

Introduction

For those who have undertaken all of the Walk with the Word studies on Amos, or at least studied it in its entirety, the thought may have arisen to the effect, “Where is the hope of restoration? Why is the text so fixated on judgment?” The fact is that there **IS** sin, even sin within the ranks of God’s people be they members of the Old or New Covenant, and the “bad” stuff has to be remedied before moving on to the “good” stuff. Although no one will escape judgment, there is still the biblical principle that God’s judgment first begins with His own:

¹⁷For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? ¹⁸AND IF IT IS WITH DIFFICULTY THAT THE RIGHTEOUS IS SAVED, WHAT WILL BECOME OF THE GODLESS MAN AND THE SINNER? ¹⁹Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.

1 Peter 4:17-19

Read verses 1-4

Q: This is the fifth and final vision communicated by Amos. What was the substance of the visions leading up to this one?

1. Amos 7:1-3—The vision of the locust swarm. This spoke of God’s mercy and longsuffering attitude toward His people.
2. Amos 7:4-6—The vision of fire. This affirmed yet again God’s mercy and forbearance of His people.
3. Amos 7:7-9—The vision of the plumb line. This served the notice, “*I will spare them no longer*”. (Amos 7:9)
4. Amos 8:1-3—The vision of the basket of summer fruit. This affirmed a second time, “*I will spare them no longer*”. (Amos 8:2)
5. Amos 9:1-4—The vision of the Lord at the altar. This describes God enacting and carrying out His judgment.

Point: Note that first there is a pair of warnings accompanied by God’s mercy in relenting from brining judgment before invoking a pair of warnings that there is no longer any chance of further withdrawals of His judgment before that final act of judgment is ultimately triggered. This progression shows how steadfast refusal to heed God’s Word develops into inevitable consequences for the progressively hardened of heart.

Q: What is textually different about this final vision from those previous?

A: The final one is absent of any kind of wordplay or dialogue and contains a direct command from God initiating action, “*Smite the capitals*”.

¹I saw the Lord standing beside the altar, and He said,
 “Smite the capitals so that the thresholds will shake,
 And break them on the heads of them all!
 Then I will slay the rest of them with the sword;
 They will not have a fugitive who will flee,
 Or a refugee who will escape.
²Though they dig into Sheol,
 From there will My hand take them;
 And though they ascend to heaven,
 From there will I bring them down.
³Though they hide on the summit of Carmel,
 I will search them out and take them from there;
 And though they conceal themselves from My sight on the floor of the sea,

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From there I will command the serpent and it will bite them.
4And though they go into captivity before their enemies,
From there I will command the sword that it slay them,
And I will set My eyes against them for evil and not for good.”

Q: Why is it significant to see the Lord destroying a temple?

A: This is God’s judgment of the false religious centers and system the Northern Kingdom of Israel implemented in a counterfeit of the authentic established in Jerusalem.

Q: Why is this also significant in the context of the charges God has made against the people through Amos to this point?

A: The charges have all revolved around their mistreatment of others, with only marginal mention of their worship and treatment of God. The destruction of their temple—their false worship and service of Him, is proof that such a failure was reflected in their treatment of others.

Q: How is this revealed in the nature of God’s command?

A: It is not given for just the destruction of the facility, but the worshipers within as well: “*And break them on the heads of them all!*” (v.1)

Q: But how do v.2-4 show that the judgment is not just limited to the temple or its counterfeit religion?

A: These verses are a dramatic and poetic statement that no one will be able to hide from God or the consequences of His judgment, that it is coming on all.

Observation: Take note of God’s “I will” statements to affirm that what is taking place is not a warning but His final action:

1. “...I will slay...” (v.1)
2. “...I will bring them down.” (v.2)
3. “I will search them out...” (v.3)
4. “...I will command the serpent...I will command the sword...” (v.3-4)
5. “...I will set my eyes against them...” (v.4)

²⁴“Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. ²⁵Once the head of the house gets up and shuts the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock on the door, saying, ‘Lord, open up to us!’ then He will answer and say to you, ‘I do not know where you are from.’

²⁶Then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets’; ²⁷and He will say, ‘I tell you, I do not know where you are from; DEPART FROM ME, ALL YOU EVILDOERS.’

²⁸In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but yourselves being thrown out.

Luke 13:24-28

Application: Once God’s judgment is **triggered**, the consequences are **unavoidable** and **inescapable**.

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⁵The Lord GOD of hosts,
The One who touches the land
so that it melts,
And all those who dwell in it
mourn,
And all of it rises up like the
Nile
And subsides like the Nile of
Egypt;
⁶The One who builds His
upper chambers in the
heavens
And has founded His vaulted
dome over the earth,
He who calls for the waters of
the sea
And pours them out on the
face of the earth,
The LORD is His name.

⁷“Are you not as the sons of
Ethiopia to Me,
O sons of Israel?” declares the
LORD.
“Have I not brought up Israel
from the land of Egypt,
And the Philistines from
Caphtor and the Arameans
from Kir?
⁸Behold, the eyes of the Lord
GOD are on the sinful
kingdom,
And I will destroy it from the
face of the earth;
Nevertheless, I will not totally
destroy the house of Jacob,”
Declares the LORD.
⁹“For behold, I am commanding
And I will shake the house of
Israel among all nations
As grain is shaken in a sieve,
But not a kernel will fall to the
ground.

Read verses 5-6

Q: What is the greater message provided here in the context of God’s judgment?

A: It is a reminder of God’s sovereignty. His power as Creator and Ruler over everything includes His authority over man’s behavior and actions as well.

Q: What are the three venues visited in these verses?

A: The land, the sea and the heavens.

Point: He is Creator and Ruler over all, omniscient and omnipresent.

Q: Why is there no mention of man or mankind other than to show mourning?

A: It is God alone who is in complete control.

Application: God’s **authority** is the only **authority**.

Read verses 7-10

Q: What is the point of these rhetorical questions?

A: God has acted in His sovereignty where **all** the nations are concerned, Israel included.

Q: Why would God need to point that out?

A: A recurring issue in Israel’s history, even to the present, is an over-estimation of God’s selection of them. During Amos’ time, as well as both before and after, there are those who believe this selection makes them invincible and impervious to judgment in spite of living in contradiction to His Word and ways.

Application: Do you believe because you underwent a salvation experience that you are automatically protected no matter how you live since?

Q: Why would God place His divine deliverance of Israel from Egypt on the same level as what He worked on behalf of two of Israel’s bitterest enemies in the Philistines and Arameans?

A: It is a way of showing that the difference in the calling of Israel is that it was a call for their obedience to His Word. They were supposed to be different from the rest by how they responded to God, but in the end became just like the others.

Q: How does God view Israel at this point?

A: “...the sinful kingdom”. (v.8)

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¹⁰All the sinners of My people
will die by the sword,
Those who say, 'The calamity
will not overtake or confront
us.'

Q: How might this be connecting back to the beginning of Amos?

A: In Amos 1:3-2:16, God demonstrated on a case-by-case basis how each nation's sins were shaping their respective destiny before proceeding with the expanded case of the same application to God's people.

Q: What might be the good news contained within the second half of v.8?

A: That condemnation will not come to everyone just because of citizenship alone, but that there will be individual exemption.

Q: How does v.9 reveal God's ultimate and specific purpose?

A: It is a process by which the apostate—the sinners among God's people, are separated from the faithful remnant.

Q: To what is this process likened?

A: To the process of cleaning grain through a sieve.

"His winnowing fork is in His hand to thoroughly clear His threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into His barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

Luke 3:17

²⁵See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven. ²⁶And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, "YET ONCE MORE I WILL SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO THE HEAVEN." ²⁷This expression, "Yet once more," denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, so that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

Hebrews 12:25-27

Q: Who is specifically stated as not surviving the process about to come?

A: "All the sinners of My people" and those who deny that what is coming is coming at the hand of God. (v.9)

Application: There is a **judgment** of the House of God which separates the **sinners** from the **remnant**.

11 "In that day I will raise up the fallen booth of David, And wall up its breaches; I will also raise up its ruins And rebuild it as in the days of old;
12 That they may possess the remnant of Edom And all the nations who are called by My name," Declares the LORD who does this.

Read verses 11-12

Q: What is the dramatic change in God's message from this point on?

A: It addresses a future restoration to take place **after** the impending judgment.

Q: Is this presented as a vision or warning?

A: No, this is an unconditional promise of God as to His ultimate working and purpose.

Q: How is this a picture of a kind of resurrection?

A: "I will also raise up" is stated twice along with "And will rebuild"

Q: What would be particularly important to Amos' listeners in God's specifying the restoration of "the fallen booth of David"?

A: David's was the only united kingdom with Solomon's ultimately dividing into its current halves. This is a dramatic way of stating that all Israel will be one again, further reinforced by the promise to "wall up its breaches"—that is, repair the divisions.

Q: Why might the calling out of Edom be important?

A: That kingdom of Edom comes from Jacob's brother Esau, both of which are sons of Abraham and therefore heirs to what was promised to all nations through him. This is followed up with the inclusion of, "And all the nations which are called by My name". This would be the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham. (Gen. 12:1-3)

Q: What is significant about the closing statement of v.12, "Declares the LORD who does this"?

A: It is an affirmation that this is an unconditional promise which is not dependent on man's reciprocal participation.

Application: The ultimate divine restoration of Israel will be a divine restoration of the whole world.

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¹³“Behold, days are coming,”
declares the LORD,
“When the plowman will
overtake the reaper
And the treader of grapes him
who sows seed;
When the mountains will drip
sweet wine
And all the hills will be
dissolved.
¹⁴Also I will restore the captivity
of My people Israel,
And they will rebuild the ruined
cities and live in them;
They will also plant vineyards
and drink their wine,
And make gardens and eat their
fruit.
¹⁵I will also plant them on their
land,
And they will not again be
rooted out from their land
Which I have given them,”
Says the LORD your God.

Read verses 13-15

Q: What is the difference in the working of restoration in this section from the previous? How has the emphasis changed?

A: The previous addressed the issue of the restoration of the *nation* of Israel; here is presented the restoration of the *land* of Israel.

Q: What are the promises provided in v.13-15?

1. (v.13) The land will be productive. This seems to be a description of the reversal of the curse imposed because of Adam (Gen. 3:17-19)
2. (v.14) The land will be inhabited. This seems to be a description of revisiting the Garden of Eden and man's life before the Fall.
3. (v.15) The land will experience peace. This seems to refer to the Garden before the serpent as the enemy arrived to incite sin and trouble.

Q: How does Amos' message seem to greatly differ from that of Hosea, Micah, Isaiah, Jeremiah or Ezekiel?

A: There is no specific mention of the Messiah; the focus is on the restoration of the Davidic kingdom which these parallel Scriptures will fully develop and categorically associate with the working and rule of the Messiah.

Application: God is not *through* with Israel; there is a *final* work yet to come.

Overall Application

It is a future divine work of God bringing life rather than death, prosperity and peace rather than disaster and captivity, restoration rather than destruction. Whereas there are most certainly dire consequences for the sinful as expressed in the v.1-10 of this closing chapter, there are likewise surpassing rewards for the faithful provided in v.11-15. The former are temporal and removed, the latter permanent and never to be uprooted. And most importantly, Israel's restoration will be at the forefront of everyone's restoration.

“And it shall be from new moon to new moon
And from sabbath to sabbath,
All mankind will come to bow down before Me,” says the LORD.
Isaiah 66:23

As a final point, it is unavoidable to see clear parallels between Amos and the Last Days when God's people are once again separated from the unfaithful in the process of establishing the Millennial Kingdom. Likewise it is difficult not to notice the same parallels of apostasy and ill-behavior being exhibited at present within the walls of the Church which were present among God's people of Amos' time.

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