**Amos**

The Word of the Lord

Sin/transgression

God’s punishment of sin

Faith and obedience

Reward and blessing

God’s majesty

Five studies: 1:1 to 2:16; 3:1 to 4:13; 4:4 to 5:18; 5:19 to 9:15. Review manuscript principles: poetry, concepts, parallelism, imagery, emotional content, sarcasm

Tekoa = 12 miles south of Jerusalem, in Judah, in the hill country of Judea.

Uzziah, 779 to 740 BC

Jeroboam 783 to 753 BC

Earthquake ~ 760 BC

1:1: “Amos saw:” he received the word of the Lord through visions

1:2: Zion = where the temple of God is: a subtle rebuke to the northern kingdom, which has set up another worship center at Bethel

1:2: The Lord, a roaring lion (see also 3:4, 8, 12; 5:19) roars 8 times regarding the nations, saving his loudest roar and fiercest punishment for Israel.

1:2: “Carmel dries up” perhaps drought conditions: God’s word brings judgment, death

1:3: Gilead is a fertile part of Israel’s land, prone to oppression by neighbors.

1:4: Hazael’s conquest of Gilead 2 Kings 10:32-33; see also 2 Kings 13:8

1:5: “Gate-bars of Damascus”: the iron bar in the city’s gate, the city’s protection against invasion

1:5: Damascus = Syria

1:5: Aven = “nothingness”; probably NW of Damascus

1:3, 6, 9 etc: “Three transgressions” = completion. Four transgressions = more than full, more than he will allow. “I am fed up!” God could have judged the nations after a single transgression. Instead he is patient. But these nations have taken patience for impotence. Finally, he is provoked.

These *roars* speak of a national judgment for international sins and justice. Individuals are punished for what their nations have perpetrated.

“I will not revoke”--the punishment is coming: no more mercy or forgiveness.

1:5: God judges and destroys those things which nations rely on for their own security.

1:5: Kir = see 9:7, the place they came from, w/God’s help

1:6: Selling people into slavery, or watching while Israel or Gilead was carried into slavery by Edom.

1:9 “delivered entire communities”: refusing refugees, simply didn’t welcome the folks from Gilead who tried to settle there. Instead, sent them back into the hands of Edom.

*Ethnic cleansing*: ethnically motivated violence

1:9 “covenant of kinship”: between Israel and Tyre? Israel and Edom?

The words of Amos, who was among the shepherds of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of King Uzziah of Judah and in the days of King Jeroboam son of Joash of Israel, two years before the earthquake.

2And he said: The Lord roars from Zion,  
   and utters his voice from Jerusalem;  
the pastures of the shepherds wither,  
   and the top of Carmel dries up.

3 Thus says the Lord: For three transgressions of Damascus, 1 NW  
   and for four, I will not revoke the punishment;  
because they have threshed Gilead with threshing-sledges of iron.   
4 So I will send a fire on the house of Hazael,  
   and it shall devour the strongholds of Ben-hadad.   
5 I will break the gate-bars of Damascus,  
   and cut off the inhabitants from the Valley of Aven,  
and the one who holds the sceptre from Beth-eden;  
   and the people of Aram shall go into exile to Kir, says the Lord.

6 Thus says the Lord: For three transgressions of Gaza, 2 SW  
   and for four, I will not revoke the punishment;  
because they carried into exile entire communities,  
   to hand them over to Edom.   
7 So I will send a fire on the wall of Gaza,  
   fire that shall devour its strongholds.   
8 I will cut off the inhabitants from Ashdod,  
   and the one who holds the sceptre from Ashkelon;  
I will turn my hand against Ekron,  
   and the remnant of the Philistines shall perish, says the Lord God.

9 Thus says the Lord: For three transgressions of Tyre, 3 North  
   and for four, I will not revoke the punishment;  
because they delivered entire communities over to Edom,  
   and did not remember the covenant of kinship.   
10 So I will send a fire on the wall of Tyre,  
   fire that shall devour its strongholds.

Strongholds: 1:4, 7, 10, 12, 14; 2:2, 2:5; 3:11: Strongholds are things people trust in other than God, and God judges them and makes their strongholds fail.

God’s destructive action:

* Roars 1-7: send fire, is shall devour strongholds
* Roar 2: break the bar
* Roars 1-2: cut off inhabitants
* Roar 2: turn my hand against
* Roar 5-6: shouting on a day of battle
* Roar 1, 2, 5, 6: king in exile or killed

11 Thus says the Lord: For three transgressions of Edom, 4 South  
   and for four, I will not revoke the punishment;  
because he pursued his brother with the sword and cast off all pity;  
he maintained his anger perpetually,  
   and kept his wrath for ever.   
12 So I will send a fire on Teman,  
   and it shall devour the strongholds of Bozrah.

1:11: perpetual anger: a character of hatred and bitterness, kept over time

1:12: Teman, a town named after Esau’s grandson

1:13: violence against women with child: personal violence, but also national: destroying the future, the wealth and income stream.

Violence of the strong against the weak: repeated theme in Amos.

God destroys the strongholds--the things in which people trust instead of God. What are the strongholds of our lives? The things about us that make it possible to vaunt ourselves, to uphold ourselves as masters of our fate? Or the things to which we fearfully cling?

2:1: Moab’s transgression: this doesn’t seem to fit what came before, because now the oppressed party is not Israel. This foreshadows God’s concern for justice beyond his loyalty to Israel. In fact, he judges Israel more harshly.

2:1: bones of the soldiers of the king: Moab makes white wash out of its enemies bones.

Will God judge the nations today for these reasons? Slavery, turning refugees back, lacking compassion on the poor and dispossessed?

God kills rulers for their decisions to mistreat or kill others. God’s concern for justice among the nations.

All the non-Jewish nations are judged for their inhumanity, crimes commonly accepted as evil by the standards of the day. They are not judged for failure to abide by any law they didn’t have.

This then is a “lesser-to-greater” progression: if God’s anger is kindled towards the nations, whose crimes are small and their level of accountability slight, how much greater will his anger be towards his chosen people who have rejected the law, God’s gift to people to show them the path to blessing & life.

How is Israel feeling at this point in the prophecy? “Yeah, God! You show them! These folks hated us! Yeah, God!”

Yet then he focuses on Judah, and finally saves his sharpest critique for Israel. The Lord, the roaring lion, is circling his prey...

Amos is from Judah: his willingness to confront and prophesy against his own people lends credibility to his message. He’s not simply a blind partisan.

Judah’s sin is that they have rejected God, not war crimes. This is a typical generational sin—they have rejected God in the same way their ancestors did, and they will be likewise judged.

2:4: What are the lies of our ancestors that have also led us astray? Racism, greed and materialism, idolatry of wealth and success, cold war and post-cold war nationalism, oppression of other nations and peoples, breaking treaties.

13 Thus says the Lord: For three transgressions of the Ammonites, 5 East

 and for four, I will not revoke the punishment;  
because they have ripped open pregnant women in Gilead  
   in order to enlarge their territory.   
14 So I will kindle a fire against the wall of Rabbah,  
   fire that shall devour its strongholds,  
with shouting on the day of battle,  
   with a storm on the day of the whirlwind;   
15 then their king shall go into exile,  
   he and his officials together, says the Lord.

2:1 Thus says the Lord: For three transgressions of Moab, 6 SE  
   and for four, I will not revoke the punishment;  
because he burned to lime the bones of the king of Edom.   
2 So I will send a fire on Moab,  
   and it shall devour the strongholds of Kerioth,  
and Moab shall die amid uproar,  
   amid shouting and the sound of the trumpet;   
3 I will cut off the ruler from its midst,  
   and will kill all its officials with him, says the Lord.

4 Thus says the Lord: For three transgressions of Judah, 7 Closer  
   and for four, I will not revoke the punishment;  
because they have rejected the law of the Lord,  
   and have not kept his statutes,  
but they have been led astray by the same lies  
   after which their ancestors walked.   
5 So I will send a fire on Judah,   
   and it shall devour the strongholds of Jerusalem.

2:1: “because he burned ot lime the bones of the king of Edom”: bones of the soldiers of the king. Moab makes whitewash out of their bones. This doesn’t fit with all the international sins that came before, because now the oppressed party is not Israel. This foreshadow’s God’s concern for justice beyond his loyalty to Israel. In fact, he judges Israel more harshly.

Will God judge nations today for these reasons? Slavery, turning refugees away, lacking compassion on the poor and dispossessed.

6 Thus says the Lord: For three transgressions of Israel, 8 target  
   and for four, I will not revoke the punishment;  
because they sell the righteous for silver, 1  
   and the needy for a pair of sandals—   
7 they who trample the head of the poor into the dust of the earth, 2  
   and push the afflicted out of the way;  
father and son go in to the same girl, 3  
   so that my holy name is profaned;   
8 they lay themselves down beside every altar 4  
   on garments taken in pledge;  
and in the house of their God they drink  
   wine bought with fines they imposed.

The past generation led the present generation astray from following God.

2:6-12: actually, five transgressions are listed here

Righteous = needy = poor (8:6); righteous meaning “in the right, acquitted”, a legal not nec. a spiritual term. They are bringing false suits into court to steal assets, over trivial sums.

2:6, also 8:6: “Pair of sandals”: people’s lives are destroyed for a trifling sum.

2:7: father and son: patriarchs asserting “droit du seigneur” with their daughters-in-law. Another 2:10: I brought you up: all the other national judgments given in the third person, but to Israel all this is directed, personally. You.

2:12: Like the unforgivable sin: they shut up the very people who will call them to repentance. They make it impossible to be forgiven.

If they had done the other sins, but then listened to the prophets, God might very well have revoked the punishment.

example of power abuse.

2:8: Ex 22:26-27: If someone takes out a loan and gives a garment as collateral, you are supposed to give it back at sundown, to sleep in.

2:8: combined offenses against God and people: worship as an excuse to oppress.

2:8: Ex 22:26-27: If someone takes out a loan and gives a garment as collateral, you are supposed to give it back at sundown, to sleep in.

2:9: fruit above, roots beneath: young and elderly, both were killed, as strong as they were, in order to make room for Israel.

2:10: I brought you up: all the other national judgments given in the third person, but to Israel all this is directed, personally. You.

2:12: mocking the vow the nazirites made to God

2:12: “you shall not prophesy”: silencing God’s words of judgment (like Amaziah, 7:10 and following)

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2:12: making Nazirites drink wine is mocking the vow they have made to God. Then, they silence God’s words of judgment. (See Amaziah, 7:10-17.)

9 Yet I destroyed the Amorite before them,  
   whose height was like the height of cedars,  
   and who was as strong as oaks;  
I destroyed his fruit above, and his roots beneath.   
10 Also I brought you up out of the land of Egypt,  
   and led you for forty years in the wilderness,  
   to possess the land of the Amorite.   
11 And I raised up some of your children to be prophets  
   and some of your youths to be Nazirites.  
   Is it not indeed so, O people of Israel? says the Lord.

12 But you made the Nazirites drink wine, 5  
   and commanded the prophets,  
   saying, ‘You shall not prophesy.’

Irony: God cuts off the rulers of other nations; Israel cuts off/shuts up its own.

* God raised up the people of Israel, out of Egypt. Some became prophets.
* God put others down in order to do this, especially the Amorites.
* Israel is pressing down the poor into the dust of the earth, and also the prophets.
* Therefore, God will press Israel down.

If they had done the other sins, but then listened to the prophets, God might very well have revoked the punishment.

2:9-11: This is a brief recounting of their history: God has provided for them in many ways, taking land from powerful people and giving it to Israel. But they have rejected God’s law (Judah, 2:4) and the prophets (2:12) and the revelation of God'

13 So, I will press you down in your place,  
   just as a cart presses down when it is full of sheaves.   
14 Flight shall perish from the swift,  
   and the strong shall not retain their strength,  
   nor shall the mighty save their lives;   
15 those who handle the bow shall not stand,  
   and those who are swift of foot shall not save themselves,  
   nor shall those who ride horses save their lives;   
16 and those who are stout of heart among the mighty  
   shall flee away naked on that day, says the Lord. [end of the roars]

2:14: Israel’s warriors will lose their strength

2:15: those who handle the bow, swift of foot, stout of heart, horses: training, strength, resources and confidence will not be enough to save yourself.

How do we tend to rely on our education and resources to distance ourselves from people in need?

2:15: Ultimately, no one can save his or her life

2:16 “flee away naked”: empty handed, defenseless, vulnerable. Shame.

Questions to consider:

* What do you do with the images in the rhetorical qns?
* How does Amos fill out the complaint God has?
* How does Amos fill out the punishment?
* What means has God tried to bring back his chosen people?

3:3-6: Structure: observed result to presumed cause. Observe the structure of life--it works this way. So too now.

3:1: the whole family: both Israel and Judah. Because they have been chosen, they are held more responsible than the other nations being judged here.

3:2: a great privilege to know God, but they have abused and ignored their chosenness.

3:2: Just because they are Israel, doesn’t mean they won’t be punished. To the contrary!

3:2: “You only have I know of all the families of the earth...” Finish the sentence. Not what we might have expected.

3:3: appointment with doom, see 4:12: “Prepare to meet your God, O Israel!”

3:3-6: These rhetorical questions make it clear that these aren’t simply idle threats. 1) God is intentional regarding this prophecy and its fulfilment. 2) God has “roared”: he has his prey and is ready to pounce. 3) God has his trap, and it has sprung. 4) The coming evil has God behind it. THEREFORE, Israel should heed the signs of the times, see God’s hand at work, and repent.

3:4: The roar immobilizes his prey, before he pounces. God tells his prey what he’s about to do.

3:6: Cities are supposed to be places of protection, prosperity, safety, law.

3:6: The oracle of Amos is the trumpet being blown in the city: a call of warning, distress.

3:3-6: Increasing violence in this progression. Amos has set a trap: 8 roars circling in on Israel.

3:6-7: addresses God’s sovereignty: they might have expected a different second half of v6. But God doesn’t want them to conclude, when they see evil coming, that it is because God is impotent as they had feared all along. Rather, it is because he is not impotent. He is sovereign.

3:6: Amos’ proper role is to blow the alarm trumpet.

3:1 Hear this word that the Lord has spoken against you, O people of Israel, against the whole family that I brought up out of the land of Egypt:   
2 You only have I known of all the families of the earth;  
therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.

3 Do two walk together unless they have made an appointment?   
4 Does a lion roar in the forest, when it has no prey?  
Does a young lion cry out from its den, if it has caught nothing?   
5 Does a bird fall into a snare on the earth, when there is no trap for it?  
Does a snare spring up from the ground, when it has taken nothing?   
6 Is a trumpet blown in a city, and the people are not afraid?  
Does disaster befall a city, unless the Lord has done it?

**Ezek 33: 1-9:** *The word of the Lord came to me: 2O Mortal, speak to your people and say to them, If I bring the sword upon a land, and the people of the land take one of their number as their sentinel; 3and if the sentinel sees the sword coming upon the land and blows the trumpet and warns the people; 4then if any who hear the sound of the trumpet do not take warning, and the sword comes and takes them away, their blood shall be upon their own heads. 5They heard the sound of the trumpet and did not take warning; their blood shall be upon themselves. But if they had taken warning, they would have saved their lives. 6But if the sentinel sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, so that the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes any of them, they are taken away in their iniquity, but their blood I will require at the sentinel’s hand. 7 So you, mortal, I have made a sentinel for the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. 8If I say to the wicked, ‘O wicked ones, you shall surely die’, and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but their blood I will require at your hand. 9But if you warn the wicked to turn from their ways, and they do not turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but you will have saved your life.*

7 Surely the Lord God does nothing,  
   without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets.   
8 The lion has roared; who will not fear?  
The Lord God has spoken; who can but prophesy?

9 Proclaim to the strongholds in Ashdod,  
   and to the strongholds in the land of Egypt,  
and say, ‘Assemble yourselves on Mount Samaria,  
   and see what great tumults are within it,  
   and what oppressions are in its midst.’   
10 They do not know how to do right, says the Lord,  
   those who store up violence and robbery in their strongholds.   
11 Therefore, thus says the Lord God: An adversary shall surround the land,  
   and strip you of your defence; and your strongholds shall be plundered.

3:7: God is walking alongside Amos, telling him what he is up to, and then Amos publishes the secret. While God wants to be understood for being sovereign, he doesn’t want to be misunderstood as being capricious.

3:7: of course, these prophets are the ones you

3:8: The proper response to the declaration of the judging work of God is fear, not confidence or self- righteousness or dismissal.

3:8: Amos is getting more clear in his declarations: but “I couldn’t help it!”

3:9: Strongholds: Almost like the “principalities and powers” in Ephesians: a cosmic connection between the powers in the heavens and their earthly corporate counterparts.

God is telling the prophet to speak to these pagan, violent nations: Look at Israel; They (Israel) do not do right. “These nations were thought to be more sinful. After all, Israel was a Christian nation!”

Israel might even have assumed of the other nations: “They do not know how to do right.”

3:10: They are storing up evil, not rich toward God. They are eager to cheat and oppress the poor (see 8:5, “When will the new moon be over so that we may oppress some more?”)

3:12: Amos is the shepherd (1:1, 7:14) rescuing the remnant of Israel from the mouth of the Lion, who is God. Also 5:3, remnant theme.

Ex 22:134: Evidence is needed by an undershepherd so he is not held responsible for the sheep. He’ll bring back any scrap of physical evidence that the sheep was killed by an animal.

3:12: Of course, this isn’t really a rescue, but simply evidence of near total destruction.

3:14: The pagan idea was that the horns of an altar provided a refuge for the supplicant.

3:15: luxury dwellings: oppressors of the poor in their luxury. Idolatry and wealth linked: both will be punished.

Bethel seems to be paying off: Israel is enjoying economic blessings, even more than Judah. But this idolatry will not yield the benefits it promises. God’s judgment is sure and swift.

12 Thus says the Lord: As the shepherd rescues from the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear, so shall the people of Israel who live in Samaria be rescued, with the corner of a couch and part of a bed.

13 Hear, and testify against the house of Jacob,  
   says the Lord God, the God of hosts:   
14 On the day I punish Israel for its transgressions,  
   I will punish the altars of Bethel,  
and the horns of the altar shall be cut off  
   and fall to the ground.   
15 I will tear down the winter house as well as the summer house;  
   and the houses of ivory shall perish,  
and the great houses shall come to an end, says the Lord.

4:1 Hear this word, you cows of Bashan who are on Mount Samaria,  
who oppress the poor, who crush the needy,  
   who say to their husbands, ‘Bring something to drink!’   
2 The Lord God has sworn by his holiness:  
   The time is surely coming upon you,  
when they shall take you away with hooks,  
   even the last of you with fish-hooks.   
3 Through breaches in the wall you shall leave, each one straight ahead;  
   and you shall be flung out into Harmon, says the Lord.

4:1 Bashan: a place noted for its cattle

Cows are just fattened up before slaughter.

Cows normally give so that others may drink...

4:1: crush the needy: not directly, but by encouraging their husbands to work hard to support their lavish living.

These “cows” would probably be completely mystified by the accusation that they oppress the poor. “Not me! I don’t even know any poor people. I would never oppress them!”

4:2: God’s character is the basis on which the judgment is coming.

4:4 Bethel: 1 Kings 12:25-33: Jereboam placed a golden calf here so that the people of Israel wouldn’t go to Jerusalem to offer sacrifices.

4:4ff: see 1 Kings 12:25-33: Jereboam placed a golden calf in Bethel so that the people of Israel wouldn’t go to Jerusalem to offer sacrifices.

4:4ff: This is sarcasm: “every morning” vs. 3x/yr “every three days” vs. every three years. Public display of religiosity is being condemned. Continuing in sin, especially sociopolitical, but claiming to have great devotion to God.

4:5: so you love to do: like Jesus speaking about the pharisees’ traditions.

Public worship yet private idolatries make it hypocrisy.

4:5: “leavened bread”: it was supposed to be unleavened. Carelessness displayed.

4:5: proclaim, publish: They are doing their sacrifies and their piety entirely for show: very public giving, but not just in their own lives.

4:6ff: “yet you did not return to me”: when bad things happen it is often a sign that things aren’t right between us and God. But we tend to see these signs and think God doesn’t exist or that he isn’t good instead of returning to him.

God’s goal: that they return to him. That they’d realize their need for God. Like Matt 6:25-34.

4:8: they wandered around seeking water, not God (5:4,6) or good (5:14). Therefore, they went unsatisfied.

4:6-11: God tried 5 strategies to get the attention of the people of Israel: 1) famine, 2) drought, 3) blight and mildew, 4) plague, 5) cities overthrown by violence.

Things they had a tendency to depend on, stripped away one by one: food, rain, crops, young men and horses, cities. Srongholds.

Does God use similar strategies today to get our attention? How do we tend to respond?

4 Come to Bethel—and transgress; to Gilgal—and multiply transgression;  
bring your sacrifices every morning, your tithes every three days;   
5 bring a thank-offering of leavened bread,  
   and proclaim freewill-offerings, publish them;  
   for so you love to do, O people of Israel! says the Lord God.

6 I gave you cleanness of teeth in all your cities,  
   and lack of bread in all your places,  
yet you did not return to me, says the Lord. 1 Famine

7 And I also withheld the rain from you  
   when there were still three months to the harvest;  
I would send rain on one city,  
   and send no rain on another city;  
one field would be rained upon,  
   and the field on which it did not rain withered;   
8 so two or three towns wandered to one town  
   to drink water, and were not satisfied;  
yet you did not return to me, says the Lord. 2 Drought

9 I struck you with blight and mildew;  
   I laid waste your gardens and your vineyards;  
   the locust devoured your fig trees and your olive trees;  
yet you did not return to me, says the Lord. 3 Blight

4:8: they were seeking water, not God, and were not satisfied. (See 5:4,6,14)

He gave them these punishments, but ha also gave them the prophets to interpret his action. They’ve rejected the words of the prophets.

4:9: fig trees = peace, olive trees = prosperity

*Deut 28:15, 38-42: But if you will not obey the Lord your God by diligently observing all his commandments and decrees, which I am commanding you today, then all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you… 38 You shall carry much seed into the field but shall gather little in, for the locust shall consume it. 39You shall plant vineyards and dress them, but you shall neither drink the wine nor gather the grapes, for the worm shall eat them. 40You shall have olive trees throughout all your territory, but you shall not anoint yourself with the oil, for your olives shall drop off.41You shall have sons and daughters, but they shall not remain yours, for they shall go into captivity. 42All your trees and the fruit of your ground the cicada shall take over.*

10 I sent among you a pestilence after the manner of Egypt;  
   I killed your young men with the sword;  
I carried away your horses;  
   and I made the stench of your camp go up into your nostrils;  
yet you did not return to me, says the Lord. 4 Plague

4:10: after the manner of Egypt, when you were the oppressed, not the oppressors.

4:12: You have an appointment with God (see 3:3) You should have made it sooner. This is a final appointment.

4:12: “thus I will do to you”: not with you or for you; this isn’t good.

4:12b: You cannot continue to ignore God forever. Meet your God, in life or else in death!

4:13: God is powerful: he is not a puppet whose strings we pull through our prayers and sacrifices.

4:13 Realize what type of God you are dealing with

5:1: like a funeral dirge: they are already dead, because it has been prophesied.

God desires:

* Seeking him (5:4,6,14)
* Seeking good, loving good (5:15)
* Establishing justice (5:15)
* Righteousness
* Grieving injustice
* Speaking out against injustice (5:10)

God hates:

* Seeking security elsewhere, Strongholds
* Ignoring those who speak for justice (5:10)
* Oppression (5:12). Bribes, Opulence
* Desiring “the day of the Lord” rather than the Lord

5:2, see 2:10-11: The Lord used to raise up the people of Israel, when they were down. But no more.

5:3: 1000 🡪 100: Remnant theme, see 3:12, the shepherd rescuing a part of an ear. See also 5:15, *perhaps the Lord will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.*

5:3: this ruin is what God will do since they did not return to him. Yet 10% live, some indeed are brought to repentance, and God promises them life (5:4ff).

5:4: God speaking and warning; 5:6: Amos’ echo and pleading.

5:6: “house of Joseph”, see 5:15, “remnant of Joseph”, 6:6, “ruin of Joseph”

“Seek God and live” vs seek a job in order to make a living. This promise is the OT version of the promise in Matt 6:25-34: God promises to take care of us as we first strive to know him and seek the kingdom first.

“do not seek Bethel”: they sought place, holy houses or altars, that were at one time meant to direct people to God. These places (Bethel, Gilgal, Beersheba) were at one point helpful to direct people to God, but they eventually became replacements for God.

5:7: They are place oriented, but God wants hearts directed towards him producing just actions toward others, justice and righteousness.

11 I overthrew some of you,  
   as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah,  
   and you were like a brand snatched from the fire;  
yet you did not return to me, says the Lord. 5 Violence

12 Therefore, thus I will do to you, O Israel;  
   because I will do this to you,  
   prepare to meet your God, O Israel!

13 For lo, the one who forms the mountains, creates the wind,  
   reveals his thoughts to mortals,  
makes the morning darkness,  
   and treads on the heights of the earth—  
   the Lord, the God of hosts, is his name!

5:1 Hear this word that I take up over you in lamentation, O house of Israel:   
2 Fallen, no more to rise, is maiden Israel;  
forsaken on her land, with no one to raise her up.

3 For thus says the Lord God:  
The city that marched out a thousand shall have a hundred left,  
and that which marched out a hundred shall have ten left.

4 For thus says the Lord to the house of Israel:  
Seek me and live; 5 but do not seek Bethel,  
and do not enter into Gilgal or cross over to Beer-sheba;  
for Gilgal shall surely go into exile, and Bethel shall come to nothing.

6 Seek the Lord and live,  
   or he will break out against the house of Joseph like fire,  
   and it will devour Bethel, with no one to quench it.   
7 Ah, you that turn justice to wormwood,  
   and bring righteousness to the ground!

What is “Bethel” for us today? Doctrine, community, family, relationships, success (even ministry success). It is easier to seek these things rather than to actually seek God.

5:6: “Seek me and live”: This is what God wanted with the five woes of the previous chapter. All God wants is for people to seek him and to find life in that. Don’t go to the places where you sacrifice to false gods, rather “Seek me!”

8 The one who made the Pleiades and Orion,  
   and turns deep darkness into the morning,  
   and darkens the day into night,  
who calls for the waters of the sea,  
   and pours them out on the surface of the earth,  
the Lord is his name,   
9 who makes destruction flash out against the strong,  
   so that destruction comes upon the fortress.

5:8: See 4:13: *the one who forms the mountains, creates the wind,/  reveals his thoughts to mortals, /makes the morning darkness, /   and treads on the heights of the earth—/ the Lord, the God of hosts, is his name!*

5:8: also see 9:5-6: *The Lord, God of hosts, he who touches the earth and it melts, /   and all who live in it mourn, and all of it rises like the Nile, / and sinks again, like the Nile of Egypt; /6 who builds his upper chambers in the heavens, /  and founds his vault upon the earth;/who calls for the waters of the sea, /   and pours them out upon the surface of the earth—the Lord is his name.*

5:8-10: Just as certainly as God turns night into day and then again into night, just as certainly as God uses rain to water the earth and to fill the rivers and seas, God will judge and punish those evil doers who punish those who speak out against injustice.

5:10-12: his complaints against them:

* They trample on the poor, withhold their needed grain
* They afflict the righteous (= “needy”)
* They take bribes
* They push aside the needy “in the gate” ie, in the place where righteousness is supposed to be done.

So they will not be able to enjoy the fruits of their ill-gotten gains.

5:13: Prudence requires staying silent in an evil time.

5:14: But it is not enough to stay silent. Rather, seek (positive) good, establish justice in the gate.

5:10, 12, 15: the gate: 1) counsel, wisdom, boundaries of the city defined: such as the university. 2) the courthouse and statehouse: where truth and justice should be found, but often isn’t.

5:14: “just as you have said”: this may be sarcasm. They have always said, “The Lord be with you” or “The Lord be with us” but haven’t necessarily sought his presence/guidance/will. Amos is saying, “Seek good and perhaps the Lord actually will be with you.”

5:14 compare to 5:4, “Seek me and live” or 5:6, “Seek God and live”. God isn’t just asking for more sacrifices, more prayer, longer QTs, more worship services—but rather justice sought, loved, done.

5:15: The remnant will survive, and after that, perhaps God will be gracious to them further. If you want to be a part of the remnant, you must be contributing to justice in the gate. (No guarantees, however!)

5:15: God is not any longer offering national reinstatement or expecting national repentance, but some individuals will be saved if they seek God and his righteousness.

5:16-17: lamentation and grief is a proper response to injustice and oppression. Lamentation in the face of lamentable things may be the faithful response, rather than shutting down our emotions or indulging our desires.

5:17: “Pass through the midst of you”: see “Prepare to meet your God” 4:12, see also 3:3.

10 They hate the one who reproves in the gate,  
   and they abhor the one who speaks the truth.   
11 Therefore, because you trample on the poor  
   and take from them levies of grain,  
you have built houses of hewn stone,  
   but you shall not live in them;  
you have planted pleasant vineyards,  
   but you shall not drink their wine.   
12 For I know how many are your transgressions,  
   and how great are your sins—  
you who afflict the righteous, who take a bribe,  
   and push aside the needy in the gate.   
13 Therefore the prudent will keep silent in such a time;  
   for it is an evil time.

14 Seek good and not evil,  
   that you may live;  
and so the Lord, the God of hosts, will be with you,  
   just as you have said.   
15 Hate evil and love good,  
   and establish justice in the gate;  
it may be that the Lord, the God of hosts,  
   will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.

16 Therefore thus says the Lord, the God of hosts, the Lord:  
In all the squares there shall be wailing;  
   and in all the streets they shall say, ‘Alas! alas!’  
They shall call the farmers to mourning,  
   and those skilled in lamentation, to wailing;   
17 in all the vineyards there shall be wailing,  
   for I will pass through the midst of you, says the Lord.

What do people tend to seek in order to live? Money, education, status, power: all these are as empty as Bethel and Gilgal, and if we pursue these things instead of justice and righteousness, we will not receive the life we long for.

How can we do what we can to establish justice in the gate? Resist the privatization of faith, recognize that our faith has a public component. Seek justice in structures, as well as in relationships.

5:17, “pass through the midst” compare “pass through” with “pass over” in Ex 12:12-13: *For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals; on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgements: I am the Lord. 13The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.*

18 Alas for you who desire the day of the Lord! 1  
   Why do you want the day of the Lord?  
It is darkness, not light;   
19   as if someone fled from a lion, and was met by a bear;  
or went into the house and rested a hand against the wall,  
   and was bitten by a snake.   
20 Is not the day of the Lord darkness, not light,  
   and gloom with no brightness in it?

5:18, 6:1, 6:4: The three woes.

5:18: These pious people long for the day when God will intervene and act on behalf of his people. They don’t realize that when God does act, they will be on the underside of God’s action.

5:19: The Lord is a lion, and is not a tame lion.

3:4, 3:8, 3:12: The Lord is like a lion. Also 1:2, “the Lord roars from Zion”

5:21-23: these are pious, worshipful people, at least by their activity. They have all kinds of sacrifices and offerings, and they sing songs well appointed with musicians, but they are not letting justice roll down, and they are not seeking God’s righteousness.

5:24: At this point, look back in Amos: what is righteousness? Doing justice, doing what is right, helping the poor, not oppressing them.

5:24: “justice roll down”: let the flow of our lives be toward justice: not just one-time acts, but continuous flow.

5:24: the river of justice will put out the fire of judgment (chapters 1-2, also 5:6)

5:25: During the years in the wilderness, God’s presence, provision, guidance was with them. They were not bringing sacrifices then. His blessings aren’t contingent on their (empty) activity, but rather on the state of their hearts, faith, focus, trust.

5:25: “Did I burden you with sacrifices while in the wilderness?” No, but you have burdened yourselves with foreign gods while you go into exile.

5:26: Sukkuth and Kaiwan, Assyrian gods.

5:27: “Beyond Damascus” beyond what they even know. Far, far away.

6:1: Those who are taking it easy now don’t realize what is coming. God will punish the oppressors and those who are secure but oblivious to the plight of their neighbors.

6:1: “at ease in Zion”: those who rest on their status as “chosen people” or those at the top of the mountain, top of the food chain.

6:1: “mountains of Samaria” Bethel, strongholds

6:2: Like the Jews in Romans 2, they were fortunate, because they had been given the law, but that didn’t make them better than other people. Gratitude and not pride should have been the response. Same here.

6:3: by not caring for the oppressed, and thinking only of your own comfort, you bring near your own ruin, and violence will touch you who think you are safe.

21 I hate, I despise your festivals,  
   and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.   
22 Even though you offer me your burnt-offerings and grain-offerings,  
   I will not accept them;  
and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals  
   I will not look upon.   
23 Take away from me the noise of your songs;  
   I will not listen to the melody of your harps.   
24 But let justice roll down like waters,  
   and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

25 Did you bring to me sacrifices and offerings the forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel? 26You shall take up Sakkuth your king, and Kaiwan your star-god, your images that you made for yourselves; 27therefore I will take you into exile beyond Damascus, says the Lord, whose name is the God of hosts.

6:1 Alas for those who are at ease in Zion, 2  
   and for those who feel secure on Mount Samaria,  
the notables of the first of the nations,  
   to whom the house of Israel resorts!   
2 Cross over to Calneh, and see;  
   from there go to Hamath the great;  
   then go down to Gath of the Philistines.  
Are you better than these kingdoms?  
   Or is your territory greater than their territory,   
3 O you that put far away the evil day,  
   and bring near a reign of violence?

Examples of unrighteousness

* 2:6-8: taking advantage of the needy
* 2:7: sexual immorality
* 2:12: silencing God’s prophets
* 3:10: storing up violence in strongholds
* 4:1: Excessive consumption
* 5:7, 12: perverting justice, bribe taking

4 Alas for those who lie on beds of ivory, 3  
   and lounge on their couches,  
and eat lambs from the flock,  
   and calves from the stall;   
5 who sing idle songs to the sound of the harp,  
   and like David improvise on instruments of music;   
6 who drink wine from bowls,  
   and anoint themselves with the finest oils,  
   but are not grieved over the ruin of Joseph!   
7 Therefore they shall now be the first to go into exile,  
   and the revelry of the loungers shall pass away.

6:4: “Woe to those who live in opulence while those around them suffer.” Third of three woes.

6:4: None of these things (beds of ivory, eating lambs, singing songs to the sound of a harp, even drinking wine from bowls), suntan lotion and perfumes--none are particularly wrong or sinful in and of themselves. They do these things—fine—but they don’t grieve over the “ruin of Joseph”—in fact, they participate in it! This callousness is what gets them their judgment.

6:6: grief over the ruin of Joseph would be the first sign of repentance. Instead, they don’t see it, or they don’t care if they do see it.

I tend to be more concerned with my own personal needs and struggles that with the “ruin of Joseph” (societal issues).

Do I grieve over the sin and oppression in the city? Do I see it? Do I care?

6:7: The “revelry of the loungers”: those loungers on beds of ivory, lounging on their couches, singing idle songs.

6:8: “pride of Jacob” = strongholds = wall, gate, wealth of the city. These things promised protection, but they cannot deliver in the face of God’s judgment.

6:9-10: doom and despair, like a scene after a holocaust. We are not even worthy to mention God’s name. A far cry from the times when they were longing for the day of the Lord, full of arrogance and confidence in God’s blessing.

6:11: the coming judgment will reach great and humble alike

6:12: Do horses run on rocks? That would be a misuse of valuable horses. Do you plough the sea with oxen? That would be a misuse of precious oxen and plows. Turning justice into poison and righteousness into wormwood is a misuse of those precious gifts.

6:13: “who rejoice in Lo-debar” you who rejoice in a military victory: Pride in victory, in our own strength.

6:14: Lebo-hamath = North Jordan, Wadi Arabah = South Jordan, the entire N-S length of Israel.

6:14: Like Habakkuk 1:5-6 *Look at the nations, and see!  
   Be astonished! Be astounded!  
For a work is being done in your days  
   that you would not believe if you were told.   
6 For I am rousing the Chaldeans,  
   that fierce and impetuous nation,  
who march through the breadth of the earth*

*to seize dwellings not their own.*

8 The Lord God has sworn by himself (says the Lord, the God of hosts):  
I abhor the pride of Jacob and hate his strongholds;  
   and I will deliver up the city and all that is in it.

9 If ten people remain in one house, they shall die. 10 And if a relative, one who burns the dead, shall take up the body to bring it out of the house, and shall say to someone in the innermost parts of the house, ‘Is anyone else with you?’ the answer will come, ‘No.’ Then the relative shall say, ‘Hush! We must not mention the name of the Lord.’

11 See, the Lord commands,  
   and the great house shall be shattered to bits,  
   and the little house to pieces.   
12 Do horses run on rocks?  
   Does one plough the sea with oxen?  
But you have turned justice into poison  
   and the fruit of righteousness into wormwood—   
13 you who rejoice in Lo-debar,  
   who say, ‘Have we not by our own strength  
   taken Karnaim for ourselves?’   
14 Indeed, I am raising up against you a nation,  
   O house of Israel, says the Lord, the God of hosts,  
and they shall oppress you from Lebo-hamath  
   to the Wadi Arabah.

7:1 This is what the Lord God showed me: he was forming locusts at the time the latter growth began to sprout (it was the latter growth after the king’s mowings). 2When they had finished eating the grass of the land, I said,  
‘O Lord God, forgive, I beg you!  
   How can Jacob stand?  He is so small!’   
3 The Lord relented concerning this;  
   ‘It shall not be,’ said the Lord.

The beginning of the Five Visions. 7:1-3, 7:4-6, 7:7-9, 8:1-14, 9:1-13

7:1: Why does God show Amos what he, in the end, relents and decides not to do? Because he wants Amos to see something, and respond. He wants Amos to care and plead with him.

7:2: We see Amos’ heart here: he is loyal to Israel, he is not against it but loves it and wants blessing for it. The heart of the prophet. Even though he’s from Judah, he prays for Israel and it makes a difference!

7:2-3: Amos is grieved over the ruin of Joseph (6:6). This is what it looks like: to intercede on Israel’s behalf. No one in Israel is praying in this way… This is a picture of Amos, like a shepherd, rescuing a small piece of Israel from the mouth of the lion (3:12).

7:7: What is the plumb line in the midst of Israel? Amos, God’s words made contextual and practical.

A prophet is a plumb line: a practical use for a moral sense. Like people who can tell when something is just slightly off, is just slightly out of alignment.

Plumb line: a standard of righteousness.

We need plumbline-type friends in our lives: people who care more for us in truth than they do about our easy approval or positive regard.

How have I been a plumbline for people in the ministry and communities I’ve been a part of?

7:1-6: Amos believed that he could make a difference in history, for the people of Israel, and he did so. God changed his mind and though he punished Israel, he did relent. Do we believe our prayers have similar power to change things?

7:8: “pass them by” never again will the Lord favorably fail to punish wrongdoing, the Lord will finally mete out punishment after being long-suffering and patient. His patience has run out. See also 8:2.

7:10: Amaziah, as chaplain, is limited to say things that would not challenge the status quo. Amos isn’t bound because he receives no paycheck from the King. He is free to speak the truth.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Amaziah** | **Amos** |
| Chaplain | Prophet |
| Employed by the king | Called by God |
| At home in the king’s court | Outsider, a foreigner |
| Loyal to ruler and oppressive structures | Compassion for the poor and oppressed |
| “The land can’t bear Amos’ words” | “the land can’t bear God’s wrath |
| Sends Amos away | Intercedes on behalf of the people |

7:11: *Thus Amos has said:* actually these are ’s words. Amaziah cannot acknowledge that.

What does it take to be a plumbline?

* Gravity: a moral clarity, pull
* Willingness to make comparisons
* A heart for the people

7:12: Amaziah trying to shut up Amos: This was one of the sins that began this whole prophecy against the people of Israel to begin with (2:12).

1

2

3

4 This is what the Lord God showed me: the Lord God was calling for a shower of fire, and it devoured the great deep and was eating up the land. 5Then I said,  
‘O Lord God, cease, I beg you!  
   How can Jacob stand?  He is so small!’   
6 The Lord relented concerning this;  
   ‘This also shall not be,’ said the Lord God.

7 This is what he 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, ‘Amos, what do you see?’ And I said, ‘A plumb-line.’ Then the Lord said,  
‘See, I am setting a plumb-line  
   in the midst of my people Israel;  
   I will never again pass them by;   
9 the high places of Isaac shall be made desolate,  
   and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste,  
   and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword.’

10 Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent to King Jeroboam of Israel, saying, ‘Amos has conspired against you in the very center of the house of Israel; the land is not able to bear all his words. 11For thus Amos has said,  
“Jeroboam shall die by the sword,  
   and Israel must go into exile away from his land.” ’ [also 7:17]  
12And Amaziah said to Amos, ‘O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah, earn your bread there, and prophesy there; 13but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king’s sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom.’

Bethel: 3:14, 4:4, 7; “house of God”: an ancient Canaanite city originally known as Luz, situated on an important N-S route through the hill country of central Palestine. Near the city, Abram erected an altar, and Jacob later renamed the city “Bethel”. Bethel became the center of Jeroboam’s idolatrous cult in the northern kingdom, instituted to rival the Temple in Jerusalem in the south. It continued as an Israelite royal sanctuary into the time of the prophets. Not until the time of Josiah was the altar of Jeroboam destroyed.

Amos is what God wants from his people: He seeks God (5:4, 5:6), he seeks good (5:14-15), he grieves over the ruin of Joseph (6:6)

14 Then Amos answered Amaziah, ‘I am no prophet, nor a prophet’s son; but I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees, 15and the Lord took me from following the flock, and the Lord said to me, “Go, prophesy to my people Israel.”   
16 ‘Now therefore hear the word of the Lord.  
You say, “Do not prophesy against Israel,  
   and do not preach against the house of Isaac.”   
17 Therefore, thus says the Lord:  
“Your wife shall become a prostitute in the city,  
   and your sons and your daughters shall fall by the sword,  
   and your land shall be parcelled out by line;  
you yourself shall die in an unclean land,  
   and Israel shall surely go into exile away from its land.” ’ [also 7:11]

7:14: Amos says, “I don’t earn my keep as a prophet. If God hadn’t called, I’d still be in the fields near Tekoa.” He’s not doing this to “earn his bread” but because God called him.

7:16: Amaziah tries to censure Amos’ prophecy of the sword, but it therefore comes back around to himself and his family.

7:16: see 2:12: this is one of the sins that began this whole tirade against Israel to begin with. If they are willing to silence the prophets, they are certainly willing to silence those calling out the silencing of prophets.

The king paid Amaziah’s salary, and Amaziah told him what he wanted to hear. How are we tempted to gather around us people who will be like Amaziah, saying what we like to hear—even at the expense of the truth?

8:1: The fourth vision: the time is ripe for God’s people Israel. It is harvest (judgment) time.

8:2: “pass them by” See the note at 7:8 Overlooked judgment no more. Now judgment is here. Prepare to meet your doom… A prophecy of non-forgiveness.

8:5: festivals and sabbaths are interruptions in their economic life—they can’t cheat people on the sabbath, so they are simply frustrated with it.

8:5: the ephah (measure of grain) small and shekel (cost of grain) great: inflation, cheating the buyers of grain, injustice to the poor

8:6: see 2:6: poor = needy = righteous. Injustice done to the poor for trifling sums that destroy lives

8:8: the land trembles, see earthquake, 1:2

8:1 This is what the Lord God showed me—a basket of summer fruit. 2He said, ‘Amos, what do you see?’ And I said, ‘A basket of summer fruit.’ Then the Lord said to me, 4  
‘The end has come upon my people Israel;  
   I will never again pass them by.   
3 The songs of the temple shall become wailings on that day,’   
says the Lord God;  
‘the dead bodies shall be many, cast out in every place. Be silent!’

4 Hear this, you that trample on the needy,  
   and bring to ruin the poor of the land,   
5 saying, ‘When will the new moon be over so that we may sell grain;  
and the sabbath, so that we may offer wheat for sale?  
We will make the ephah small and the shekel great,  
   and practise deceit with false balances,   
6 buying the poor for silver and the needy for a pair of sandals,  
   and selling the sweepings of the wheat.’

7 The Lord has sworn by the pride of Jacob:  
Surely I will never forget any of their deeds.   
8 Shall not the land tremble on this account,  
   and everyone mourn who lives in it,  
and all of it rise like the Nile,  
   and be tossed about and sink again, like the Nile of Egypt?

9 On that day, says the Lord God,  
   I will make the sun go down at noon,  
   and darken the earth in broad daylight.   
10 I will turn your feasts into mourning,  
   and all your songs into lamentation;  
I will bring sackcloth on all loins,  
   and baldness on every head;  
I will make it like the mourning for an only son,  
   and the end of it like a bitter day.

8:9: God is rattling the foundations of the world; he is shaking the sieve (9:9)

8:9-10: sun go down at noon: on the day of mourning for God’s son. God understands what mourning an only son’s death is like. He’s done it.

8:11-14: The people of Israel took the words of the LORD for granted; they took the prophets and the Law for granted. Soon will come a time when people will hunger and thirst for what they previously rejected.

Just as disobedience brings a famine of hearing God’s word, obeidience brings clarity from God regarding his will.

8:12: seeking the word of the Lord but not finding it: the intertestamental period, without prophets speaking the word of God.

8:13-14: those who relied on the permanence of long forgotten gods will fall and themselves be forgotten.

9:1: the earthquake is coming that cannot be avoided, no one fleeing from the destruction will escape. The only escape is to flee TO the LORD, repenting and seeking God. Otherwise, they will die. If they don’t ask for mercy or forgiveness, if they don’t listen to the prophets, they will die.

God’s own reputation as a righteous God is at stake. He will let no one escape because his justice would be called into question.

11 The time is surely coming, says the Lord God,  
   when I will send a famine on the land;  
not a famine of bread, or a thirst for water,  
   but of hearing the words of the Lord.   
12 They shall wander from sea to sea,  
   and from north to east;  
they shall run to and fro, seeking the word of the Lord,  
   but they shall not find it.

13 In that day the beautiful young women and the young men  
   shall faint for thirst.   
14 Those who swear by Ashimah of Samaria,  
   and say, ‘As your god lives, O Dan’,  
and, ‘As the way of Beer-sheba lives’—  
   they shall fall, and never rise again.

9:1 I saw the Lord standing beside the altar, and he said: 5  
Strike the capitals until the thresholds shake,  
   and shatter them on the heads of all the people;  
and those who are left I will kill with the sword;  
   not one of them shall flee away, not one of them shall escape.

2 Though they dig into Sheol, from there shall my hand take them;  
though they climb up to heaven, from there I will bring them down.   
3 Though they hide themselves on the top of Carmel,  
   from there I will search out and take them;  
and though they hide from my sight at the bottom of the sea,  
   there I will command the sea-serpent, and it shall bite them.   
4 And though they go into captivity in front of their enemies,  
   there I will command the sword, and it shall kill them;  
and I will fix my eyes on them for harm and not for good.

5 The Lord, God of hosts, he who touches the earth and it melts,  
   and all who live in it mourn, and all of it rises like the Nile,  
   and sinks again, like the Nile of Egypt;   
6 who builds his upper chambers in the heavens,  
   and founds his vault upon the earth;  
who calls for the waters of the sea,  
   and pours them out upon the surface of the earth—the Lord is his name.

9:5-6: One again Amos reminds people of God’s power and might, and ends with the refrain, “The Lord is his name.” See 4:13, 5:8.

9:7: “Are you not like the Ethiopians to me?” Israel would say, “NO!” Like John the Baptist saying, “I tell you God can raise these stones into children of Abraham.” Your being chosen people should make you grateful, not proud. You are better off because you have been chosen, but you are no better than other nations. I led you up from Egupt, but I did the same to other groups…

9:8: the final instance of the remnant theme (see 5:15; 5:3, 3:120.

9:10: the worst sin of pride, of complacency, thinking that God is always on our side, resting in our own status as God’s people, assuming God is blind to the injustices we tolerate, practice, celebrate, normalize.

9:11ff: As Amos embodied the plumbline for Israel, so Israel should have been the prophet or plumbline for the nations. Its role, to reveal the word of God, was not accomplished.

9:12: God’s desire is to rule among the nations. All families derive their name from God (Eph 3) and all will be blessed by his seed and plan in the person of Jesus.

9:13: future happy day, when God reverses the judgments of his people. God will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, and there will be a day of rebuilding.

7 Are you not like the Ethiopians to me, O people of Israel? says the Lord.  
Did I not bring Israel up from the land of Egypt,  
   and the Philistines from Caphtor and the Arameans from Kir?   
8 The eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom,  
   and I will destroy it from the face of the earth  
   —except that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, says the Lord.

9 For lo, I will command, and shake the house of Israel among all the nations  
as one shakes with a sieve, but no pebble shall fall to the ground.   
10 All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword,  
   who say, ‘Evil shall not overtake or meet us.’

11 On that day I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen,  
and repair its breaches, and raise up its ruins,  
   and rebuild it as in the days of old;   
12 in order that they may possess the remnant of Edom  
   and all the nations who are called by my name,  
   says the Lord who does this.

13 The time is surely coming, says the Lord,  
   when the one who ploughs shall overtake the one who reaps,  
   and the treader of grapes the one who sows the seed;  
the mountains shall drip sweet wine,  
   and all the hills shall flow with it.   
14 I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel,  
   and they shall rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them;  
they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine,  
   and they shall make gardens and eat their fruit.   
15 I will plant them upon their land,  
   and they shall never again be plucked up  
   out of the land that I have given them, says the Lord your God.