

Amos' Prophecy to Israel – Part 2 (c. 760 BC)

Amos 3–6

Cause and Effect—Sin Brings Judgment

3:1 Listen, you Israelites, to this message which the LORD is proclaiming against you! This message is for the entire clan I brought up from the land of Egypt:

- 2 “I have chosen you alone from all the clans of the earth.
Therefore I will punish you for all your sins.”
- 3 Do two walk together without having met?
- 4 Does a lion roar in the woods if he has not cornered his prey?
Does a young lion bellow from his den if he has not caught something?
- 5 Does a bird swoop down into a trap on the ground if there is no bait?
Does a trap spring up from the ground unless it has surely caught something?
- 6 If an alarm sounds in a city, do people not fear?
If disaster overtakes a city, is the LORD not responsible?
- 7 Certainly the sovereign LORD does nothing without first revealing his plan to his servants the prophets.
- 8 A lion has roared! Who is not afraid?
The sovereign LORD has spoken! Who can refuse to prophesy?

9 Make this announcement in the fortresses of Ashdod and in the fortresses in the land of Egypt. Say this:

- “Gather on the hills around Samaria!
Observe the many acts of violence taking place within the city,
the oppressive deeds occurring in it.”
- 10 “They do not know how to do what is right.” (The LORD is speaking.)
“They store up the spoils of destructive violence in their fortresses.
- 11 Therefore,” says the sovereign LORD, “an enemy will encircle the land.
He will take away your power; your fortresses will be looted.”

12 This is what the LORD says:

- “Just as a shepherd salvages from the lion’s mouth a couple of leg bones or a piece of an ear,
so the Israelites who live in Samaria will be salvaged.
They will be left with just a corner of a bed,
and a part of a couch.”
- 13 Listen and warn the family of Jacob!
The sovereign LORD, the God who commands armies, is speaking!
- 14 “Certainly when I punish Israel for their covenant transgressions,
I will destroy Bethel’s altars.
The horns of the altar will be cut off and fall to the ground.
- 15 I will destroy both the winter and summer houses.
The houses filled with ivory will be ruined,
the great houses will be swept away.”
The LORD is speaking!

Condemnation of Samaria’s Self-serving Women

4:1 Listen to this message, you cows of Bashan who live on Mount Samaria! You oppress the poor; you crush the needy. You say to your husbands, “Bring us more to drink!”

2 The sovereign LORD confirms this oath by his own holy character:

- “Certainly the time is approaching
when you will be carried away in baskets,
every last one of you in fishermen’s pots.
- 3 Each of you will go straight through the gaps in the walls;
you will be thrown out toward Harmon.”
The LORD is speaking!

Condemnation of Israel's Worship

- 4 "Go to Bethel and rebel!
At Gilgal rebel some more!
Bring your sacrifices in the morning,
your tithes on the third day!
- 5 Burn a thank offering of bread made with yeast!
Make a public display of your voluntary offerings!
For you love to do this, you Israelites."
The sovereign LORD is speaking!

Condemnation of Israel's Stubbornness

- 6 "But surely I gave you no food to eat in any of your cities;
you lacked food everywhere you live.
Still you did not come back to me."
The LORD is speaking!
- 7 "I withheld rain from you three months before the harvest.
I gave rain to one city, but not to another.
One field would get rain, but the field that received no rain dried up.
- 8 People from two or three cities staggered into one city to get water,
but remained thirsty.
Still you did not come back to me."
The LORD is speaking!
- 9 "I destroyed your crops with blight and disease.
Locusts kept devouring your orchards, vineyards, fig trees, and olive trees.
Still you did not come back to me."
The LORD is speaking!
- 10 "I sent against you a plague like one of the Egyptian plagues.
I killed your young men with the sword,
along with the horses you had captured.
I made the stench from the corpses rise up into your nostrils.
Still you did not come back to me."
The LORD is speaking!
- 11 "I overthrew some of you the way God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.
You were like a burning stick snatched from the flames.
Still you did not come back to me."
The LORD is speaking!
- 12 "Therefore this is what I will do to you, Israel.
Because I will do this to you,
prepare to meet your God, Israel!
- 13 For here he is!
He formed the mountains and created the wind.
He reveals his plans to men.
He turns the dawn into darkness
and marches on the heights of the earth.
The LORD, the God who commands armies, is his name!"

Funeral Song for Fallen Israel

5:1 Listen to this funeral song I am ready to sing about you, family of Israel:

- 2 "The virgin Israel has fallen down
and will not get up again.
She is abandoned on her own land
with no one to help her get up."

3 The sovereign LORD says this:

"The city that marches out with a thousand soldiers
will have only a hundred left;

the town that marches out with a hundred soldiers
will have only ten left for the family of Israel.”

4 The LORD says this to the family of Israel:

“Seek me so you can live!

5 Do not seek Bethel!

Do not visit Gilgal!

Do not journey down to Beer Sheba!

For the people of Gilgal will certainly be carried into exile;
and Bethel will become a place where disaster abounds.”

6 Seek the LORD so you can live!

Otherwise he will break out like fire against Joseph’s family;
the fire will consume

and no one will be able to quench it and save Bethel.

7 The Israelites turn justice into bitterness;

they throw what is fair and right to the ground.

8 (But there is one who made the constellations Pleiades and Orion;

he can turn the darkness into morning and daylight into night.

He summons the water of the seas

and pours it out on the earth’s surface.

The LORD is his name!

9 He flashes destruction down upon the strong

so that destruction overwhelms the fortified places.)

10 The Israelites hate anyone who arbitrates at the city gate;

they despise anyone who speaks honestly.

11 Therefore, because you make the poor pay taxes on their crops

and exact a grain tax from them,

you will not live in the houses you built with chiseled stone,

nor will you drink the wine from the fine vineyards you planted.

12 Certainly I am aware of your many rebellious acts

and your numerous sins.

You torment the innocent, you take bribes,

and you deny justice to the needy at the city gate.

13 For this reason whoever is smart keeps quiet in such a time,

for it is an evil time.

14 Seek good and not evil so you can live!

Then the LORD, the God who commands armies,

just might be with you, as you claim he is.

15 Hate what is wrong, love what is right!

Promote justice at the city gate!

Maybe the LORD, the God who commands armies,

will have mercy on those who are left from Joseph.

16 Because of Israel’s sins this is what the LORD, the God who commands armies, the sovereign One, says:

“In all the squares there will be wailing,

in all the streets they will mourn the dead.

They will tell the field workers to lament

and the professional mourners to wail.

17 In all the vineyards there will be wailing,

for I will pass through your midst,” says the LORD.

The “Day of the LORD”

18 Woe to those who wish for the day of the LORD!

Why do you want the LORD’s day of judgment to come?

It will bring darkness, not light.

19 Disaster will be inescapable,

as if a man ran from a lion only to meet a bear,
then escaped into a house,
leaned his hand against the wall,
and was bitten by a poisonous snake.

- 20 Don't you realize the LORD's day of judgment will bring darkness, not light—
gloomy blackness, not bright light?

Rejection of Israel's Worship

- 21 "I absolutely despise your festivals!
I get no pleasure from your religious assemblies!
- 22 Even if you offer me burnt and grain offerings, I will not be satisfied;
I will not look with favor on your peace offerings of fattened calves.
- 23 Take away from me your noisy songs;
I don't want to hear the music of your stringed instruments.
- 24 Justice must flow like torrents of water,
righteous actions like a stream that never dries up.
- 25 You did not bring me sacrifices and grain offerings
during the forty years you spent in the wilderness, family of Israel. [[Acts 7:42](#)]
- 26 You will pick up your images of Sikkuth, your king,
and Kiyyun, your star god, which you made for yourselves,
and I will drive you into exile beyond Damascus," says the LORD.
He is called the God who commands armies!

Woe Oracle against Israel

- 6:1 Woe to those who live in ease in Zion,
to those who feel secure on Mount Samaria.
They think of themselves as the elite class of the best nation.
The family of Israel looks to them for leadership.
- 2 They say to the people:
"Journey over to Calneh and look at it!
Then go from there to Hamath-Rabbah!
Then go down to Gath of the Philistines!
Are they superior to our two kingdoms?
Is their territory larger than yours?"
- 3 You refuse to believe a day of disaster will come,
but you establish a reign of violence.
- 4 They lie around on beds decorated with ivory,
and sprawl out on their couches.
They eat lambs from the flock,
and calves from the middle of the pen.
- 5 They sing to the tune of stringed instruments;
like David they invent musical instruments.
- 6 They drink wine from sacrificial bowls,
and pour the very best oils on themselves.
Yet they are not concerned over the ruin of Joseph.
- 7 Therefore they will now be the first to go into exile,
and the religious banquets where they sprawl on couches will end.

A Doomed Nation

- 8 The sovereign LORD confirms this oath by his very own life. The LORD, the God who commands armies, is speaking:

"I despise Jacob's arrogance;
I hate their fortresses.
I will hand over to their enemies the city of Samaria and everything in it."

- 9 If ten men are left in one house, they too will die.

10 When their close relatives, the ones who will burn the corpses, pick up their bodies to remove the bones from the house, they will say to anyone who is in the inner rooms of the house, "Is anyone else with you?" He will respond, "Be quiet! Don't invoke the

LORD's name!"

- 11 Indeed, look! The LORD is giving the command.
He will smash the large house to bits,
and the small house into little pieces.
- 12 Can horses run on rocky cliffs?
Can one plow the sea with oxen?
Yet you have turned justice into a poisonous plant,
and the fruit of righteous actions into a bitter plant.
- 13 You are happy because you conquered Lo-Debar.
You say, "Did we not conquer Karnaim by our own power?"
- 14 "Look! I am about to bring a nation against you, family of Israel."
The LORD, the God who commands armies, is speaking.
"They will oppress you all the way from Lebo-Hamath to the Stream of the Arabah."

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