



## Lesson 173

# Amos Prophecies the Fall of Israel

### Story Elements

- **Text:** Amos 1:1-9:15
- **Setting:** circa 763-755 B.C. in Tekoa (Judah) and Bethel (Northern Israel)
- **Main Characters:** God, Amos, Jeroboam II (king of northern Israel) and Amaziah priest of Bethel.
- **Plot:** Amos prophecies of coming judgment against idolatrous northern Israel.
- **Key word(s):** “For three transgressions and for \_\_\_\_\_” is a phrase appears in 1:3, 1:6, 1:9, 1:11, 1:13, and 2:1. It is a phrase shows that the nations' iniquities have

reached the brim of the cup of God’s patience and now it will overflow in God’s judgment.

- **Climax: Amos 9:10** *All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword, Which say, The evil shall not overtake nor prevent us.* This verse mark the climax because it is a declaration of judgment that appears just before the closing passage which promises a coming messianic blessing of Israel which includes the Gentiles.

### Background

1. (1:1; 7:14) Amos was a shepherd and a \_\_\_\_\_ fruit farmer. He lived in Tekoa, which was a town 10 miles south of Jerusalem.
  - a. Amos lived in the time after the division of the kingdom during Rehoboam’s reign.
  - b. Though from southern Judea, Amos’ message was primarily aimed at the northern tribes of Israel. He preached during the reign of Jeroboam II of Israel and Uzziah of Judah.

### “For Three Transgressions and for Four”

2. (1:2) Amos begins his prophetic sermons by comparing the LORD to a lion roaring from Jerusalem. That the Lion roars from Jerusalem is a reminder to the northern tribes that their spiritual identity remains in \_\_\_\_\_, not in the pagan shrines of Bethel or Dan established by Jeroboam. Amos gives short, yet scathing indictments against surrounding nations before focusing on Israel.
  - a. (1:3-2:3) Amos indicts the capital cities of Damascus, Gaza, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, and Moab for their oppression and \_\_\_\_\_.
  - b. (2:4-5) Before turning his attention to Israel, Amos rebukes his own country Judah for despising the Law of the LORD and failing to keep the commandments.
  - c. (2:1-16) In this final section of the “for three transgressions and for four,” God condemns Israel for enslavement of the vulnerable, corruption of religion, and rejection of prophetic warnings. *Amos 2:12 But ye gave the \_\_\_\_\_ wine to drink; And commanded the prophets, saying, Prophecy not.*

### “Prepare to Meet Thy God”

3. (3:1-3) The LORD reminds Israel that they are a chosen people that have a special relationship with God – different than all the other nations. Such a relationship makes their wickedness all the more vile. *Amos 3:2 You only have I \_\_\_\_\_ of all the families of the earth: Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.*

APPLICATION → “The distinguishing favours of God to us, if they do not serve to restrain us from sin, shall not serve to exempt us from punishment.”<sup>1</sup>

4. (4:1-3) Amos rebukes the rich, drunken \_\_\_\_\_ of Samaria (the kine of Bashan) and warns that they will all be led out of their palaces through the ruins of their defensive walls.

<sup>1</sup> Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 1506.

- a. (4:4-5) Amos uses sarcasm as an indictment against Israel's continuing idolatry.
  - b. (4:6-13) Amos lists the many ways that God has chastised Israel, and five times it is repeated, *Yet have ye not returned unto me*. Since the nation would not come to God in repentance, he will come to them in \_\_\_\_\_. Hence: **Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.** Amos 4:12
5. (5:1-27) Chapter five tells Israel how they should prepare themselves to face God in his day of visitation: **Amos 5:4** *For thus saith the Lord unto the house of Israel, \_\_\_\_\_ ye me, and ye shall live; Amos 5:14 \_\_\_\_\_ good, and not evil, that ye may live;*
  6. (6:1-14) The coming judgment would be so severe that God's name will no longer be abused, or even revered, but \_\_\_\_\_. "Formerly ye boasted in the name of Jehovah, as if ye were His peculiar people; now ye shall be silent and shudder at His name...as one from whom ye wish to be hidden, [Calvin]."<sup>2</sup>

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## “I Will Not Again Pass by Them Anymore”

7. (7:1-9) Amos sees a vision of devouring locusts and a destroying fire.
  - a. After both visions, Amos pleaded for mercy, and God relented.
  - b. In a third vision, Amos sees a \_\_\_\_\_ line. He prays for mercy upon Israel, but this time, God refuses, saying, *I will not again pass by them any more.* (v 8)
8. (7:10-17) Amaziah, a pagan priest of Bethel, bids Amos to depart, but Amos rebukes the idolater and warns him that the LORD will indeed judge Israel and Amaziah's family will be destroyed.
9. (8:1-3) In a fourth vision, Amos sees a basket of summer fruit, ripened by the sun. This was an object lesson of Israel's sin becoming ripe for \_\_\_\_\_. Again God says, *I will not again pass by them any more.* (v 2)
10. (8:4-14) Amos decries the greed and oppression of Israel and warns of a coming famine, *Not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, But of hearing the \_\_\_\_\_ of the LORD.*

APPLICATION → “Surely [God] was angry indeed with them when he would no more speak to them as he had done, and had abandoned them to ruin when he would no more afford them the means of bringing them to \_\_\_\_\_.”<sup>3</sup>

11. (9:1-10) In the fifth and final vision, Amos sees the LORD standing atop Bethel's altar and commanding it be demolished. The LORD makes one more final pronouncement of total destruction, *All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword.* (v 10) Amos' prophecy was fulfilled in \_\_\_\_\_ B.C. when the Assyrians conquered the northern tribes of Israel and dispersed the population into Gentile lands. (cf. 2 Kings 17)
12. (9:11-15) In the final verses, God promises a coming restoration of Israel. In Acts 15:15-17, James said this prophecy was fulfilled in \_\_\_\_\_, whose gospel brings the gentiles under the throne of David.

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**Answer Key:** Key word(s): four • 1. sycamore • 2. Jerusalem; a. war crimes; c. Nazarites • 3. known • 4. women; b. judgment • 5. seek; seek • 6. feared • 7. b. plumb • 9. judgment • 10. words • 11. 722 • 12. Jesus Christ

<sup>2</sup> Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*, vol. 1 (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), 676.

<sup>3</sup> Henry, 1517.