

## Amos

The messages of Amos, a shepherd from Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah and Jeroboam son of Joash king of Israel, two years before the quake.

He says:

“Yahweh roars from Zion  
His voice utters from Jerusalem!  
The pastures mourn,  
Carmel’s summit withers.”

This is what Yahweh says:

“For the three crimes of Damascus,  
Even four *crimes*, I will not relent:  
Because they threshed Gilead with sledges of iron!  
I will set the house of Hazael on fire  
And it will consume the fortresses of Ben-Hadad.  
I will break the barred gate of Damascus,  
I will cut off the one ruling, from the Valley of Aven  
And the one holding the scepter, from Beth-eden  
And the people of Aram will be exiled to Kir,” declares Yahweh.

This is what Yahweh says:

“For the three crimes of Gaza,  
Even four *crimes*, I will not relent:  
Because they exiled whole communities into Edom!  
I will set the wall of Gaza on fire  
And it will consume its fortresses.  
I will cut off the one ruling, from Ashdod,  
And the one holding the scepter, from Ashkelon.  
I will turn my hand against Ekron,  
And the remnant of the Philistines will perish,” declares the sovereign Yahweh.

This is what Yahweh says:

“For the three crimes of Tyre,  
Even four *crimes*, I will not relent:  
Because they exiled whole communities into Edom  
And forgot the covenant of brotherhood!  
I will send a fire upon the wall of Tyre  
And it will consume its fortresses.

This is what Yahweh says:

“For the three crimes of Edom,

Even four *crimes*, I will not relent:

Because he pursued his brother with the sword mercilessly

His fury raging unrelentingly.

I will set Teman on fire

And it will consume the fortresses of Bozrah.

This is what Yahweh says:

“For the three crimes of the Ammonites,

Even four *crimes*, I will not relent:

Because they ripped open the pregnant women of Gilead

to expand their borders!

I will set the wall of Rabbah on fire

And it will consume its fortresses.

With an alarm on the day of the battle

With a gale on the day of the windstorm.

Their king will go into exile

He and his princes together,” says Yahweh.

This is what Yahweh says:

“For the three crimes of Moab,

Even four *crimes*, I will not relent:

Because he burned to ashes the bones of the king of Edom.

I will set fire to Moab

And it will consume the fortresses of Kerioth.

Moab will die in the din

Amid battle cries and blast of horn.

I will destroy their ruler,

I will slaughter all their princes,” declares Yahweh.

This is what Yahweh says:

“For the three crimes of Judah,

Even four *crimes*, I will not relent:

Because they rejected the law of Yahweh, did not keep his statutes,

and have been led astray by the same errors that deceived their ancestors.

I will set Judah on fire

And it will consume the fortresses of Jerusalem.”

This is what Yahweh says:

“For the three crimes of Israel,

Even four *crimes*, I will not relent:

Because they sell the righteous for silver and the needy for a pair of shoes,

They trample the heads of the poor into the dust of the earth,

And push the oppressed out of the way,

A father and son sleep with the same girl

thus, defaming my holy name!

On garments received as collateral *from the poor*

they make a bed for themselves by every altar

In the house of their god they drink the wine acquired as their *unjust* fines!

Yet they saw how I destroyed the Amorites,

whose height was like the cedars, and strength like the oaks!

I destroyed both fruit above and root below!

I also brought you up out of the land of Egypt,

I led you in the wilderness for forty years,

So that you could possess the Amorites' land.

I raised some of your sons up as prophets,

Some of your young men as Nazirites.

Is this not true, O Sons of Israel?” declares Yahweh.

“But you made the Nazirites drink wine,

and commanded the prophets to shut up!”

“So, I will crush you where you are like a wagon overloaded with sheaves,

Flight will flee the swift,

Your strongest will not keep strength,

Your mighty will not save themselves.

Your archers will not stand,

Your fastest will not escape

Your horsemen will not survive.

Your bravest will flee naked in that day,” declares Yahweh.

“Hear this word that Yahweh speaks against you, O Sons of Israel, against the whole family that I brought out of the land of Egypt:

I have chosen you from among the families of the earth,  
Therefore, I will punish you for all your wrongdoing.  
Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so?  
Does a lion roar in the forest when he has no prey?  
Does a young lion cry out from its den if it has not caught anything?  
Does a bird get caught in a trap without being baited?  
Does a snare get sprung if it has nothing to catch?  
Does an alarm sound in a city and people are not afraid?  
Does disaster strike a city unless Yahweh has done it?  
Surely Yahweh does nothing without first revealing his secret to his servants the prophets.

The lion has roared, who will not fear?  
Yahweh has spoken, who can but prophesy?”

“Proclaim in the fortresses of Assyria<sup>1</sup> and in the fortresses of Egypt:  
‘Assemble on the mountains of Samaria  
Observe her tumultuousness and her oppressions!’”

“They don’t know how to do right,” declares Yahweh,  
“those who store up violence and theft in their fortresses.”  
Therefore, says the sovereign Yahweh:  
“An enemy is coming.  
He will surround your land.  
He will shatter your defenses.  
He will plunder your fortresses.”

This is what Yahweh says:

“As a shepherd who rescues, from the mouth of the lion,  
two leg bones or a piece of an ear,  
In the same way, the sons of Israel living in Samaria will be rescued  
a corner of a couch and a part of a bed.”

“Hear, and testify against the House of Jacob,” declares the sovereign Yahweh, God of heaven’s armies.

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<sup>1</sup> Following the LXX as the MT (which reads “Ashdod”) seems corrupted here given the context.

“On the day I punish Israel for her crimes, I will destroy the altars at Bethel.  
The horns of the altar will be cut off and fall to the ground.  
And I will destroy the winter and summer houses,  
The ivory house will be destroyed,  
The great house will be swept away,” declares Yahweh.

“Hear this word, you cows of Bashan on Mount Samaria,  
You oppress the poor  
You crush the needy  
You tell your husbands, ‘Bring us some drinks!’”

The sovereign Yahweh has sworn by his holiness:

“The days are coming upon you,  
When they will take you away with hooks,  
The last of you with fish hooks.  
You will go out through the gaps *in the wall*, one in front of the other,  
And you will be cast out toward Harmon,” declares Yahweh.

“Go to Bethel and rebel,  
To Gilgal and multiply rebellion.  
Bring your sacrifice each morning,  
Your tithes every three days.  
Offer a thank offering of leavened bread,  
Publicly proclaim *your* freewill offerings,  
This is what you love to do, O Sons of Israel,” declares the sovereign Yahweh.

“I gave all your towns clean teeth,  
And all your places want for bread,  
Yet you did not return to me,” declares Yahweh.  
“I even withheld the rain from you when there were three months till harvest.  
Then I sent rain to one city, but no rain to another city.  
While one field would get rain, another without rain would wither.  
People from two or three towns would wander to one city for water,  
but never be satisfied.  
Still you would not return to me,” declares Yahweh.

“I struck you with blight and mildew,  
I laid waste to your gardens and vineyards.  
Locusts devoured your fig trees and olive trees.  
Still you would not return to me,” declares Yahweh.

“I sent plagues on you like I sent on Egypt.  
I killed your young men with the sword.  
I carried away your horses.

I made the stench of your camp fill your nostrils.  
Still you would not return to me,” declares Yahweh.

“I overthrew some of you like when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah,  
You were like a burning stick snatched from the fire.  
Still you would not return to me,” declares Yahweh.

“Therefore, this is what I will do to you, O Israel.  
Because I will do this to you, prepare to meet your God, O Israel!”

“For the one who  
Forms the mountains,  
Creates the wind,  
Reveals his thoughts to mortals,  
Turns dawn into darkness,  
And treads upon the heights of the earth,  
Yahweh, God of heaven’s armies, is his name!”

“Listen to this word that I take up as a dirge over you, O House of Israel:  
‘Fallen, never to rise again, Virgin Israel,  
Forsaken on her land, with no one to raise her up.’

The sovereign Yahweh says this:

‘The city that marches out with a thousand will have a hundred left,  
The one that marches out with a hundred will have ten left to the House of Israel.’

This is what Yahweh says to the House of Israel: 'Seek me, and live!'

'Do not seek Bethel,

Do not enter Gilgal

Or cross over to Beersheeba;

For Gilgal will surely go into exile,

And Bethel will come to trouble.'

'Seek Yahweh and live!

Otherwise he will break out like a fire in the House of Joseph,

And it will devour unquenchably for Bethel.

You who turn justice to wormwood,

And cast down righteousness to the earth,

Seek the one who made the Pleiades and Orion,

He turns midnight into dawn and darkens day into night.

He calls for the waters of the sea and pours them out on the surface of the earth:

Yahweh is his name!

He flashes destruction upon the strong

Bringing fortresses to destruction.

They hate the one arbitrating at the city gate.

They despise the one speaking the truth.

Therefore, because you trample the poor with taxes on grain,

Though you build houses of hewn stone,

You will not live in them.

Though you plant fine verdant vineyards,

You will not drink their wine.

I know your many rebellions; how great your sins are:

You oppress the righteous

You take bribes,

You deprive the poor of justice in the courts.

Therefore, the prudent keep silent; for it is an evil time.

Seek good and not evil that you may live,

So that Yahweh, the God of heaven's armies, will be with you, as you have said.

Hate evil, love good, maintain justice in the courts.

Maybe Yahweh, the God of heaven's armies, will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.'"

Therefore, this is what Yahweh, the God of heaven's armies says,

"In every city square there will be wailing,

On every street they will say, 'Alas! Alas!'

They will call the farmers in for mourning,

And the professional mourners in for wailing.

In every vineyard there will be wailing,

For I will pass through your midst," declares Yahweh.

Woe to you who desire the day of Yahweh! Why do you long for the day of Yahweh? It is darkness and not light. It is as if a man fled a lion only to meet a bear, then escaped to his house to lean his hand against a wall only to have a snake bite him. Isn't the day of Yahweh darkness and not light, total darkness without any glimmer?

"I hate, I despise your festivals!

I take no delight in your solemn assemblies!

Even if you offer me burnt and grain offerings, I won't accept them!

I won't even look at your peace offerings of fattened calves!

Take away the noise of your songs!

I won't listen to the music of your harps!

But let justice roll down like waters,

Righteousness like an ever-flowing stream!

Did you bring me sacrifices and offerings the forty years in the wilderness, O House of Israel?

You will take up Sakkuth your king and Kaiwan your star-god, your idols you made for yourselves.

Therefore, I will exile you beyond Damascus," says Yahweh, whose name is the God of heaven's armies.

"Woe to those at ease in Zion,

And those who feel secure on Mount Samaria,

You are the notable heads of the nations

To whom the House of Israel comes.

Cross over to Calneh, and see,

Go from there to Hamath the great,

Then go down to Gath of the Philistines.

Are you better than these kingdoms,

Or is their territory larger than yours?

You push away the evil day,

And bring near the reign of violence.

You who lay on beds of ivory and stretch on your couches,

Who eat lambs from the flock and calves from the middle of the stall,

Who improvise songs on the harp and like David compose songs for themselves,

Who drink wine by the bowlful and anoint themselves with the finest oils,

You care nothing about the ruin of Joseph!

Therefore, they will be the first to go into exile,

And the leisure of their revelry will pass away.

The sovereign Yahweh has sworn by himself, declares Yahweh, God of heaven's armies:

"I despise the pride of Jacob,

And I hate his fortresses!

I will deliver up the city and everything in it!



And it will come to pass: if there are ten men left in one house, they will all die. When a relative, who burns the corpses, picks up the bodies from the house, he'll ask if anyone is with you. He will be answered with, "No". Then the relative will say "Silence! We must not mention the name of Yahweh!" For when Yahweh commands, then the great and small houses will be smashed to pieces.

Do horses run on rocks? Do oxen plow the sea?  
Yet you have turned justice into poison,  
and the fruit of righteousness into wormwood.

You who rejoice in Lo-debar, who say, "Have we not taken Karnaim for ourselves by our own strength?"

"I will raise against you a nation, O House of Israel," declares Yahweh, the God of heaven's armies, "they will oppress you from Lebo Hamath to the Wadi Arabah."

This is what Yahweh God showed me: He was forming locusts when the spring crops were beginning to sprout (after the royal harvest). When they had finished eating the grass of the land, I said, "O sovereign Yahweh, please forgive! How can Jacob stand? He is so small!" Yahweh repented concerning this. Yahweh said, "It will not happen." This is what the sovereign Yahweh showed me: The sovereign Yahweh was calling for a judgment by fire and it devoured the great deep and consumed the fields. Then I said, "O sovereign Yahweh, please stop, I beg you! How can Jacob stand? He is so small!" Yahweh repented concerning this. The sovereign Yahweh said, "It will also not happen." This is what he showed me: The sovereign one was standing beside a wall built with a plumb line, with the plumb line in hand. Yahweh said to me, "Amos, what do you see?" I said, "A plumb line." Then sovereign one said, "I am setting a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel; I will never again pass by them. The high places of Isaac will be made desolate and the sanctuaries of Israel will be laid waste. I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword."

Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent a message to Jeroboam king of Israel: "Amos has conspired against you in the midst of the house of Israel. The land cannot endure all his words. For this is what Amos says, 'Jeroboam will die by the sword, and Israel must be exiled from his land.'" Amaziah also said to Amos, "O Seer, go, run away to the land of Judah and earn your bread there by prophesying, but don't ever prophesy again at Bethel, because it is the king's sanctuary and a royal temple!" Amos answered Amaziah, "I'm neither a prophet, nor the son of a prophet, but I'm a shepherd and caretaker of sycamore-fig trees. Yahweh took me from following the flock, and Yahweh said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.' Now hear the word of Yahweh: you say, 'Don't prophesy against Israel and don't preach against the house of Isaac.' Therefore, this is what Yahweh says, 'Your wife will become a prostitute in the city, and your sons and daughters will fall by the sword, and your land will be divided up, and you yourself will die in an unclean land. Israel will assuredly be sent into exile from its land.'"

Thus, the sovereign Yahweh showed me: a basket of summer fruit. He asked, "What do you see, Amos?" Then Yahweh said to me, "The end has come for my people Israel. I will never again pass by them." "The songs of the temple will be turned to wailing in that day," declares the sovereign Yahweh. "The corpses will be many; cast out everywhere! Silence!"

Hear this, you who trample the needy and destroy the poor of the land,  
Saying, 'When will the new moon be gone so we can sell grain again?  
When will the Sabbath be over so that we can offer wheat for sale,  
So that we can make the weight less and the cost great,  
And fix our scales for cheating,  
So that we can buy the poor for silver,  
And the needy for a pair of sandals,  
So that we can sell the refuse of the wheat?

Yahweh has sworn by the pride of Jacob, "I will never forget any of their deeds!"  
Will not the land quake on this account,  
And everyone mourn who lives in it,  
And all it is rise like the Nile,  
And be tossed about and sink again like the Nile of Egypt?

"In that day," declares the sovereign Yahweh, "I will make the sun set at noon, and darken the earth in broad daylight. I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation. I will bring sackcloth upon everyone's loins, and baldness on every head. I will make it like mourning for an only son and the end of it like a bitter day."

"The days are coming," declares the sovereign Yahweh, "when I will send a famine on the land—not a famine of bread, nor thirst for water, but of hearing the words of Yahweh. They will wander from sea to sea, from north to east. They will run back and forth, to seek the word of Yahweh, but will not find it. In that day, the beautiful young women and the young men will faint from thirst. Those who swear by Ashimah of Samaria, and say, 'As your god live, O Dan,' and, 'As the way of Beersheeba live,' they will fall, never to rise again."

I saw Yahweh standing beside the altar, and he said, "Strike the capitals until the thresholds shake, and shatter them on the heads of all the people. Those who are left, I will kill with the sword. No one will get away; no one will escape! Even if they dig into Sheol, there my hand will pull them up. Even if they climb up to heaven, there I will bring them down. Even if they hide themselves on the top of Carmel, there I will hunt them down and take them. Even if they hide from my sight at the bottom of the sea, there I will command the sea-serpent to bite them. Even though they go into captivity before their enemies, there I will command the sword and it will kill them. I have fixed my eyes on them for evil and not for good."

The sovereign Yahweh, of heaven's armies,  
He touches the earth and it melts  
And everyone who lives in it mourns,  
And all of it rises, like the Nile,  
And sinks again, like the Nile of Egypt  
He builds his upper chambers in the heavens,  
And founds his vault upon the earth,  
He calls for the waters of the sea,  
And pour them out upon the surface of the earth,  
Yahweh is his name!

"Are you not like the Ethiopians to me, O Sons of Israel?" declares Yahweh. "Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt, and the Philistine from Caphtor, and the Arameans from Kir? The eyes of the sovereign Yahweh are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from the face of the earth. But I will not completely destroy the house of Jacob," declares Yahweh.

"For I will command and share the house of Israel among all the nations as one shakes with a sieve, but no pebble will fall to the ground. All the sinners among my people will die by the sword, everyone who says, 'Evil will not overtake or meet us.' In that day, I will raise up David's fallen tabernacle. I will repair its wall-breaches and raise up its ruins, to rebuild it as in the days of old in order that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all of the nations who are called by my name!" declares Yahweh who does this.

"The days are coming," declares Yahweh, "when the one who plows will overtake the one who reaps, and the treader of grapes, the one who sows the seed. The mountains will drip sweet wine, and all the hills will flow with it. I will restore the fortunes of my people, Israel. They will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them again. They will plant vineyards and drink their wine. They will make gardens and eat their fruit. I will plant them in their land, and they will never again be plucked out of the land I have given them," says Yahweh your God.