he has much to say about them. In fact, what happens will be typical of what will happen to Israel two years prior to the Second Coming of Christ. Now look at verse 2:

**“... YHWH will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the habitations of the shepherds shall mourn, and the top of Carmel [near Haifa today] shall wither.”**

• **Amos 1:2**

### **Damascus**

The first prophecy was against Damascus.

**“Thus says YHWH; For three transgressions of Damascus, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they have threshed Gilead with threshing instruments of iron: But I will send a fire into the house of Hazael, which shall devour the palaces of Benhadad.**

**I will break also the bar of Damascus, and cut off the inhabitant from the plain of Aven, and him that holds the scepter from the house of Eden: and the people of Syria shall go into captivity unto Kir, says YHWH.”**

• **Amos 1:3–5**

The Damascus discussed here is the Damascus of the 8<sup>th</sup> Century BC, but it also refers to Damascus two years prior to the Second Coming of Christ. Does this mean there will be a Damascus at that time? Yes. It is the capital of Syria right now. Though this prophecy is given in the 8<sup>th</sup> Century BC, look at what will happen to Damascus a few years in advance of us, just before Christ’s Second Coming.

### **Gaza and the Other Nations**

Then it goes on to the second prophecy in verse 6, a prophecy against Gaza, the Philistine area. This is now the Gaza Strip. People wonder whether there will be a Palestinian state. I have said for years there shall

#### **The Lion in Amos**

In Amos 1:2 YHWH roars like a lion *from Jerusalem* to the people of the northern kingdom of Israel. The same verb “roar” is used in Amos 3:4 with reference to a lion. A lion’s roar is a frightful sound to a shepherd like Amos. In Amos 3:8 a lion’s roar is compared to YHWH’s prophecies:

**“The lion has roared, who will not fear? the Lord YHWH has spoken, who can but prophesy?”**

In Amos, God is angry and He will act in judgment; in anger He is more fearsome than the lion (Amos 5:19). The people were not only committing idolatry spiritually and physically, but as a result of their idolatry, that same idolatry led them to be unjust and unrighteous toward each other. God commands Israel in Amos 5:15:

**“Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment [justice] in the gate: it may be that YHWH, God of hosts, will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph”**

Unless Israel repents, God’s punishment will leave only remnants to be rescued. Yet like the shepherd, YHWH will retrieve Israel’s remnants from lion’s mouth — Amos 3:12. *DWS*

be one. It makes no difference if the Israelis want one or not, it will happen.<sup>8</sup>

Now I will explain something about Israel, and who will be in charge toward the end of the age. When you look at these geographical divisions:

Number one is Damascus. This is the territory of Syria today.

Number two is Gaza along the Mediterranean coast.

Number three (in verse 9) is Tyre. That is up in Lebanon.

Number four is Edom (verse 11), which is part of Jordan today (east of the Jordan River).<sup>9</sup>

Number five (verse 13), is Ammon, also east of the Jordan River.

Number six is Moab (Amos 2:1, southeast of the Dead Sea).

Then in Amos 2:4 we find Judah itself.<sup>10</sup>

Then we come to Amos 2:6, to Israel. It is the eighth geographical area discussed. The prophecy to Israel occupies the rest of the Book of Amos.

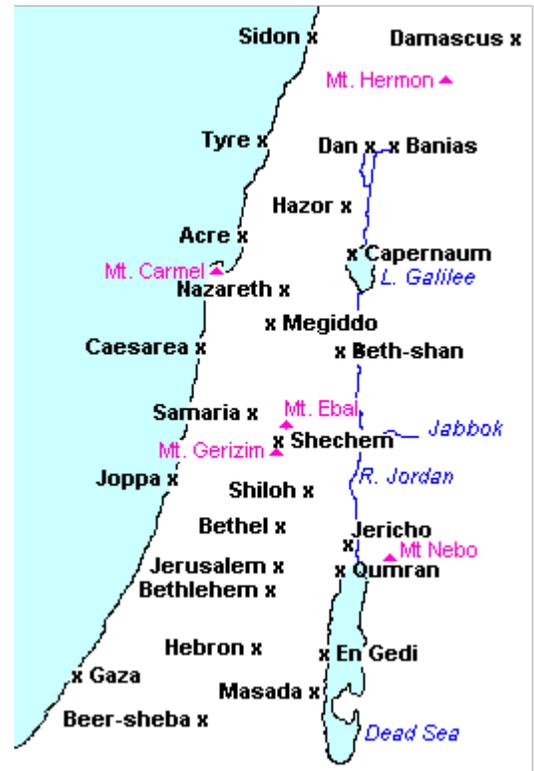
So here is this prophet from Judah, who comes from the herdsmen of Tekoa, giving a prophecy to ancient Israel. But first he gave it to the seven nations, including Judah, and six of them happen to be Gentile — Moab, Ammon, Edom, Tyre, Damascus, and Gaza. Some people have wondered whether there will actually be seven different nations there two years prior to the Second Coming of Christ? Yes, there will be. And there will be Israel. Israel will control the whole region.

### *Solomon's Economic Control over the Nations*

Let me mention something very important. At the time Solomon was reigning in Israel, Solomon controlled the whole world for all practical purposes. His 40 years of reign was a golden era in Israel, and a golden era for the whole world. Did you know that Solomon did not have political control over Gaza and the Philistine area? He did not. He had economic control. In fact, he had economic control over Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, over the Anatolian countries, over Europe, over all the empire of Tyre.

A lawyer told me one time, Ernest, it is not what you own, it is what you can control which makes all the difference in the world.” Solomon knew it was politically expedient not to establish sovereign ownership over the Philistine territory. He wanted them to have their own leaders. He allowed the other nations to have their own kings. All he required was for them to send their princesses for his harem from all over the world to secure political alliances through marriage. Solomon did not control the world politically. He controlled the world economically. Solomon controlled those nations through prestige, through power and authority vested in him.

This is how Israel will do things in the near future and Israel must recognize that fact today. If they want to create an Israel which controls the whole Middle East, they will fail. They must allow the nations to exist, as the prophecies here show, but through sheer economic control they will dominate the whole area. This prophecy here in Amos is setting up this very thing.



*Cities and sites in Israel and Judah*<sup>11</sup>

<sup>8</sup> See Dr. Martin's article "[The Prophesied State of Palestine](#)" about the future of the Gaza territory. Dr. Martin also discusses the prophecy of Psalm 83, which deals with some of the same nations as Amos. DWS

<sup>9</sup> See Dr. Martin's article "[The Most Significant Gentile Nation in the Bible](#)," for a discussion of the past and future of the people of Edom. DWS

<sup>10</sup> In each of these six YHWH shall "send fire" upon some aspect of their domain (Amos 1:4, 7, 10, 12, 14, 2:2, 5). DWS

## *The Eighth Century BC and Modern Times*

If you want to know what the political situation will be, read Amos. It is already beginning to show on the world scene. If you would like further definition of it, go to Psalm 83, which mentions additional nations including Assyria, which will make up a ten nation confederation. It is all here, in Psalm 83, it is also in the Book of Daniel and the Book of Revelation.

Understand this — there will be nations which will not be a part of Israel, but they will be under the control of Israel. In the time of Solomon, consider Hiram. He was the king of Tyre. He had control over Tyre and the whole western Mediterranean basin to himself. But who controlled Hiram economically? Solomon did. That is the key.

This is what you should understand about the Book of Amos. When you read this and say, why, this is talking about the 8<sup>th</sup> Century BC. Some of these kingdoms do not even exist today. Wait. You will not wait very long to see these things begin to coalesce. These nations will form and events will take place at a period prior to two years *before* the earthquake prophesied in Amos, Zechariah, and Revelation.

## *God's Primary Concern in Amos*

What do we find in these prophecies of Amos, given primarily to Israel? The main concern in Amos was the establishment of religious sanctuaries in wrong places. Israel should get back to the right place. Until they go to the right place, they will be in trouble. The right place is Jerusalem, and not in other places.

The whole of the prophecy of Amos is about evil which has been subjected upon the nation of Israel and the people because the leaders, following in the footsteps of Jeroboam,<sup>11</sup> led Israel astray. And you know what they did? The leaders and Jeroboam broke Israel away from Jerusalem (the right spot for worship) and Jeroboam raised up shrines at Bethel, and Dan, and other places. This is one of the major thrusts of Amos.

I am giving the overall principles you should look for. What Amos shows is that Israel looked good on the surface, as though they were YHWH's people, but in fact they imposed a type of Gentile teaching which was not Mosaic at all. One major point Amos has to bring out is: "what do you do with the festivals?"

**"I hate [God says], I despise your feast days, and I will not smell [the sacrifice] in your solemn assemblies. Though you offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take you away from me the noise of your songs [in their religious services]; for I will not hear the melody of your viols.**

**But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream. Have you offered unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years [as was done in the time of Moses], O house of Israel? But you have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch and Chiun your images [two pagan idols], the star of your god, which you made to yourselves. Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus [or as Stephen says, Acts 7:43: "beyond Babylon"]."**

• **Amos 5:21–27**

That was the prophecy back then for the Israelites, true, and those events did occur. But what was God interested in here? Israel had the holy days on the right days. So what were they doing? They were misinterpreting them. They were bringing in heathenism. One of them was a god, a star-god, which they saw in the night sky. Look today at some of the things which identify Israel today. Are they free of paganism today?<sup>12</sup> Many of the holyday rituals the Jews have accepted, just as in ancient Israel, displease God with how they are practiced.

<sup>11</sup> Amos is speaking of Jeroboam II, the son of Joash (Amos 1:2, and 7:9–11). He ruled in idolatrous ways similar to his namesake Jeroboam I, the first northern Israelite king after Solomon. *DWS*

<sup>12</sup> The symbol of the nation of Israel today is the six-pointed star. When you look at it, it is two triangles superimposed over one another, and 180 degrees away from the other. And what is a triangle? It symbolizes the trinity, the pagan trinity. You will not find this symbol in the Old Testament. They must put the idolatry out of the land. Zechariah speaks about it in Zechariah 10:2–3 and 13:2. It is not only we Christians who have been subjected to idolatrous acts and objects. *ELM*

We will also see some astronomical events taking place.

**“For thus says YHWH unto the house of Israel, ‘Seek you me, and you shall live: But seek not Bethel [the wrong place to worship], nor enter into Gilgal [east of Jericho], and pass not to Beersheba [near the southern limit of Israel]: ...’”**

• **Amos 5:4–5**

At Beersheba Abraham raised up a tree which symbolized the tree of life (Genesis 21:31–33), but a wrong kind of worship was later established at those places by Israelites after the time of Solomon.

It seems like every place where a holy event took place which was true and right in its time, people come along and change it to heathenism. Even this spot down where Abraham himself, the father of the nation, raised up a tree. Here were the Israelites, along with the Jews, going right down there to Beersheba.

**“... for Gilgal shall surely go into captivity, and Bethel shall come to naught. Seek YHWH, and you shall live; lest he break out like fire in the house of Joseph [the northern Israelites], and devour it, and there be none to quench it in Bethel.”**

• **Amos 5:5–6**

God says, I will wipe away Bethel, and He has done so. So destroyed is Bethel that three different sites have been suggested, and scholars are not sure which one is correct. We do not know to this very day where the ancient temple of Jeroboam was. God has completely, by historical events, taken it out. He will take out the idolatry and other evil things out of Israel today.<sup>13</sup> Look at verse 7 of Amos chapter 5:

**“You who turn judgment to wormwood, and leave off righteousness in the earth, Seek him that makes the seven stars [the Pleiades in Taurus] and Orion, and turns the shadow of death into the morning ...”**

• **Amos 5:7–8**

In other words, do not go after and worship Orion, do not worship the Pleiades, the seven stars, but worship Him who made them, and not some kind of idol. The symbol of itself is not wrong, but the interpretation and the thought behind the symbol are wrong.

### ***Intensities of Punishment in Amos***

Amos gives five intensities of prophecy which I want to point out to you. Amos did not have the prophetic rank upon him when God called him. He was just a layman, a shepherd, a herdsman out of the fields. God can take common folk to go to the kings of the Earth, and tell them the truth. This is what Amos was doing, and the power which he had was absolutely fantastic.

In chapter 4 Amos gives five intensities of punishments of what God will do to ancient Israel. These also pertain to modern Israel — today.

1. It says in verse 6:

**“And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places: yet have you not returned unto me, says YHWH.”**

• **Amos 4:6**

In other words, God judged them at one time, but they still did not return to YHWH to obey Him. Notice the phrase at the end of verse 6: **“Yet have you not returned unto me, says YHWH.”**

2. If you go down he says something else that He has done to judge them, to bring them back to their senses. At the end of verse 8 is this second point: **“Yet have you not returned unto me, says YHWH.”**

<sup>13</sup> Let us not blame the Israelis too much. What about the Christian world with our steeples, our crosses, our pictures of a long-haired Jesus, all of which is not true? We are worshipping the gods of the heathen, and we think we are worshipping the God of the Bible. *ELM*

3. Then he smites them with blasting and mildew, and things of that nature. At the end of verse 9, it says again: **“Yet you have not returned unto me, says YHWH.”**
4. And what do we find at the end of verse 10? **“Yet have you not returned unto me, says YHWH.”**
5. At the end of verse 11 He gives a fifth judgment, which is always the most intense. And He says: **“Yet have you not returned unto me, says YHWH.”**

God gives these five intensities of punishment as opportunities: to wake them up, to make them better, to get them to change their minds (repent). If they go five times,<sup>14</sup> at the end of the fifth judgment here is what he says in Amos 4:12, one of the most frightening verses in the entire Bible:

**“Therefore thus will I do unto you, O Israel: and because I will do this unto you, prepare to meet your God, O Israel.”**

God says this after He has sent the five-fold judgments, and they refused at every juncture to repent. The judgments got more severe to the fifth. You have not returned unto me, so Israel, **“prepare to meet your God.”**

**“For, lo, he that formed the mountains. He that created the wind. He that declares unto man what is his thought, that makes the morning darkness, treads upon the high places of the earth, YHWH, The God of hosts, is his name.”**

• **Amos 4:13**

Now God shall intervene. He will intervene on behalf of Israel, on behalf of these other nations which are mentioned, and on behalf of the whole world.

Amos gave these prophecies here at the upper part of the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC. The prophecies came true; there is no question. But as Solomon says in the Book of Ecclesiastes, what happened at one time will also happen again.

And what did the apostle Paul say? He said these things were recorded for you, so those living at the end of the age may have instruction, may have wisdom, and may have understanding. When you go to the Book of Revelation, which is about the Second Coming of Jesus to this Earth, when He comes He shall come with power and authority. He will come in glory. He shall come with judgment. He will come with an earthquake which will be the biggest that ever occurred. The only event comparable is the earthquake in the time of Amos.

Amos’ prophecies took place, and God wants people to know this. The great earthquake had already occurred when Amos wrote down the prophecies he spoke to Israel. Amos said he was given the prophecies two years before the earthquake. This is a signal, if you can see it, connecting with Zechariah chapter 14 and the Second Advent of Christ when His feet touch on the Mount of Olives. Even the reference there to the earthquake in Amos is mentioned and connected with the 16<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Book of Revelation, in association with the 19<sup>th</sup> chapter — all explaining things that are going to happen at the end-time, events to be climaxed with the true Second Coming of our Lord to earth.

Remember, when you read the Book of Revelation: Christ Jesus Himself takes prophecies from all over the Old Testament, from different time periods, different areas, and various events, and He combines them together into one, to show what will happen in days soon to come. I tell you now, pay attention to Amos, because two years before the great earthquake of the future, you will see these events happening in Israel. Keep your eyes on the Middle East. Interesting times are just on the horizon.

Ernest L. Martin, September 1996  
 Edited by David Sielaff, February 2013

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<sup>14</sup> Isaiah also uses exactly five, again with greater intensity each time. Those judgments prophesied in Isaiah are different judgments qualitatively. *ELM* See Dr. Martin’s article [“Introduction to Isaiah”](#) where this five-fold punishment in Amos is compared with instances of five-fold punishment in other Old Testament prophecies. *DWS*

## ***Biblical Earthquakes Mentioned by Dr. Martin***

It will be helpful to itemize the earthquakes mentioned by Dr. Martin. Chronologically these earthquakes are as follows:

- There is the earthquake in **“the Day of Battle”** (1 Samuel 13:22–14:23, especially 14:15). With this earthquake God gave victory to Israel. This took place in the time of King Saul, probably in the mid-11<sup>th</sup> century BC.
- Next is the earthquake in the Days of Uzziah, King of Judah, mentioned in Amos 1:1 and in Zechariah 14:3. This occurred in the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC.
- Then finally there is the earthquake to come at Christ’s return (Revelation chapter 16) when the Mount of Olives will split in two (Zechariah 14:5). This earthquake has not yet occurred. It will be the greatest earthquake ever (Revelation 16:17–20) and it will be qualitatively different than those mentioned elsewhere (Revelation 6:12, 8:5, 11:13, 19). Several events prophesied by Amos will occur two years before this earthquake, before Christ returns.

## ***Amos the Outsider***

The prophet Amos is an outsider both to the prophetic ministry and to the society of the northern kingdom of Israel. Amos was from Judah but he prophesied in Israel as an outsider. Nor was he one of the prophetic groups of either Judah or Israel. It is interesting that a well-known verse comes from a prophet who is an outsider: **“Surely the Lord YHWH will do nothing, but he reveals his secret unto his servants the prophets”** (Amos 3:7).

Amos gave his prophecies during the reigns of two very long-ruling kings, Jeroboam II of Israel, and Uzziah of Judah (Amos 1:1, 7:10). Each reigned some 40 years and they ruled contemporarily for 36 years. Both kingdoms were prosperous during that period, and apparently so was Amos. Professor James Nogalski makes an excellent case that Amos was not just a hired shepherd, but was a landowner and an owner of herds in Judah. In other words, Amos was a man of property and maybe of some substance, likely owning herds and the orchard. He did not become a prophet to make a living.<sup>15</sup> Note what Amos said in defense of himself:

**“Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah, ‘I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet’s son [not a member of any prophetic guild]; but I was an herdsman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit: And YHWH took me as I followed the flock, and YHWH said unto me, “Go, prophesy unto my people Israel.” Now therefore hear you the word of YHWH’: ...”**

• ***Amos 7:14–16***

Amaziah was a priest at Bethel and an enemy who accused Amos of conspiracy. He tried to stop Amos from preaching God’s prophecies to Israel and suggested that Amos be expelled from the kingdom (Amos 7:10–17).<sup>16</sup> Amos then told a prophecy which God directed against one individual by the name Amaziah.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>15</sup> James D. Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve: Hosea–Jonah*, Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary Series (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2011), pp. 259, 341. *DWS*

<sup>16</sup> The apostle Paul was also an outsider. He was not one of the original apostles or even one of Jesus’ disciples. Paul probably had Amos in mind when he wrote 1 Corinthians 1:27:

**“But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.”**

It is interesting that at some future time teachers and so-called prophets in Jerusalem will try to deny they were ever teachers or prophets. They will try to say something similar but directly opposite to what Amos said. Look at Zechariah 13:5:

**“But he shall say, I am no prophet, I am an husbandman; for man taught me to keep cattle from my youth.”** *DWS*

<sup>17</sup> Amos 7:16–17. Imagine having God give a judgment oracle personally against you! What God prophesied was probably already in process of being fulfilled when Amos spoke the prophecy. *DWS*

### *Amos Referenced Elsewhere*

A. Of course, the best known citation from the Book of Amos is in Acts 15:16–17 where James quotes directly from Amos, but with interpretation (*Midrash*) of the Old Testament text.<sup>18</sup> Also, Amos 5:25–27 is quoted precisely from the Greek translation (the LXX) as told by the evangelist Stephen in Acts 7:42–43. This is another example of New Testament apostles and evangelists changing the traditional understanding of the Hebrew text, and using the meaning of the Greek text.

Amos 5:25–27	Acts 7:42–43
<p><b>“Have you offered unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?</b></p> <p><b>But you have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch and Chiun your images, the star of your god, which you made to yourselves.</b></p> <p><b>Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity <u>beyond Damascus</u>,</b></p> <p>says YHWH, whose name is The God of hosts.”</p>	<p>“Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, ‘O you house of Israel,</p> <p><b>have you offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices by the space of forty years in the wilderness?</b></p> <p><b>Yea, you took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which you made to worship them:</b></p> <p><b>and I will carry you away <u>beyond Babylon.</u>”</b></p>

Why did Stephen change “**beyond Damascus**” to “**beyond Babylon**”? Amos basically discussed the kingdom of Israel, but Stephen applies to Judah as well as to Israel the passage he quotes when the Babylonians conquered the southern kingdom of Judah.

**“This variant seems to be a valid inference from Damascus, because the captive Jews dragged off to Babylonia by the Chaldeans in 586 B.C. had to pass through Damascus on their way, so Babylon was indeed beyond Damascus. The highway to Babylon went north-northeast to Tadmor or Tiphshah to the Euphrates River, and then southeast down to Babylon itself. Stephen’s purpose was to bring out the implication of Amos 5:27 that the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities would result from Israel’s sin.”**

• *Archer and Chirichigno, Old Testament Quotations, ¶¶295–296*<sup>19</sup>

B. The prophecy of God against Judah in Amos 2:4–5, the 6<sup>th</sup> of the judgment oracles of nations surrounding Israel? Judah was guilty.<sup>20</sup>

**“Thus says YHWH; For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they have despised the law [the Torah] of YHWH, and have not kept his commandments, and their lies caused them to err, after the which their fathers have walked: But I will send a fire upon Judah, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem.”**

• *Amos 2:4–5*

Great punishment will come to Judah. Point for point what was prophesied to occur to the people of the kingdom of Israel will happen to Judah also, but later. The future exile of Judah is not prophesied in Amos.

<sup>18</sup> See my Commentary “[The Twelve Minor Prophets](#).” DWS

<sup>19</sup> Gleason Archer and Gregory Chirichigno, *Old Testament Quotations in the New* (Chicago: Moody Bible Institute, 1983), DWS

<sup>20</sup> See also Dr. Martin’s article on the first book of the Minor Prophets, “[Book of Hosea](#),” in which God focuses His displeasure on Judah and less so on Israel. DWS

This comes from other prophets especially Jeremiah and Ezekiel. So Stephen correctly interpreted the text in Amos to reflect the experience of all the people of Israel.

C. Scholars have noted close similarity in the calls to repentance of Amos 5:14–15 and Joel 2:2–17. The call for the northern kingdom is in Amos, and in Joel for the southern kingdom. Nogalski notes that although there is no literary dependence between the two,

“... it is significant that a prophetic figure confronts both Jerusalem/Judah and the House of Israel with a call to change so that ‘perhaps’ YHWH might relent. Theologically, these calls to repent emphasize YHWH’s repeated attempts to bring the people back (see also Amos 4:6–11).”

• *Nogalski, Book of the Twelve, p. 319*

D. Note the interesting connection of Jeremiah 49:1–3 which expands upon the oracle of Amos 1:13–15.

### *Skeletal Outline of the Book of Amos*

Below is an outline of the Book of Amos from *The Bible Remembrancer: Containing an Analysis of the Whole Bible* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, Ltd., 1848), attributed to Rev. Ingram Cobbin and published without author attribution. It contains outlines for every book of the Bible and has several interesting Bible lists and articles. Such outlines are useful, providing details to the general skeleton of the Bible. Cobbin’s outline of Amos gives the topics of each chapter.

**A century and a half later, in the days of Jeroboam II, from a most unlikely circle — the herdsmen of the small pastoral town of Tekoa — Amos comes forth to speak for God and truth. The humility of Amos is very striking:**

**‘I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet’s son; but I was a herdman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit. And YHWH took me as I followed the flock; and YHWH said unto me, “Go, prophesy unto My people Israel”’ (Amos 7:14–15).**

**In the address of martyr Stephen a noteworthy quotation is made from the Book of Amos (compare Amos 5:25–26 with Acts 7:42–43); to which it will be well to refer.”**

• *Bible Remembrancer, p. 71*

### *Cobbin’s Outline of Amos*

<b>Reigns of Uzziah of Judah, and Jeroboam II of Israel</b>	<b>Ch. 1</b>	Predictions of judgments on Syria; Philistines; Tyre; Edom; Ammonites.
	<b>2</b>	Predictions of judgments on Moab; Judah; Israel.
	<b>3</b>	God’s judgments against Israel, who had enjoyed special favors. Predicted ruin, under the similitude of the devoured sheep, leaving but the legs or the ear in the mouth of the lion.
	<b>4</b>	Israel in luxury compared to the kine [cow] of Bashan.
	<b>5</b>	Rejection and captivity of Israel.

<b>Those at ease in Zion</b>	<b>6</b>	Woe to them that are at ease in Zion!
	<b>7</b>	Plague of grasshoppers. God contends by fire. The answered prayers of Amos. The plumb line applied to Israel. Amaziah, priest of Bethel, instigates Jeroboam against Amos. His attempt to dissuade Amos from prophesying.
	<b>8</b>	Type of the basket of summer fruit, indicating Israel’s ripeness for punishment.
	<b>9</b>	Type of smiting the lintel of the Temple. Promises of future restoration, under the figure of rebuilding a tabernacle.

### David Dorsey's Outline of Amos

In *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament*, David Dorsey presents his structure of Amos<sup>21</sup>:

- a. Coming judgment upon Israel and its neighbors (through oracles, 1:1–2:16)
- b. The prophet's compulsion: destruction of Israel and Bethel's cult center (3:1–15)
  - c. Condemnation of wealthy Israelite women: empty religious activity and YHWH's judgment (4:1–13)
  - d. **CENTER**: call to repentance and lament (5:1–17)
  - c' Condemnation of wealthy Israelite men: empty religious activity and coming judgment (5:18–6:14)
- b' The prophet's compulsion: destruction of Bethel's cult center (7:1–8:3).
- a' Coming judgment upon Israel and its neighbors (scattering among the nations) and future restoration among the nations (8:4–9:15).

Dorsey goes into considerable detail showing structural patterns within this 7-fold structure.

### James Nogalski's Outline of Amos

Nogalski's outline for the Book of Amos is simpler:

- I. chapters 1–2: 8 formulaic oracles against nations (including Israel)
- II. chapters 3–6: Sayings from the Prophet and Disciples
- III. 7:1–9:6: Visions of Impending Destruction
- IV. 9:7–15: A Remnant and Hope

Section III has five visions which Amos narrates for us:

- Amos 7:1–3, **“Thus has the Lord YHWH showed unto me; and, behold, ...”**  
 7:4–6, **“Thus has the Lord YHWH showed unto me; and, behold, ...”**  
 7:7–9, **“Thus he showed me; and, behold, ...”**  
 8:1–3, **“Thus has the Lord YHWH showed unto me: and behold, ...”**  
 9:1–4, **“I saw the Lord standing upon the altar: and he said, ...”**<sup>22</sup>

The first four visions contain conversations which Amos has with YHWH and have a different formula than the last vision.

### God's Movement of Peoples through Time

In Amos 9:7–10 God tells Israel that He will send them into exile because of their sins. Those who resist will be killed. In verse 7 Amos gives us an interesting glimpse into God's movement of peoples and nations through history. Speaking to the northern kingdom of Israel:

**“Are you not like the sons of the Cushites to Me, sons of Israel? averring is YHWH; Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt? And the Philistines from Caphtor? And Syria from Kir? Behold, the eyes of my Lord YHWH are on the sinful kingdom, And I will exterminate it off the surface of the ground, Only that I shall not exterminate the house of Jacob to extermination, averring [answering] is YHWH.**

<sup>21</sup> David Dorsey, “Chapter 29: Amos: The Lion Has Roared,” in *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament: A Commentary on Genesis–Malachi* (Grant Rapids: MI, Baker Books, 1999), pp. 277–286. I still recommend this book for your personal library. Remember, the entire Bible has a structure, as shown in Dr. Martin's book [Restoring the Original Bible: The Design and Development of the Holy Scriptures](#). DWS

<sup>22</sup> Nogalski, *Book of the Twelve*, pp. 271, 335–337. DWS

**For behold, I am instructing, And I will jerk the house of Israel to and fro among all the nations, Just as if jerked to and fro in a sieve, Yet not a pebble shall fall to the earth. By the sword shall die all the sinners of My people, Those saying, 'The evil shall not come close, or confront about us.'"**

• **Amos 9:7–10, Concordant Literal Version**

Note that the Syrians were brought from Kir by God, and they were to be taken captive back to Kir (Amos 1:5; fulfilled in 2 Kings 16:9). In other words, all those who deny the prophecies shall suffer the judgment which God says through Amos (Amos 2:6–16).<sup>23</sup>

### **The Day of the Lord in Amos**

“The Day of the Lord,” or more precisely “the Day of YHWH” has a small but important mention in the Book of Amos. The people of Israel had serious misconceptions about what the Day of YHWH entailed. Amos corrected their understanding:

**“Woe unto you that desire the day of YHWH! to what end is it for you? the day of YHWH is darkness, and not light.”**

**As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him.**

**Shall not the day of YHWH be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?”**

• **Amos 5:18–20**

The Day of YHWH will be a time when mankind goes from terrible trouble to horrific trouble, from one life threatening disaster to another. Of course, the concern in the Minor Prophets and in Amos is about events of this “**Day of YHWH**” in the land of Palestine. Amos says that God’s Word will not be available at a future time in what is the land of Israel today:

**“Behold, the days come,’ says the Lord YHWH, ‘that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of YHWH: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of YHWH, and shall not find it.”**

• **Amos 8:11–12**

You and I as believers today have nothing to fear from the Day of YHWH, the Day of God’s wrath. It is not directed at us, but at the world.<sup>24</sup>

Amos begins with “**the words of Amos**” (1:1) and ends with the words, “**says YHWH your God**” (9:15).

**“The words of Amos, ... concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel, two years before the earthquake. And he said, YHWH will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; ...”**

• **Amos 1:1–2**

**“And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, says YHWH your God.”**

• **Amos 9:14–15**

Amos begins his prophecy warning of punishment. He ends with God’s rescue of His people not because of their righteousness, but because of His mercy. Israel will be restored.

David Sielaff, February 2013

<sup>23</sup> Kir is a fortress location somewhere in Assyria. The Hebrew word means wall or enclosure. *DWS*

<sup>24</sup> See Dr. Martin’s two articles on this topic: “[How to Fully Escape the Great Tribulation](#)” and “[The Place of Safety](#).” *DWS*