

AMOS

The man: The unusual circumstances of this prophecy are brought out when we consider certain things about Amos himself.

- 1/ He prophesied in Israel, but he was a native of Tekoa, which was south of Bethlehem ~~6 mi.~~ ^{from Beth.} in Judah. This would cause the people of Israel to respond to his message with a great deal of indignation, and was primarily the reason for Amaziah's opposition to him as recorded in 7:10-13.
- 2/ He was not a prominent person, but an unknown shepherd with adequate but limited means.
- 3/ He was "no prophet, neither . . . a prophet's son," i.e., a prophet's pupil. His right to do what he was doing is stated in 1:1 and 7:15.

4/ *He prophesied at the height of Israel's prosperity. Therefore, his warning*
Therefore, we have another example of the divine principle stated in 1 Cor. 1:27, 28, 29, "But God hath chosen the . . . things which are not, to bring to nothing things that are, That no flesh should glory in his presence."

Two biographical sections in the book: 1:1; 7:10-17.

The date: This is clearly stated in 1:1, "In the days of Uzziah, king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam (II), the son of Joash, king of Israel." This would mean that he prophesied during the 27 or 28 years when these men were ruling over their respective nations. The years are 810-783 B.C. Amos did not prophesy all of this time. It is impossible to say how long ~~how long~~ he did prophesy. He says that it was "two years before the earthquake," but the only reference we have to this is in Zech. 14:5. Earthquakes were (and shall be) a form of judgment used by God. Cf. Amos 8:8. These details are all the information that we have.

The style: Amos uses repetition in a most effective way, and at several different places throughout the book. The important ones (from the standpoint of the numbers of time a statement is repeated) are in chs. 1, 2, 4, 9.

- 1/ "Thus saith the Lord: For three transgressions of Damascus (1:3)
 - Gaza (1:6)
 - Tyre (1:9)
 - Edom (1:11)
 - Ammon (1:13)
 - Moab (2:1)
 - Judah (2:4)
 - Israel (2:6),

and for four, I will not turn away its (their-1:13) punishment because . . ."

- 2/ "But I will send fire (kindle-1:14) into the house of Hazael (1:4)
 - on the wall of Gaza (1:7)
 - on the wall of Tyre (1:10)
 - upon Teman (1:12)
 - in the wall of Rabbah (1:14)
 - upon Moab (2:2)
 - upon Judah (2:5)

which shall devour the (or, its) palaces."

- 3/ "Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord" (4:6, 8, 9, 10, 11).
- 4/ "Though they . . . there" (9:2, 3--2x, 4).

These indicate simplicity, but also give force to his message.

→ Theme: The Absolute Certainty of Divine Judgment.

The book: I. Introduction (Amos 1, 2). There are seven nations mentioned (including Judah), and then Israel. The extended space given to Israel indicates that the prophecy is primarily for her.

God is speaking against "transgressions" regardless of the nations that is guilty. The numbers indicate a multiplicity of sins.

II. Four Discourses On Judgment (Amos 3-6). These are divided as the four chapters are divided in the book. *Amos speaks of 4 reasons for the*

A. First Message: Israel's sins make judgment certain (Amos 3). *certainty*

B. Second Message: Israel's failure to repent even though God has judged her before in many ways, makes judgment certain (Amos 4). *of judgment.*

- C. Third Message (Amos 5): Judgment is certain in the hope that Israel will yet repent, and seek the Lord. If they think the day of the Lord is what they want, they will find that it will be a time of judgment for them, and not blessing (cf. vv. 18-20). Also, if they think that their observance of feast days, their offerings, or their songs, can please God, then they are mistaken in this also.
 - D. Fourth Message (Amos 6). Judgment is certain because of the people in Israel (and Judah) who do not think that judgment will come in their day.
- III. Five Visions Of Judgment (7:1-9:10).
- A. First Vision (7:1-3). The first two visions give essentially the same message: that the Lord will not completely destroy "Jacob" by judgments. On the significance of repetition in Scripture, cf. Gen. 41:32.
This first vision is of a plague of locusts (KJV: "grasshoppers").
 - B. The Second Vision (7:4-6). This is a plague of fire. The significance is the same as the first, due to the intercession of Amos.
 - C. The Third Vision (7:7-9). This vision is of a plumb line, indicating the righteous standard by which God will judge His people. In particular, it is a prediction of the downfall of Jeroboam's house.
 - D. Historical Interlude (7:10-17). Since the third vision would raise the anger of those close to the king, we are told how Amos was warned by the priest, Amaziah, who told him to go back to Judah. Amos, not only continues, but his prophecies of judgment become even more intense.
 - E. The Fourth Vision (Amos 8). This is of "a basket of summer fruit," evidently an indication that Israel was ripe for judgment. Note that v. 8 seems to refer to an earthquake, as in 1:1. The nature of the judgments is indicated in vv. 9-14.
 - F. The Fifth Vision (9:1-10): of the Lord standing upon the altar. Note the repeated expression, "Though they . . . there," in vv. 2, 3 (2x), 4. With the sacrifices rejected and cut off, nothing can spare the people from judgment.
- IV. A Message of Hope (9:11-15): Judgment will be followed by blessing when the the Lord comes to establish His kingdom on the earth. Israel will be re-gathered to the land, and never driven out of it again.