

Amos

Amos burst on the scene of the northern kingdom with the terror and surprise of a lion's roar. He pronounces judgment on the nations, beginning with those more distant and gradually pronounces God's judgment on those who are nearer and finally on Judah and even Israel itself.

The book was placed third in the Hebrew 'Book of the Twelve' (*or, the Minor Prophets*) but the LXX places it second: Hosea, Amos, Micah, Joel.

Amos seems to appear on the scene briefly, possibly between 760-755 BCE. The date of the book as we now have it can not be readily determined. Scholars are divided in their understanding of the book with respect to authorship. Some feel that the entire book is from the hand of Amos. Others feel that it is a compilation with many later interpolations and that most of the book reflects elaboration by later writers. For more detailed information cf. The Book of Amos A commentary by Jorg Jeremias. The book is well written and reflects careful preparation. Amos was the first of the Hebrew prophets to leave a lengthy record of his prophetic message.

The name Amos means "burden" or "burden bearer." He reports that he was a sheep breeder from Tekoa. There is a Tekoa about 7 1/2 miles west of Capernaum and a Tekoa about 6 miles south of Bethlehem, i. e. 10 miles south of Jerusalem, present day Khirbet Taqu'a, which seems the most likely location. He raised, and apparently marketed, sheep and also was a dresser of sycamore figs. He was adamant that he was not a prophet but was so disturbed by the religious and political situation of his time that he journeyed to Israel to speak out. As a result a new chapter of Hebrew prophecy began.

One can readily see Amos, in the quiet of the Judean hills, meditating on God and God's dealings with his people. Then arriving in Bethel, Israel, and being shocked by what he saw. This resulted in his feeling that he was called of God to speak out. Obviously this is not an examination of the depth of the prophet's understanding and feelings.

In a series of five visions Amos saw the day of doom as being close at hand. He warned people to prepare to meet their God. For those who loved God, Amos had a word of hope. The day was near at hand, he felt, when the kingdom of David would be re-established and God's people would be able to dwell in safety. The key thought seems to be 5:15.

He prophesied during the reign of Jeroboam II which would date his writings in the mid 8th century.

Amos

<CHAPTER 1>

I Oracles against the nation 1:1-2:16

A Subscription 1:1-2

¹ The words of Amos, ¹ a breeder of sheep, ² from the town of Tekoa ³ who had visions concerning ⁴ Israel in the days of Uzziah, ⁵ king of Judah and in the days of Jeroboam ⁶ the son of Joash, ⁷ king of Israel, two years (*or, during two years*) before the earthquake. ⁸ ² Amos proclaimed:

"The Lord roars from Zion,
and shouts loudly from Jerusalem;
the pasture land of the shepherds is dried up,
and the top of Carmel ⁹ withers."

B Oracles against neighboring nations 1:3-2:3

1 Damascus 1:3-5

³ The Lord declares: ¹⁰

"For three transgressions ¹¹ of Damascus (*Syria*)
and for four, I will not revoke punishment; ¹²
because they destroyed ¹³ the people of Gilead
as someone would thresh grain with sleds of iron. ¹⁴

⁴ So I will send a conflagration on the house
(*or, palace*) of Hazael, ¹⁵
and it will break down (*or, burn*) the fortress of Ben-hadad. ¹⁶

⁵ I will break down the defenses of Damascus ¹⁷
(*or, I will smash the city gate of Damascus*),

1 The name means "burden" or "burden bearer."

2 Literally: "sheep raiser" דִּקְרָן rather than a shepherd רִקְוֹב Sometimes translated "sheep master" cf. II Kings 3:4, as over against a "herder of sheep."

3 Present day Khirbet Taqu'a 6 miles south of Bethlehem.

4 Literally: "concerning saw."

5 King of Judah about 781-740 BCE. The name means "my strength is the Lord."

6 Jeroboam II ruled Israel from about 783-743 BCE. The name means "may the people increase."

7 King of Israel about 837-800 BCE. The name means "The Lord has given." An alternate spelling is Jehoash.

8 Apparently an especially violent quake which took place about 760 BCE. It is mentioned in Zechariah 14:5.

9 Literally: "head of Carmel." Carmel means "field, park or garden."

10 Hebrew: "thus the Lord said."

11 These are "acts of rebellion" in Hebrew but also assuredly acts of inhumanity. The prophet is saying nations are accountable.

12 Hebrew literally: "cause it to return." or "decrease the punishment." J. B. Phillips translates "I will not relent." NEB: "grant no reprieve." The three and the four in ancient Hebrew implied an innumerable number of transgressions. This is repeated in chapters 1 & 2.

13 Literally: "threshed."

14 Wooden sleds (*or, platforms*) with metal prongs that tore the grain from the heads and stalks as the sled was pulled over the grain lying on the threshing floor.

15 Cf. II Kings 13:3, 7. The name means "God has seen."

16 Cf. II Kings 13:22-25. Presumably Ben-hadad III who took power in about 802 BCE. The name means: "son of fierceness." The king of Damascus and Ben-hadad III were bitter enemies of Israel.

17 The chief city of Aram.

and wipe out the inhabitants of sin valley.¹⁸
and those in position of power¹⁹ in Beth-eden,²⁰
and the people of Syria will be taken to Kir."²¹

That is what the Lord declares!²²

2 *The Philistines 1:6-8*

6 The Lord declares:

"For three transgressions of Gaza²³
and for four, I will not revoke punishment,
because they exiled an entire nation
as captives, (*selling them as slaves*)²⁴ to Edom.²⁵

7 So I will torch the wall of Gaza
and its fortress will burn.

8 I will remove the inhabitants of Ashdod,²⁶
and destroy the power of Ashkelon;²⁷

I will strike a blow against Ekron;²⁸
and those Philistines, even those who survived all this, will perish."

That is what the Lord declares!

3 *Tyre 1:9-10*

9 The Lord declares:

"For the three transgressions of Tyre,²⁹
and for four, I will not revoke the punishment;
because they carried³⁰ the entire nation of Edom into exile,
and disregarded the existing friendship treaty.³¹

10 So I will send a conflagration on the city of Tyre,
and it will burn down their fortress."

18 Literally: "Valley of Aven" or "On." The translation of the name of the valley is: "sin valley" which seems to be the intention of Amos. A fertile plain in the Aramaean kingdom. Possibly Baalbeck. The reference can be the "Beqa" valley, though scholars are beginning to consider Bit-adini along the Euphrates river as a possibility based on E. Sellin's Das Zwölfprophetenbuch. The name seems intended to be derogatory.

19 Literally: "hold the scepter."

20 Many scholars feel that "valley of Aven" and "Beth-eden" are names that stand for Damascus. In Hebrew Beth-eden sounds like the Hebrew words for "valley of iniquity" on the banks of the Euphrates river.

21 The location of Kir is uncertain.

22 Literally: "says the Lord." J. B. Phillips translates: "This is what the Lord declares."

23 One of the Philistine cities. The name means "a strong place."

24 Clearly the sense of the Hebrew words is that of delivering a group of captives to be enslaved.

25 The name means "red."

26 The name means "stronghold, fortress."

27 Literally: "destroy the holder of the scepter of Ashkelon." The name means "holm-oak."

28 Literally: "cause to return my hand against Ekron." Ekron means "extermination." Interestingly Gath, one of the five Philistine cities, is not mentioned. Cf. OTL for possible explanations.

29 A seaport city of the Phoenicians. Present day Lebanon.

30 The Hebrew word could also mean to "extradite."

31 Cf. I Kings 5:26; 9:12-13.

4 Edom 1:11-12

11 The Lord declares:

"For the three transgressions of Edom
and for four, I will not revoke the punishment;
because they hunted down their own relatives with the sword,³²
and disregarding³³ all mercy (*or, compassion*);
and their fury persisted,³⁴
and their wrath never ceased (*or, was unchecked*).³⁵

12 So I will set the city of Teman³⁶ in flames
and it will raze the fortress of Bozrah."³⁷

5 Ammon 1:13-15

13 The Lord declares:

"For three transgressions of the Ammonites³⁸
and the four, I will not revoke punishment,
because they have disemboweled the pregnant women of Gilead,
in order to enlarge their territory.

14 So I will bring down the wall of Rabbah³⁹ with fire,
and it will consume the fortress.

There will be battle cries⁴⁰ as the battle rages
like a storm in the day of the whirlwind;

15 and their king⁴¹ will go into exile,
along with his officers."

That is what the Lord declares!

<CHAPTER 2>

6 Moab 2:1-3

1 The Lord declares:

"For the three transgressions of Moab,
and for four, I will not revoke punishment,
because he made lime by burning
the bones of the king of Edom.⁴²

2 Because of this I will send fire on Moab,

32 The Edomites were descendants of Esau, the brother of Jacob, the ancestor of the Israelites.

33 Hebrew unclear. Literally: "corrupted." LXX: "and violated his own womb."

34 Syriac & Vulgate: "he maintained his anger perpetually." Hebrew: "and his anger tore perpetually."

35 Hebrew: "his wrath kept." LXX, Syriac & Vulgate: "he kept his wrath." Many scholars emend: "it maintained its anger continuously and its wrath remained ever alert."

36 Teman means "the south." Possibly a tribal name or place.

37 Modern Buseirah, 30 miles south east of the Dead Sea. The name means "fortress" or "sheepfold."

38 Descendants of Ammon. The name means "a people."

39 The capital city of Ammon, often called Rabbah ben Ammon. The name means "great city."

40 Literally: "shouts."

41 LXX & Vulgate vocalize the consonants differently and understand this as an allusion to the Ammonite deity Milcom or Moloch.

42 This crime violated the mores of the ancient world.

and it will burn the fortress of Keriioth,⁴³
and the people of Moab will die amid the noise of battle,
amid shouting (*or, war cries*) and trumpet sounds.
3 I will kill⁴⁴ the ruler⁴⁵ of the land,
along with the loyal officials."

That is what the Lord declares!

C The oracle against Judah 2:4-5

4 The Lord declares:

"For the three transgressions of Judah,
and for four, I will not revoke punishment,
because they have despised the Lord's statutes (*or, laws*),
not keeping his teachings.
They have been led astray by the lies (*of their false gods*),
worshipping idols just as their ancestors already had done.

5 So I will destroy Judah with fire
and it will demolish the fortress (*or, palaces*) of Israel (*or, Jerusalem*)."

D Oracles against Israel 2:6-16

1 Rebellion in national life 2:6-8

6 The Lord declares:

"For three transgressions of Israel,
and for four I will not revoke punishment,
because they sell the righteous (*or, virtuous*)⁴⁶
into slavery to gain silver,
and the needy for the price of a pair of sandals ---⁴⁷
7 trampling⁴⁸ the weak and helpless (*or, ordinary people*)
into the dust of the earth,
and disregarding those who are miserable.⁴⁹
A son and even his father have sex with the same slave girl,⁵⁰
so thereby my holy name is profaned!
8 They even lie down in places intended for sacred worship,

43 Keriioth means "cities." This was the location of a shrine of the Moabite deity, Chemosh. Keriioth is mentioned on the Moabite Stone 1.13, where it is named as a site of the sanctuary of the Moabite god Chemosh. It was a leading city of Moab.

44 Literally: "cast off."

45 Literally: "executive officer" or "judge."

46 With the concept here of being innocent. MFT translates: "they sell honest folks for money."

47 I. e. debt slavery; selling debt slaves to a third party. Cf. Nehemiah 5:2 Leviticus 25:23, 47; Deuteronomy 5:12; Jeremiah 34:14.

48 Hebrew unclear. LXX: "trampling on the head" While the text is not clear there seems to be a bit of Hebrew word play in these lines in the original language.

49 So: emended. Cf. TAN for an attempt to translate the MT. The Hebrew word m^{h} can be translated as "meek, afflicted, miserable." It is descriptive of obstruction of justice for those who do not complain.

50 The Hebrew word $\text{h}^{\text{r}}\text{n}$ describes a slave girl. The Hebrew word $\text{h}^{\text{v}}\text{d}!$ is used for a temple prostitute. The Hebrew word used here normally would signify a minor. Cf. Deuteronomy 22:23-24.

on garments⁵¹ taken as collateral (*or, security*) for a loan,
and in the house of their god they drink
the wine bought with money from fines they had imposed.

9 "Yet, for your sake, I destroyed the Amorites⁵²
people who were as tall as cedar trees,
and stronger than oak trees!
They have been totally destroyed."⁵³

10 "I also brought you out of the land of Egypt,
and led you in the wilderness for forty years
and enabled you to possess the land of the Amorites.
11 I caused some of your children to be prophets,
and some of your young men to be Nazarites.⁵⁴
Isn't that true, people of Israel?"

That is what the Lord declares!

12 "But you pressured the Nazarites to break their vow,⁵⁵
and commanded the prophets,
saying, 'Do not prophesy.'"

3 *The coming judgment 2:13-16*

13 "Now therefore, I will press⁵⁶ you down
the way a cart is pressed down when overloaded.
*(or, I will make you groan
the way a cart filled with sheaves groans
or, make your steps collapse
as a cart collapses when overloaded with sheaves.)*⁵⁷
14 Not even those who are fast will find refuge,
and the strength of the powerful will become useless.⁵⁸
Even the mighty will be unable to save themselves.
15 The bowmen will not be able to stand their ground
and the fast runner will not be able to escape,
nor will those escape who are mounted cavalry.
16 At that time even the bravest soldiers (*or, warriors*)

51 The Hebrew word for a coat is **בִּשְׂמֹנֶת** which must be returned to the owner at night. Cf. Exodus 22:26-27, Deuteronomy 24:12 ff. Amos, however, uses **בִּשְׂמֹנֶת** a more general term for a covering of the body, not the term used for a garment that must be returned but a more simple garment.

52 A word used for a general term for all the people who lived in Canaan at the time of Israel's taking over the land.

53 Literally: "I destroyed his fruit above, and his roots beneath."

54 Cf. Numbers 6:1-21. Cf. also: Judges 13:5, 7; 16:17. The word Nazarite means "the separated ones."

55 I. e. to drink wine.

56 Hebrew unclear. **סָדַד** is variously translated. "pieces, weighed down, totter, groan, creak, shake, break off, crush." Jeremias translates: "split the ground open beneath you."

57 Jeremias again uses the thought of the cart being split open in this stich.

58 Hebrew unclear.

will flee naked (*or, without weapons*)."

That is what the Lord declares!

<CHAPTER 3>

II Sermons on the doom of Israel 3:1-6:14

A Amos interpretation of Israel's relationship to God 3:1-8

1 The uniqueness of election 3:1-2

¹ "O people of Israel, ⁵⁹ be attentive to this declaration the Lord has made against you concerning the entire nation which I led out of the land of Egypt."

² "Of all the nations of the earth you are the only one
I have known intimately. ⁶⁰
That is why I will punish ⁶¹ you
for all your guilty behavior (*or, wrongdoing*)."⁶²

2 The prophet's authority 3:3-8

³ "Do two people travel together,
unless they have agreed to do so? ⁶³
⁴ Does the lion roar in the brush (*or, thicket*), ⁶⁴
unless he has found some prey?
Does a young lion ⁶⁵ growl ⁶⁶ in his den, ⁶⁷
unless he has caught something?
⁵ Does a bird swoop down to get caught in a trap,
if the trap is not baited? ⁶⁸
Does a trap spring
when nothing has tripped it? ⁶⁹
⁶ Is a signal (*or, ram's horn*) blown in a city,
without causing fear in the people?
Is the disaster that befalls a city,
beyond the control (*or, power*) of the Lord?
⁷ Surely ⁷⁰ the Lord God does not take any action,
without revealing his plan (*or, secrets*)

59 LXX: "House of Israel" perhaps to match 5:1, 25; 6:1.

60 Hebrew: 3\$1 Cf. Der Prophet Hosea by Jeremias p. 51 for additional information about the meaning of the word and the implications of "to know."

61 Literally: "visit." .w1-3 985 i. e. a visitation for judgment.

62 Hosea's terms for guilt %&-3 & %-&3 are more comprehensive than that of Amos: 0&3

63 LXX: "Except they know each other." This involves a transposition of two Hebrew letters: &3\$&1 instead of &\$3&1. Conceivably this reading of the LXX is the older one.

64 The Hebrew word means "scrub, brush, thicket." There is a different Hebrew word for forest. A western U. S. translation might be "chaparral."

65 The Hebrew reference is not a lion cub or whelp. There is a different word in Hebrew for these.

66 Literally: "give his voice."

67 So: LXX. MT: "net."

68 Literally: "if the striker is not set."

69 Hebrew unclear.

70 Literally: "for."

to his servants, the prophets.
8 When the lion roars;
who is unafraid?
The Lord God has declared:
'Who can keep from prophesying (*or, refuse to prophesy*)?'"

B The Corruption of Samaria 3:9-4:3

9 "Declare (*or, announce*) to the fortresses of Ashdod,⁷¹
as well as those of Egypt,
saying, 'Gather together on the mountains⁷² of Samaria,
and see the great terror (*or, disaster*) within her;
and the oppressions of the people.'
10 'They do not know how to be honest', declares the Lord.
There are those who amass loot
through violence⁷³ and oppression (*or, robbery*)."

2 Total destruction 3:11-12

11 Therefore the Lord⁷⁴ God declares:
"An enemy will surround (*or, invade*) the⁷⁵ land
and destroy your might.⁷⁶
and your fortune will be looted (*or, plundered*)."

12 This is what the Lord declares!

"As the shepherd re-covers two shin bones and the tip of an ear from the mouth of the lion. so also only a few people of Israel who dwell in Samaria will survive, along with the corner of a luxurious couch and part of a bed."⁷⁷

3 The fate of Bethel 3:13-15

13 "Be attentive! Testify against⁷⁸ the house of Jacob:
declares the Lord God, the Lord of Hosts!
14 On that day I will punish the people for their sins!
I will destroy the altars⁷⁹ of the town of Bethel.
and the decorative corners⁸⁰ of every altar and will be broken off
and be demolished.

71 Possibly a miswriting $\$U!w$ Ashdod. LXX: Assyria $9\&9U!w$.

72 LXX: singular.

73 Hebrew: $2/\%$ (Hamas) "brutality." Originally: "a violent act, to destroy life."

74 "Lord" is absent in the Peshitta.

75 LXX: "your."

76 Literally: "strength."

77 Hebrew uncertain. Several emendations have been suggested along with a change of word order. For "part of a bed" the MT has "camel's hump" or "head rest." Possibly the intention is: bed legs decorated with lion's leg representations. If so, Amos is apparently using different lion imagery.

78 I. e. "to warn in a threatening manner."

79 Hebrew: plural. Some translators want to make it singular or emend by changing $twxbzm$ (altars) for $tb[m]$ pillars.

80 Literally: "horns." Cf. I Kings 1:50; 2:28 concerning the fugitive being safe when holding fast to a horn of the altar. Cf. also Exodus 27:1; 30:10. Thus every safe refuge will be destroyed.

15 I will tear down the winter house along with the summer house;⁸¹
and the houses decorated with ivory⁸² will be demolished
and the great houses (*or, many houses*)⁸³ will be destroyed."

That is what the Lord declares!⁸⁴

<CHAPTER 4>

4 *The selfish greed of the women 4:1-3*

1 "Be attentive to this! Women (*or, aristocratic women*) of Samaria,
who have become as well fed, like the cows⁸⁵ of Bashan,⁸⁶
for you defraud the poor and mistreat⁸⁷ them.

It is you who make demands on their husbands;⁸⁸

'Bring that we⁸⁹ might drink (*or, might carouse*).'⁹⁰

2 The Lord God has sworn by his holiness (*or, glory*):

be aware for the days will come for you,
when enemies⁹¹ will drag you away with hooks,
everyone⁹² of you will be like a fish on a hook (*or, an ox goad*).⁹³

3 And you will be dragged through the broken gaps in the walls
by the most direct way,
and you will be thrown out naked."⁹⁴

That is what the Lord declares!

C *The deep-seatedness of Israel's guilt 4:4-5:3*

1 *The sin of the sanctuaries 4:4-5*

4 "Come to Bethel,⁹⁵ and sin;⁹⁶

81 Winter houses could imply the first floor which could be heated. Summer houses could mean the second floor which was an airy upper chamber. Cf. I Kings 21:1 Ahab had a winter palace in the Valley of Jezreel because of the warmer climate there.

82 Literally: "elephant teeth."

83 Some would translate "the houses of ebony."

84 J. B. Phillips aptly translates: "By order of the Lord."

85 While the Hebrew word means "cow" it could possibly an Ugaritic word: "serpents."

86 The most fertile part of Gilead along the Yarmuk river in Jordan. It became a synonym of egotistical enjoyment.

87 Literally: "flay" that is, to oppress. Originally the Hebrew word meant to break a reed or a staff, as a description of divination.

88 Hebrew: "lords."

89 Grammatically the "we" is feminine, thus the husbands apparently are excluded.

90 While the Hebrew word literally means "to drink" in later years it came to be used for "feast." Cf. Genesis 19:3.

91 Literally: "he."

92 The Hebrew word is 9;&9(! and is used again in 9:1.

93 Hebrew unclear. Since the previous reference is "cows" a "prong" or, as above, "ox goad" might better describe the thought. The Hebrew word is definitely "hook." Possibly the word "harpoon" might describe the concept. Some would like to translate the word as "fish basket."

94 Hebrew unclear. The traditional translations say "Harmon" as a location whose significance is unknown. This is done when one makes the Hebrew word be a proper noun. Some emend the word to read "Hermon" a mountain in Lebanon. The word: tnmr[can mean "naked." Cf. ICC. The MT vocalizations in this verse are unusual. Attempts have been made by the LXX to clarify this, as also in BHS.

95 Tel Beitin, 18 km. north of Jerusalem.

96 The concept is one of rebellion.

to Gilgal⁹⁷ and sin even more.
Bring your sacrifices every morning;
your tithes every third day;⁹⁸
5 offer⁹⁹ your leavened bread (*or, a cereal offering*)
as a sacrifice of thanksgiving,
and brag as you talk about your special offerings.
That is what you enjoy doing."¹⁰⁰

That is what the Lord declares!

2 *Indifference to Chastisement* 4:6-12

6 "It was I who caused famine in your land,
and lack of bread everywhere,
yet you did not return to me."

That is what the Lord declares!

7 "Yes, I also kept it from raining
when the crop needed moisture badly.¹⁰¹
I sent rain on one city
and no rain on another city;
one field would be rained on,
and the field on which it did not rain dried up.
8 People from several cities would stagger to one city,
seeking to find drinking water but were not satisfied.
Yet you did not return to me."

That is what the Lord declares!

9 "I struck¹⁰² you with blight and mildew.
Repeatedly your gardens and vineyards dried up;¹⁰³
likewise locusts devoured your fig and olive trees.
Yet you did not return to me."

That is what the Lord declares!

10 "I sent a plague on you similar to the ones in Egypt;
I killed your young men¹⁰⁴ in battle;

97 27 km. north of Jerusalem. The name Gilgal means "the circle."

98 Exaggerated zeal. Tithes were generally understood to be contributed every third year.

99 Literally: "burn" or "offer in smoke." Leavened bread was not to be a burned sacrifice.

100 Note the sarcasm. Amos points out the sacrilege of sacrifice. Each of these stichs is an imperative.

101 Literally: "three months before harvest."

102 A slight emendation. "To strike," as with a sword.

103 MT: "the multitude of." Emended to make grammatical sense. MT: ytB~xh emended to ytB~xl

104 The Hebrew word *ḥayil* could be translated: "crack troops."

I caused your horses ¹⁰⁵ to be taken as spoils of war.
The stench of the dead in your camps filled your nostrils.
Yet you did not return to me."

That is what the Lord declares!

¹¹ "I destroyed some of you, by means of an upheaval¹⁰⁶
just as Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by God.
Yet some of you survived like a
charred stick (*or, fire brand*) snatched from the blaze.
Yet you did not return to me."

That is what the Lord declares!

¹² "Therefore I will do the same to you, O Israel;
because I will punish you. ¹⁰⁷
Prepare to meet your God, O Israel
(*or, Get ready to meet the judgment!*)"

3 *The first doxology* 4:3

¹³ Take note! The one who forms the mountains ¹⁰⁸ and creates the wind,
and makes his thoughts known to humanity,
who causes the pre-dawn darkness to yield to morning light, ¹⁰⁹
and walks on the heights of the earth ---
the Lord, the God of hosts, is his name! ¹¹⁰

<CHAPTER 5>

4 *The death of a people* 5:1-3 ¹¹¹

¹ Listen to this message which I declare to you in this dirge,
O people of Israel: ¹¹²
² "The maiden (*or, virgin*) ¹¹³ of Israel
has fallen, ¹¹⁴ never to rise again;

105 Literally: "with the captivity of your horses."

106 Possibly an earthquake. This has been the usual thought of this line. More recent scholars have felt, assuming that this passage is a later interpolation into the book of Amos and that it refers to the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BCE. The understanding of the word "upheaval" depends on one's understanding of the unity or editor's insertions of Amos. Cf. introduction.

107 Several emendations have been suggested but none are favored by all scholars.

108 LXX: "who forms the thunder."

109 Some Hebrew manuscripts say: "who makes the morning light to darkness" LXX says the same.

110 The doxologies in the book of Amos are possibly hymnic fragments that together might comprise a hymn. This is the thought of recent scholars. In the past they were simply regarded as marginal remarks by pious readers or redactors.

111 The speaker is now not God but the prophet. The tense has changed. The Lord *has* spoken. Now the prophet speaks. Those spoken to are now not the people of Israel but the people of God.

112 TAN: "Hear this word which I intone, as a dirge over you, O house of Israel."

113 The Hebrew word is that of an unmarried woman though she may be engaged. Cf. Deuteronomy 22:23f.

114 As in a violent death.

abandoned (*or, prostrate*)¹¹⁵ on her own soil,
with no one to help her rise."

³ This is what the Lord God declares:

"The city that sent a thousand into battle
will have a hundred survivors;
and the town that sent a hundred into battle
will have ten survivors."

That is what the Lord declares!¹¹⁶

D Mingled exhortation and denunciation 5:4-15

1 False and true religion 5:4-6

⁴ This is what the Lord declares to the people of Israel:

"Come to me [*as you are*] and you will live,¹¹⁷
⁵ but do not go to Bethel,¹¹⁸
and do not enter Gilgal
or go as far away as Beersheba (*for worship*),
for the people of Gilgal will surely go into exile,¹¹⁹
and Bethel will be annihilated.¹²⁰

⁶ "Come to the Lord and you will live.
If you do not come to him he may permeate
the house of Joseph like fire,
and burn up the people of Bethel."¹²¹

2 Burial treatment of the poor and a second doxology 5:7-13

⁷ "You twist¹²² justice into wormwood;
(*or, You have changed justice into a bitter herb,*)
and debased¹²³ to the ground what is righteous.
⁸ It is the Lord who made the Pleiades and Orion

115 Literally: "forsaken."

116 MT adds: "to the house of Israel."

117 This brief oracle undergoes various interpretations in 5:6, 14f.

118 There is a play on words in Hebrew, here translated as "go" and "come to."

119 There is a Hebrew play on words that is something like this: "Gilgal will go to the gallows" or as Wellhausen aptly translates: "Gilgal wird zum Galgen gehen." The play on words in this chapter seems to deal with the cultic sites. Regrettably, they are difficult to translate into another language.

120 Again a play on words, aptly translated by Wellhausen as, "Bethel wird der Teufels werden." or, "Bethel will become the devil's." Remember: Bethel means the house of God. The implication in verse 3 is that these places of worship have become so alienated from God that it is as if they were haunted. Another Hebrew play on words is "Bethel" and "annihilated."

121 Hebrew uncertain. Some scholars feel verses 4-6 are a conditional promise of survival.

122 Hebrew: "overturn" The LXX translates very artificially with no textual support. The concept perhaps is: "you are doomed."

123 Literally: "they have put down."

(*or, the constellations*);¹²⁴
 who turns the pre-dawn darkness into morning,
 and daylight into night.
 It is he who gathers (*or, summons, calls for*) the waters of the sea,
 and pours them out on the surface of the earth.
 The Lord (*Yahweh*) is his name.

9 "He brings destruction (*or, collapse*) on the powerful in a moment,
 so that their protective fortresses are destroyed.¹²⁵

10 "They abhor anyone who exposes injustice in court,¹²⁶
 and speaks the whole truth.

11 So then: because you have denied¹²⁷ the poor their rights
 and have robbed¹²⁸ them of a fair share of the wheat,
 you have built luxurious houses of dressed stone (*or, ashlar*),
 but you will not reside in them.
 You have planted pleasant vineyards,
 but you will not enjoy drinking their wine.

12 I know the extent of your crimes
 and the extent of your sins ---
 you have persecuted the righteous¹²⁹ by taking bribes
 and denied justice in court for the needy.

13 Therefore any one who is wise will remain silent
 in such an evil time."

3 *The true seeking of God 5:14-15*

14 "Strive after what is good, not what is evil
 (*or, Don't do evil things, but work for what is good*),
 so that you may live,
 and the Lord, the God of hosts, will be with you,
 just as you claim him to be.¹³⁰

15 Hate what is evil and do what is good,
 and let justice prevail (*or, establish justice*) in the courts¹³¹
 for then the Lord, the God of hosts,
 will be gracious to those descendants¹³² of Joseph
 who will survive."

124 Pleiades is a cluster of stars in the constellation Taurus. In Greek mythology these were seven daughters of Atlas and Pleione, placed by Zeus among the stars. Orion was the mythical hunter whom Diana loved but accidentally killed. He was placed in heaven by her as a constellation near Taurus. Cf. Job 9:9; 38:31.

125 Hebrew uncertain.

126 Literally: "in the gate" which is where court was held.

127 A hapax legomenon. Possibly: "collect rent from the poor."

128 The Hebrew word signifies: "have imposed an unfair tax on the poor."

129 Cf. 2:6.

130 Von Rad in *Old Testament Theology* comments: "This is not the language of a man who wants to regulate life by law."

131 Literally: "in the gate." Cf. foot note 12.

132 Literally: "the remnant." This "remnant" came into reality three decades after Amos, ca. 722 BCE.

E The coming of God 5:16-25

1 A day of lamentation 5:16-17

16 Because of this the Lord of Hosts declares:

"There will be wailing¹³³ in all the public places,
and in all the streets, saying: 'Alas! Alas!'¹³⁴

Even the farm hands will be called to join
in lamentation along with the skilled professional mourners.¹³⁵

17 There will be wailing in all vineyards
and this will occur because I will punish you.!"

That is what the Lord declares!¹³⁶

2 A day of darkness 5:18-20

18 "In the day of the Lord¹³⁷ terrible punishment
will befall those who long for¹³⁸ his judgment.

How terrible it will be for you who long for that day .

*(or, When the Lord will judge Israel,
that day will certainly not do you much good.)*

It will be a time of darkness and not of light;

19 It will be as if someone fled from a lion,¹³⁹
only to meet a bear;

or went into his house, resting his hand on the wall,
only to be bitten by a snake.¹⁴⁰

20 The day of the Lord is a time of darkness,¹⁴¹
and gloom without any brightness at all."¹⁴²

3 Rejection of the cultus 5:21-25

21 "Your religious feasts are repugnant¹⁴³ to me,
and I take no pleasure¹⁴⁴ in your exuberant¹⁴⁵ assemblies.

22 Even though you bring me your burnt and cereal offerings,¹⁴⁶

133 The Hebrew word דָּפַם occurs three times in verses 16-17 in various forms. The word is used for keening at burial rites.

134 The Hebrew word is onomatopoeic, having the sound of despairing grief.

135 Hebrew unclear.

136 Some scholars feel that 5:1-17 is an oral unit. 5:18-25 is a second oral unit, these having been combined to form chapter 5. There is no manuscript evidence, only possible internal evidence.

137 This concept colors the entire history of prophecy after Amos.

138 Hebrew: "long for" or "desire."

139 The Asian or Persian species of lion lived in Palestine until AD 1300. Bears survived till the 20th Century.

140 Poisonous is apparently implied. There are 20 kinds of poisonous snakes in Palestine.

141 Some scholars feel this line does not fit the thoughts of 18, 19 & 20b. Cf. George Adam Smith Book of the Twelve Prophets

142 MT unclear in its vocalization.

143 Literally: "I cannot savor the odor of."

144 Literally: "I do not like the smell" thus: the senses.

145 RSV: "solemn." This gives the wrong impression of the reality of such assemblies. Based on divine rejection of Israel's worship the day of the Lord must mean the death of Israel. In verses 22-23 we have 'pars pro toto' representing the worship service as a whole.

146 Literally: "cereal gifts," meaning cereal gifts that pay tribute to the Lord.

I will not accept them:
nor will I accept peace offerings:
the animals you have fattened
are not acceptable.¹⁴⁷
23 Remove¹⁴⁸ the noise of your songs from me.
I will not listen to the melody of your harps.¹⁴⁹
24 Instead let justice flow down like a mighty river,
and righteousness like a perennially flowing stream."

25 "O people of Israel, you obediently brought me sacrifices and offerings during the forty years in the wilderness."¹⁵⁰

F Inevitability of invasion and exile 5:26-6:14

1 A sad procession 5:26-27

26 "You persist in carrying images of Sukkuth,¹⁵¹ your king god and Kaiwan¹⁵² your star god images,¹⁵³ which you made for yourselves.¹⁵⁴ 27 That is why I will take you into exile into a land that is farther away than Damascus," declares the Lord, whose name is the God of hosts.

<CHAPTER 6>

2 Blind pride and self-indulgence of the leaders 6:1-7

1 "Alas for those who are complacent in Zion¹⁵⁵
and to those who feel secure in the mountains of Samaria;
those appointed leaders¹⁵⁶ of the foremost nation,
to whom the people of Israel repeatedly come.
2 Look over the city of Calneh,¹⁵⁷ and see;
and from there go to the great city of Hamath.¹⁵⁸
Then go down to the city of Gath¹⁵⁹ of the Philistines.
Are they better than the kingdoms [*of Israel and Judah*]?
(*or, Are Calneh, Hamath and Gath better than these kingdoms of yours?*)
Is their territory greater than your territory?¹⁶⁰

147 Scholars feel that, poetically a line is missing from verse 22. Cf. Mays OTL.

148 Literally: "from upon me."

149 These verses declare that Israel's worship is neither true prayer nor true praise.

150 Hebrew difficult. Some scholars would emend this verse considerably. Emendation would have the verse read: "And did you (in the wilderness) take up Sukkuth your king and Kaiwan your star god, your images you made yourselves, (as you are now doing)?"

151 LXX emends to "tabernacle." Hebrew uncertain. It is possibly a masoretic distortion of Assyrian-Babylonian divine names.

152 These are Assyrian gods, both being linked with the planet Saturn. The names of the astral deities Sukkuth and Kaiwan refer to the allure of the Assyrian-Babylonian astral cult, the cult of Saturn, which arrived in Israel with the Assyrian occupation of Israel II Kings 17:19-31.

153 Hebrew: "your images, your star god."

154 Verse 26 would read well following 6:14.

155 Suggested emendations include "Joseph" to correspond with 5:6; 6:6.

156 Literally: "nailed in a prominent position" -- either by acclamation or by blasphemy.

157 Location unknown.

158 A city state in upper Syria on the Orantes river.

159 South west of Bethel.

160 So: literally. Emended it might read, "or is your territory larger than theirs?"

3 O you who fully ignore the coming disaster (*or, the day of reckoning*),
[*Your actions only*] bring the time ¹⁶¹ of violence near.

4 "Alas for those who lie on ivory beds,
and are sprawled out on luxurious couches, ¹⁶²
and feasting on choice lambs of the flock,
and stall fattened veal;

5 who sing idle songs to the sound of the harp
and like David ¹⁶³ improvise on their own musical instruments.

6 You drink wine by the bowl full (*or, You swill wine*)
and anoint yourselves with the finest perfumes,
but have no concern for the descendants of Joseph. ¹⁶⁴

7 For these reasons you will now be the first to go into exile,
and the reveling ¹⁶⁵ of those who sprawled out
at ease and feasting will come to an end." ¹⁶⁶

3 The horrors of the siege 6:8-11

8 The Lord ¹⁶⁷ God himself has given a warning
(says the Lord, the God of hosts):¹⁶⁸

"I abhor the pride ¹⁶⁹ of Jacob,
and hate his fortifications; ¹⁷⁰
and I will hand over the capital city to the enemy
with all who reside therein."

That is what the Lord the God of hosts declares.

9 If ten men are left in one family home ¹⁷¹ they will die. 10 If a relative comes to burn incense for him (*or comes to burn the body*), he who has to be in charge of the funeral ¹⁷² will call from the innermost part of the house, 'Is there still anyone with you?' He will say, 'No' and will add, 'Silence! We must be careful not to call attention to ourselves ¹⁷³ by mentioning the

161 Literally: "the sitting on the throne." Hebrew uncertain.

162 Expressing a shepherd's contempt.

163 Hebrew uncertain. David is omitted by LXX. Emended it would read: "shouting" instead of David. RSV is a literal translation. Emended it could read: "You enjoy composing songs accompanied by the lyre as David did." JBP: "and compose melodies as though you were David himself."

164 Literally: "you do not make ill the collapse of Joseph."

165 Recent studies have brought to light through published Ugarit texts that this Hebrew word *xzr*, signifies an extended time of revelry following a funeral feast. It came to be a social and religious institution including families who met regularly to celebrate for several days with food, drink and orgies.

166 Literally: "turn aside."

16753 Omitted by LXX.

168 Omitted by LXX. It seems to be a note of an early editor or scribe.

169 Literally: "splendor, majesty, excellency" A poetic declarative of the Northern Kingdom.

170 The Hebrew word could possibly be translated as "beautiful palaces."

171 Or possibly: "are hiding in a house" looking for security.

172 Hebrew unclear. The Hebrew has possibly been erroneously transmitted. Possibly a 2 has been used instead of a U thus misspelling a word. Then "burning" would become "embalmer." Some emend to have the word become "maternal uncle." A possible translation of a difficult text is: "who makes a burning for him."

173 Hebrew unclear. Literally: "not to make mention of the name of."

Lord's name.'

11 "Take note! When the Lord commands,
the great house will be shattered into fragments
(*or, totally crushed into pieces*)
and the little house broken into bits (*or, pieces broken off*)"

4 *The end of a people of unnatural conduct and silly pride* 6:12-14 ¹⁷⁴

12 "Do horses ¹⁷⁵ race on rocks?
Does one plow the sea with oxen? ¹⁷⁶
Yet you have turned justice into a deadly poison
and the fruit of righteousness into a bitter herb. ¹⁷⁷
13 You brag about a victory over Lo-debar (*or, a thing of nothingness*) ¹⁷⁸
(*or, brag about a victory over nothing*),
and say, 'Have we not,
by our own strength taken Kar-nim?' ¹⁷⁹
14 For behold I will cause a foreign nation to rise up against you,
O people of Israel," says the Lord, ¹⁸⁰ the God of hosts,
and they will dominate you from the entrance of Hamath (*or, Lo-hamath*)
to the Wadi (*or, brook*) of Arabah
(*or, from one end of the territory to the other*)."

<CHAPTER 7>

III *A series of visions* 7:1-9:15 ¹⁸¹

A *Visions and narrative* 7:1-8:3

1 *The locust swarm* 7:1-3

¹ I received a vision from the Lord, God ¹⁸² who showed me ¹⁸³ that he was creating ¹⁸⁴ a locust swarm just when the second cutting of hay was beginning to grow again, ¹⁸⁵ for this took place just following the mowing for the king's share. ¹⁸⁶ ² When they had devoured everything

174 Some scholars feel verses 12-14 comprise two originally independent units. The reason being only internal evidence.

175 Horses in Amos' day were draft horses for military wagons or chariots, not for riding.

176 MT: "does one plow with oxen?"

177 Literally: "wormwood." Cf. 5:7.

178 The site is possibly in Gilead, Trans Jordan though the exact location of the site has not been established. The Hebrew word sounds like the word for "nothing" hence the alternative translation, sensing a play on words.

179 Lo-debar and Kar-naim are towns in Trans Jordan. They had successful victories over the Assyrians. Amos mispronounces Lo-debar as "no thing" hence the alternate translation. There is a Lodebar between Damascus and Amman but the Trans Jordan location seems to be preferred. Kar-naim is modern Sheikh Sa'd, north of the Yarmuk river. The root word means "horn" hence a picture of power. It was the most important city of Bashan. After the fall of Babylon in 732 BCE it became the capital of an Assyrian province. These two localities become a word play: "You who rejoice in a thing of nothingness."

180 Not in the original hand of the earliest LXX manuscripts.

181 This cycle is in part an account of the close of Amos' ministry. In Amos 7:1-6 he takes the role of a mediator. We usually just think of a prophet having the role of spokesman for God.

182 Literally "my master Yahweh." Note how this name for God dominates this section of Amos.

183 Omitted by LXX here and in 4, 6, 7 and 8:1.

184 LXX uses different vowel points from the MT thus translating: "brood" or "offspring" hence to swarm. LXX literally: "behold a brood of locusts."

185 Hebrew uncertain. TAN translates: "late sown crops."

186 I. e. the first cutting. Hay from the first cutting is better than later cuttings. This was given to the king as a kind of tax for maintaining the war horses.

that was green in the land ¹⁸⁷ (*or, and as they were about to finish devouring all the herbage*), I begged (*or, pleaded*): ¹⁸⁸

"O Lord God, forgive! ¹⁸⁹ I beg you!
How ¹⁹⁰ can your people ¹⁹¹ survive?
They are too helpless!" ¹⁹²
3 The Lord relented ¹⁹³ compassionately.
"It will not occur," said the Lord. ¹⁹⁴

2 The devouring fire 7:4-6

4 The Lord God then provided another vision for he determined to have fire (*or, a judgment by fire*) ¹⁹⁵ dry up the abyss (*or, ocean*), ¹⁹⁶ burning up the tilled land. ¹⁹⁷ 5 Then I said:

"Lord God, I plead with you to cease!
How can your people survive?
They are so helpless. ¹⁹⁸
6 The Lord relented compassionately.
"This also will not take place," said the Lord God. ¹⁹⁹

3 The plumb line 7:7-9

7 The Lord ²⁰⁰ showed yet another vision. He was standing beside (*or, upon*) a wall built using a plumb line. ²⁰¹ which he had in his hand.

"Notice! I am holding a plumb line ²⁰²

187 The Hebrew word means more than simply "grass."

188 There is a play on words in Hebrew using "finished" and "to eat."

189 The Hebrew word has an Akkadian cognate meaning "to sprinkle," hence "to clean."

190 Literally: "who."

191 Literally: "Jacob."

192 Literally: "small."

193 mxn in the niph'al form. "to be sorry, rue."

194 Based on the Palestinian Calendar from the 10 C. BCE discovered in Gezer in 1908 it can be assumed that Amos did not receive these visions in quick succession since a longer time would exist between the 1st cutting of hay and the ripe fruit of 8:1. Interestingly Amos does not hint that he felt the command to declare these visions until 7:15.

195 Grammatically the alternate version is possible. Literally the Hebrew word used here for fire, if slightly emended could be translated: "a shower of fire." Alternative readings could be: "calling for a flame of fire" based on a change of two vowels, or "rain of fire" based on a different division of the Hebrew words.

196 Possibly "the deep springs." as JBP translates. A few scholars feel it is the Dead Sea that is being referred to.

197 Literally: "eating the land."

198 Cf. footnote 78 above.

199 These two visions form a pair. In each case there is compassionate relenting on the part of God. Casual readers might miss the next pair of visions: 7:7-9 & 8:1-4. These provide no relenting but judgment and accompanying punishment. The incursion of verses 10-17 cause casual readers to miss that these visions also are a pair. Some translators have inserted 8:1-4 following 7:9.

200 So: LXX.

201 Hebrew uncertain. "Plumb line" is a hapax legomenon. It apparently is an Akkadian loan word, which in Akkadian means "tin." Tin was a much needed metal in the manufacture of bronze which in turn was used for armament. Over the years in Hebrew the word seems to have come to mean "metal." OTL translates: "tin." A more extensive explanation is found in OTL, pp. 130 - 131. LXX, Symmachus & the Peshitta translate "adamant," i. e. an extremely hard metal. The implication is that there will be a wall of military arms to go against the people of Israel. Whether a plumb line or "tin/metal" the translation has the same end result of judgment and destruction. TAN in a footnote translates: "destined for the pick ax" as a possible understanding of the hapax legomenon that has traditionally been translated as "plumb line."

202 There is a pun in that the prophet understands himself to be the plumb line. "I" and "plumb line" form the pun. Cf. A.

thereby testing my people Israel;
I will not relent ²⁰³ again, but will carry out what I have determined.
9 The worship sites of Isaac will become desolate,
and the houses of worship of Israel will be destroyed;
and I will rise against the dynasty of Jeroboam with the sword." ²⁰⁴

4 Amos and Amaziah 7:10-17

10 Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent a report to King Jeroboam of Israel, saying:
"Amos has plotted (*or, conspired*) against you among the people of Israel. This destructive work
dare not be tolerated in the land. 11 This is what Amos said:

'Jeroboam will die in battle
and the people of Israel will be taken away from their land,
and will live in exile.'

12 Amaziah told Amos: "O seer, ²⁰⁵ go! Leave (*or, flee*)! Go to the land of Judah, and
reside ²⁰⁶ there. Prophesy there. 13 You are never to return to prophesy in Bethel, for this is
where the king dwells (*or, where the king's sanctuary is*) and he worships in the national (*or,*
royal) temple (*or, residence*)." ²⁰⁷

14 Then Amos answered Amaziah. "I am ²⁰⁸ not a prophet by profession, nor am I a
member of the prophet's guild (*or, the brotherhood of prophets*). ²⁰⁹ I am ²¹⁰ a breeder of sheep
²¹¹ and one who tends (*or, nips the fruit of*) sycamore (*or, mulberry fig*) trees. ²¹² 15 It is the Lord
who ordered me to stop tending the flock, saying to me: 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel!'

16 Now then! Hear the word of the Lord!
You say, 'Stop prophesying against Israel,
and no preaching against the people of Israel.'

17 "This is what the Lord declares!
'Amaziah, your wife will become a prostitute in the city,
your sons and daughters will die in warfare;

Szabo.

203 Literally: "not pass by them."

204 Jeroboam II ruled from 783 - 743 BCE.

205 The word for prophet in Hebrew usually is *nbyh* but Amaziah uses *hzx* possibly to show his disregard for Amos.

Perhaps his opinion corresponds with the words in Jeremiah 29:26: "a mad man who plays the prophet." However, recent studies hint that this word is used for those who provide "moral" direction. This would again deny the prophetic office of Amos.

206 Literally: "eat bread." This might imply "earn your living" as in the NRSV. Thus it would imply that he felt Amos was trying to make his living as a "seer" in Israel.

207 Hebrew unclear.

208 Scholars are divided about the translation: "I am" which is the translation of the Vulgate. "I was" is the translation of the LXX & Peshitta. The Hebrew word can be read either way.

209 Hebrew unclear. The sentence has no verbs. Literally "a prophet's son." Possibly: "I am not the sort of prophet who prophesies for pay."

210 Cf. footnote 94 above.

211 Hebrew: "one who raises sheep," not a shepherd. Cf. 1:1.

212 The mulberry fig. The one who tends (*or, the dresser*) would prick or nick the fruit with a knife to speed ripening. LXX translates: *βελεξ* a word that is akin to the Semitic word for "fig."

your land will be divided.
You, yourself, will die in on foreign soil.²¹³
Israel will certainly be taken from its territory into exile."²¹⁴

<CHAPTER 8>²¹⁵

The basket of summerfruit 8:1-3

¹ The Lord God showed me in another vision: a basket²¹⁶ of ripe summer fruit (*or, fruit that ripens in summer*).²¹⁷ ² He asked, "Amos, what do you see?" I replied: "A basket of ripe summer fruit." Then the Lord responded, saying:

"The time is ripe (*or, the end has come*)
for the destruction of the people of Israel.
I will never again relent.²¹⁸

³ The women singers²¹⁹ of the temple²²⁰ will wail in that day."²²¹

That is what the Lord God declares!

"There will be many corpses;
they will be strewn every where²²²
and there will be deadly silence."

B Present iniquity and impending doom 8:4-14

1 Oppression of the poor 8:4-7

⁴ "Listen to this, you who trample upon (*or, snap at*) the needy,²²³
and bring the poor of the country to their destruction (*or,*
annihilation),²²⁴

⁵ saying, 'We can hardly wait till the new moon is past
as well as the Sabbath (*or, the day of rest and worship*)
so we may sell our grain ;²²⁵
that we can again sell wheat.

Then we can cheat our customers by overcharging,
using incorrect measures and overcharging on the cost,²²⁶

213 Literally: "an unclean land."

214 The fall of the northern kingdom in 722/721 BCE is the ultimate fulfillment of this prophesy.

215 At this point Amos seems to present a commentary on what will transpire as the result of his earlier messages.

216 An obscure word. In Jeremiah 5:27 it is translated as "a cage." No doubt it is a general word for a woven receptacle.

217 The Hebrew word is a word also might mean "summer season." Summer fruit might include figs or pomegranates. There is a play on words since the word for "end" near the end of this verse is very similar in sound.

218 Literally: "pass by them."

219 The Hebrew word for "singers" is a feminine form.

220 This Hebrew word can also mean "palace."

221 Some scholars emend to read: "The singing women of the palace will howl."

222 TAN aptly translates: "So many corpses. Left lying everywhere! Hush!"

223 Literally: "...and that with the intention of putting on an end to the poor in the land." The Hebrew word used here is: '&bw!

224 Literally: "and are for exterminating the poor." LXX: "and oppressing the poor." A rather stilted play on words is found in the Hebrew words,

225 Literally: "open (the sack) of grain."

226 Literally an Ephah is mentioned that, being more than a half bushel. The Shekel is also mentioned which was about .04

and manipulating ²²⁷ our scales deceitfully.
6 For silver we can buy poor people as our slaves
even if the amount they owe is as little as the cost of a pair of
sandals
and sell the refuse of (*or, sweepings and discards*) the wheat."²²⁸

7 The Lord whom Israel glorifies has sworn:
"I surely will never forget any of their deeds!"

2 Earthquake, darkness and mourning 8:8-10

8 " Because of these deeds the earth will quake
and everyone residing in the land will mourn. ²²⁹
and all of the land will rise, as does the Nile,
only to surge ²³⁰ and subside, as does the Nile of Egypt."
9 "On that day,"

the Lord God declares:

"I will make the sun set at mid-day
and have the earth become dark during the day. ²³¹
10 I will turn your feasts into funerals,
and all your songs into dirges.
I will make you wear sackcloth on your loins,
and make you shave your head in mourning, ²³²
for I will cause you to experience grief like that
of parents mourning their only son. ²³³
and on that day ²³⁴ everything will end in bitter despair."

3 Famine and thirst 8:11-14

11 "Be aware! The time is coming,"

declares the Lord God;

"when I will send a famine in the land;
not a hunger for bread, or a thirst for water,

ounce of silver. The use of undersized measures but demanding oversized payment is also found in Proverbs 11:1; 16:11; 20:11, 23 to name a few references.

227 Literally in Hebrew: "to twist the balances of falsehood."

228 This stich is possibly an addendum. The line does not fit the poetic scheme.

229 Hebrew: *wabl*.

230 Literally: "be tossed about." Not in the LXX. In Hebrew it is poetically superfluous. Some scholars feel verses 7 & 8 are a later addition.

231 Literally: "a day of light."

232 The Ahirim Sarcophagus depicts women with sackcloth skirts and naked to their waists.

233 Grammatically it could mean that the earth will mourn.

234 Literally: "the end of it."

but for hearing a message from (*or, the words* ²³⁵ *of*) the Lord.

12 People will stagger from sea to sea,, ²³⁶
and from north to east;
they will run back and forth, seeking a message
from (*or, word of*) the Lord;
but they will not find it.

13 "At that time the beautiful young women and young men
will collapse for thirst.

14 Those who swear by the idols (*or, shame*) of Samaria;
(*or, who swear by Ashimah of Samaria*) ²³⁷
and say 'We ²³⁸ rely only on the god of Dan'
or make a pilgrimage to Beersheba ²³⁹
will fall, never to rise again!"

<CHAPTER 9>

C The finality of doom 9:1-7

I A fifth vision and its sequel 9:1-4

¹ I saw the Lord (*or, Master*) standing by (*or, upon*) the altar and he commanded: "I will strike the tops of the pillars (*of the temple*) until the foundations shake and shatter ²⁴⁰ the ceiling on the heads of the people, ²⁴¹ and those who survive ²⁴² I will put them to death by warfare. Not a single one of them will survive while attempting to flee; nor escape.

² "Even if they would burrow down ²⁴³ to Sheol, ²⁴⁴
I would catch them.

Though they would climb up to heaven,
I would drag them down.

³ If they were to hide themselves on the top of Mount Carmel,
I would search for them and catch them;
and if they were to conceal themselves
at the bottom ²⁴⁵ of the sea (*or, sea floor*),

235 Literally: "words" in a plural form.

236 Presumably the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean Sea. Some would emend to read "from south to west."

237 Ashimah is an idol made in Samaria by the citizens of Hamath. II Kings 17:30. It apparently was the name of a god that was brought to the Northern kingdom. The name "Ashimah" translated can mean "shame" in Hebrew. It is translated as "shame" by the LXX, Vulgate & NIV.

238 Literally: "they."

239 Literally: "as the way of Beersheba lives." The word "way" in Hebrew is: +99 which could possibly be an Ugaritic word meaning "dominion" or "might," i.e. "the might deity."

240 Literally: "cut off" or "shear."

241 Literally: "I will hack them, all of them all."

242 Hebrew uncertain. "the survivors." In 4:2 the word is usually translated "to the last man." Numerous emendations have been suggested for this phrase.

243 Hebrew: "break through."

244 Thought of as the abode of the dead.

245 Hebrew: *qrqai*.

I would command the sea monster ²⁴⁶ to crush them.
4 If they go into captivity by their enemies,
I will cause them to perish (*or, to be slain*)
as the result of my command.
I will see to it that they are destroyed, ²⁴⁷
and not to help them."

2 *The third doxology 9:5-6*

5 The Lord is the God of hosts!
It is he who touches the earth and it shakes, ²⁴⁸
and everyone who lives there will mourn.
The entire world surges (*or, rises*) as does the Nile,
and falls again like the Nile of Egypt.
6 It is the Lord who builds his upper chambers ²⁴⁹
and places his dome of sky above the earth.
It is the Lord who summons the waters of the sea,
and pours them out on the surface of the earth.

The Lord is his name!

3 *God's relationship to the other people 9:7*

7 The Lord says: "O people of Israel, are you not like the Nubians ²⁵⁰ to
me?
Did I not bring you back from the land of Egypt,
and did I not bring the Philistines from Caphtor (*or, Crete*) and
the Syrians from Kir (*or, Mesopotamia*)? ²⁵¹

D *An epilogue 9:8-15*

1 *A purging judgment 9:8-10*

a *The judgment 9:8*

8 "The Lord God is watching the sinful kingdom (*of Israel*)
and will destroy it from the face of the earth.
But, I will not destroy the descendants of the house of Jacob." ²⁵²

That is what the Lord declares!

b *Israel should not be complacent 9:9-10*

9 "See: I will command,

246 Cf. Isaiah 27:1; Job 26:13.

247 Literally: "set my eyes on them."

248 Traditionally translated "melts." Cf. Koehler-Baumgartner *Lexikon*. 7

249 Possibly "upper staircase" or "room chamber." A slight emendation would be "the heaven of heavens."

250 LXX: "people of Ethiopia." Vulgate: "Sons of Ethiopia." Nubia was a portion of Ethiopia and Sudan. These people where the most unusual looking that the people of Israel would have opportunity to see, hence the mention of them.

251 LXX, Vulgate & Targums identify Caphtor as Cappadocia. Syrians are Aramaeans. These nations were the arch enemies of Israel. The passage becomes a reminder that all nations are equal in the eyes of the Lord. Amos is saying it is sinfulness not nationality about which God is concerned.

252 Hebrew unclear. I. e. even the rubble will be wiped away. Neither Israel, nor we, should become complacent.

and shake the people of Israel along with (*or, together with*) all nations,

just as one shakes (*grain in*) a sieve,
and nothing that is worthless will survive. ²⁵³

10 All the sinners of my people will die in war;
those who say, 'God wouldn't harm me.'" ²⁵⁴

2 Restoration of the Davidic kingdom 9:11-12

11 "The day is coming when I will restore
the house ²⁵⁵ of David that has fallen into ruin (*or, has become shoddy*);

and repair it's ²⁵⁶ broken walls,
and restore it's ruins
and rebuild it as it was long ago;
12 so that the people of Israel ²⁵⁷ may possess
what is left of the remnant of Edom, ²⁵⁸
and all the nations who once were mine." ²⁵⁹

3 Nature's bounty 9:13

13 "Behold, the days are surely coming," says the Lord,
"when reaping the ripening grain will overtake
the work of the one who plows; ²⁶⁰
and the grapes will grow faster than wine can be made. ²⁶¹
The mountains will drip sweet wine,
and all the hills will flow with it." ²⁶²

4 Return of the exiles 9:14-15

14 "I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel,
and they will rebuild the ruined cities and reside in them;
they will plant vineyards and drink their wine,
and they will plant gardens and eat what is grown. ²⁶³
15 I will establish them on the land,
and they will never again be uprooted
from the land which I have given them."

253 Literally: "no pebble will survive."

254 Literally: "Evil will not be round about us."

255 Literally: "booth."

256 Hebrew: "their."

257 Hebrew unclear.

258 LXX: "the rest of men."

259 Literally: "who are called by my name." LXX: "that the remnant of men may seek the Lord" instead of the MT "that they may possess the remnant of Edom."

260 Cf. Leviticus 26:8. The harvest is to be so abundant that the work of one busy season will not have been completed when the time for the next busy season should begin.

261 Possibly the last portion of this stich should read "than he who sows." The Hebrew word is a hapax legomenon.

262 An observation by Amos of the bounty in the harvests "on that day."

263 For Amos, now God's true plan can be accomplished.