

Commentary Studies in Amos

CHAPTER 1

1. THE WORDS OF AMOS, WHO WAS AMONG THE HERDMEN OF TEKOA, WHICH HE SAW CONCERNING ISRAEL IN THE DAYS OF UZZIAH KING OF JUDAH, AND IN THE DAYS OF JEROBOAM THE SON OF JOASH KING OF ISRAEL, TWO YEARS BEFORE THE EARTHQUAKE. (This opening verse identifies the writer, tells his occupation and location, and tells to whom he prophesied and when. Now let us break the matter down. Amos speaks of himself as a herdsman; elsewhere he mentions his gathering sycamore fruit, 7:14; thus, he was a rural man altogether. His town of Tekoa was toward the Dead Sea in a very bleak countryside. Some of the greatest thinkers have come out of barren surroundings where they have had time to think and meditate. It took a rugged, courageous man like Amos to fulfill the mission of preaching that he did. Though from the southern kingdom, he was sent to the northern kingdom. Most of the prophetic books of the Old Testament deal with Judah of the south; only Amos and Hosea were sent principally to the northern kingdom. In his day, Uzziah was reigning in the south and Jeroboam in the north. The north had two kings by the name of Jeroboam; this was the second Jeroboam for the first Jeroboam's date does not coincide with the date of Uzziah. This first verse even pinpoints the date as "two years before the earthquake". Amos's date is usually given as 787 B.C., which would make the earthquake in 786. That must have been a tremendous earthquake, for a whole 300 years later, they were still referring to it in a vivid way. Zechariah (300 years later) said to the people of his day, "Ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains... yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah" (Zech. 14:5). Through the years, the Jews have held that the earthquake was sent because of God's wrath against King Uzziah for entering the temple to burn incense.)

2. AND HE SAID, THE LORD WILL ROAR (This word "roar" gives us a forewarning as to the nature of the

message in the book—one of divine thunderation) FROM ZION, AND UTTER HIS VOICE FROM JERUSALEM; (These were not welcome words to the inhabitants of the north who had so many years before withdrawn from Jerusalem and Zion. The first Jeroboam had set up golden calves at Dan and Bethel to keep the people of his segment of the old kingdom from going to Jerusalem for their annual festivals lest in time a sentimental and patriotic spirit would cause them to reunite the kingdom under the Jerusalem ruler; I Kings 12:26-29. But, Amos told them what was going to happen whether they liked it or not.) AND THE HABITATIONS OF THE SHEPHERDS SHALL MOURN, AND THE TOP OF CARMEL SHALL WITHER. (When the breath of God's mouth would utter the judgments coming up, things as far away as Carmel in the north would wither and everything in between.)

3. THUS SAITH THE LORD; (And the uttering begins.) FOR THREE TRANSGRESSIONS OF DAMASCUS, AND FOR FOUR, I WILL NOT TURN AWAY THE PUNISHMENT THEREOF: (A Bible dictionary is an indispensable book in studying these prophetic books, for there are so many nations, cities, mountains, and other geographical names mentioned in them. Damascus was the capital of Syria, the northern kingdom's neighbor to the north and east. God was going to punish Syria. The expressions, "For three transgression, and for four," is used of seven other nations in the first and second chapters of Amos. If God had three particular sins in mind, He does not list them. It is generally held that the expression is a Hebraism indicating a number of things with which God had been displeased, but when a particular transgression occurred, that was enough—the nation must be punished. At least, the expression indicates the longsuffering of God, proving that He is not triggerhappy, having no mercy. God does not have an insatiable mania to inflict punishment immediately.) BECAUSE THEY HAVE THRESHED GILEAD WITH THRESHING INSTRUMENTS OF IRON: (The land of Gilead lay just south of Syria east of the Jordan River. It was that country that Moses gave to the two and one-half tribes that settled east of the Jordan. Syria had been exceedingly brutal toward Gilead, thus bringing down God's axe of judgment. Elisha had predicted that Hazael, king of Syria, would be brutal toward the Israelites, II Kings 8:11,12, and II Kings 10:32,33 and 13:7 tells of the threshing that Syria gave them. God wanted Israel punished, but Syria did it out of hatred and not for divine punishment.)

4. BUT I WILL SEND A FIRE INTO THE HOUSE OF HAZAEL, WHICH SHALL DEVOUR THE PALACES OF BENHADAD. (Benhadad was Hazael's son and successor. Assyria would destroy Damascus as we shall cite later.)

5. I WILL BREAK ALSO THE BAR (Across the gates.) OF DAMASCUS, AND CUT OFF THE INHABITANT FROM THE PLAIN OF AVEN, AND HIM THAT HOLDETH THE SCEPTRE FROM THE HOUSE OF EDEN; (Locations in Syria. God would see that its defense collapsed and that the people were taken.) AND THE PEOPLE OF SYRIA SHALL GO INTO CAPTIVITY UNTO KIR, SAITH THE LORD. (II Kings 16:9 tells of the king of Assyria taking Damascus and carrying the people captive to Kir, probably the country of Cyrene.)

6. THUS SAITH THE LORD; FOR THREE TRANSGRESSIONS OF GAZA, (A chief city of Philistia,) AND FOR FOUR, I WILL NOT TURN AWAY THE PUNISHMENT THEREOF; (Punishment follows disobedience in God's order of things. These Gentile nations that Amos was condemning did not have the written Old Testament by which to measure their acts, but their sins consisted in violating the understanding of right and wrong that still remained from the knowledge of God's will that Adam carried out of the Garden. The things for which Amos condemns them are found in the list in Romans 1, of which things Paul said they knew the judgment of God and knew that those who committed such things were deserving of punishment, Rom. 1:32. God does not condemn without reason.) BECAUSE THEY CARRIED AWAY CAPTIVE THE WHOLE CAPTIVITY TO DELIVER THEM UP TO EDOM. (The Philistines well knew the utter hatred that Edom held for Israel. The captives taken in their battles with Israel were apparently sold to the Edomites. What cruel masters those Edomites would make for poor Israelite slaves!)

7. BUT I WILL SEND A FIRE ON THE WALL OF GAZA, (All principal cities in those days were walled for protection. After conquering a city, it was often burned.) WHICH SHALL DEVOUR THE PALACES THEREOF:

8. AND I WILL CUT OFF THE INHABITANT FROM ASHDOD, AND HIM THAT HOLDETH THE SCEPTRE FROM ASHKELON, AND I WILL TURN MINE HAND AGAINST EKRON; (Ashdod, Ashkelon, and Ekron were all principal cities of the Philistines.) AND THE REM-

NANT OF THE PHILISTINES SHALL PERISH, SAITH THE LORD GOD. (They too fell under the sway of Assyria and later to others.)

9. THUS SAITH THE LORD; FOR THREE TRANSGRESSIONS OF TYRUS, (The capital of Phoenicia,) AND FOR FOUR, I WILL NOT TURN AWAY THE PUNISHMENT THEREOF; BECAUSE THEY DELIVERED UP THE WHOLE CAPTIVITY TO EDOM, AND REMEMBERED NOT THE BROTHERLY COVENANT; (Besides being like guilty with Philistia of delivering Israelite slaves to the Edomites, Tyre had "broken the brotherly covenant". The Phoenicians and Israelites had long had the most peaceful relations, Hiram, king of Tyre, was always a lover of David, and he congratulated Solomon when he came to the throne, I Kings 5:1. Solomon called upon the Phoenicians to help with materials and craftsmen in the erection of his great temple, I Kings 5:2-12, but this neighborly spirit came to be broken in time, and God held the Phoenicians responsible.)

10. BUT I WILL SEND A FIRE ON THE WALL OF TYRUS, WHICH SHALL DEVOUR THE PALACES THEREOF. (Another nation that fell to the sway of Assyria, later to Greece, and still later to others.)

11. THUS SAITH THE LORD; FOR THREE TRANSGRESSIONS OF EDOM, (Israel's neighbors on the south,) AND FOR FOUR, I WILL NOT TURN AWAY THE PUNISHMENT THEREOF; BECAUSE HE DID PURSUE HIS BROTHER (The Israelites,) WITH THE SWORD, AND DID CAST OFF ALL PITY, AND HIS ANGER DID TEAR PERPETUALLY, (It exhibited itself at every opportunity,) AND HE KEPT HIS WRATH FOR EVER: (Edom warred against Israel not merely for gain, but because of hate.)

12. BUT I WILL SEND A FIRE UPON TEMAN, WHICH SHALL DEVOUR THE PALACES OF BOZRAH. (The two main cities of the Edomites.)

13. THUS SAITH THE LORD; FOR THREE TRANSGRESSIONS OF THE CHILDREN OF AMMON, (One of Israel's neighbors on the east, they were descendants of Lot by the younger of his two daughters who escaped the destruction of Sodom, Gen. 19:30-38,) AND FOR FOUR, I WILL NOT TURN AWAY THE PUNISHMENT THEREOF; BECAUSE THEY HAVE RIPPED UP THE WOMEN WITH

CHILD OF GILEAD, THAT THEY MIGHT ENLARGE THEIR BORDER; (They were condemned because of utter brutality in warfare. Gilead was that portion of Israel that lay next to Ammon. Jer. 49:1-6 also carries a prediction of the punishment of Ammon.)

14. BUT I WILL KINDLE A FIRE IN THE WALL OF RABBAH, (Capital of Ammon,) AND IT SHALL DEVOUR THE PALACES THEREOF, WITH SHOUTING IN THE DAY OF BATTLE, WITH A TEMPEST IN THE DAY OF THE WHIRLWIND: (Ammon likewise felt the lash of the Babylonian whp.)

15. AND THEIR KING SHALL GO INTO CAPTIVITY, HE AND HIS PRINCES TOGETHER, SAITH THE LORD. (Jer. 49:3 also takes note of the captivity of the king and princes and also adds the captivity of the "priests".)

CHAPTER 2

1. THUS SAITH THE LORD; FOR THREE TRANSGRESSIONS OF MOAB, (Descendants of Lot by the older of his two daughters, Gen. 19:36,37. Moab was the land in which Israel camped just before crossing the Jordan. It was the land of King Balak, who sought Balaam to curse Israel. Mt. Nebo, where Moses died, was in that land.) AND FOR FOUR, I WILL NOT TURN AWAY THE PUNISHMENT THEREOF; BECAUSE HE BURNED THE BONES OF THE KING OF EDMON INTO LIME: (It would sound as if Moab dug up the bones of some former king of Edom and burned them—if so, God was condemning their utter hatred and their disrespect for the dead. However, some think Amos refers to the battle recorded in II Kings 3:21-27. Some fanciful, speculative interpretation is necessary to accept this latter position.)

2. BUT I WILL SEND A FIRE UPON MOAB, AND IT SHALL DEVOUR THE PALACES OF KIRIOTH, (Capital city,) AND MOAB SHALL DIE WITH TUMULT, WITH SHOUTING, AND WITH THE SOUND OF THE TRUMPET:

3. AND I WILL CUT OFF THE JUDGE FROM THE MIDST THEREOF, AND WILL SLAY ALL THE PRINCES THEREOF WITH HIM, SAITH THE LORD. (Isa. 15:1-9 and Jer. 48:1-46 both portray vividly this destruction at the hands of Babylon.)

4. THUS SAITH THE LORD; FOR THREE TRANSGRESSIONS OF JUDAH, (The people of the south with which the kingdom to whom Amos was prophesying had so often warred,) AND FOR FOUR, I WILL NOT TURN AWAY THE PUNISHMENT THEREOF; BECAUSE THEY HAVE DESPISED THE LAW OF THE LORD, AND HAVE NOT KEPT HIS COMMANDMENTS, (God condemns Judah for disobedience to His commandments. They were a part of His covenant people. The other nations had been condemned on general principles, but Judah for violating the commandments of this covenant.) AND THEIR LIES (Since idols were fakes, they were often labeled as "lies" by the prophets,) CAUSED THEM TO ERR, AFTER THE WHICH THEIR FATHERS HAVE WALKED: (Idolatry also got into the southern kingdom. It struck at the very foundation of the worship of Jehovah.)

5. BUT I WILL SEND A FIRE UPON JUDAH, AND IT SHALL DEVOUR THE PALACES OF JERUSALEM. (About two hundred years later, this punishment fell upon Judah at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon.)

6. THUS SAITH THE LORD: (The true God whom they were sworn to worship, but to whom they had been unfaithful.) FOR THREE TRANSGRESSIONS OF ISRAEL, (Here is divine psychology. Having condemned the Gentile nations of Syria, Philistia, Phoenicia, Ammon, and Moab and the southern kingdom—all of which was music to the hearers' ears—the prophet in the last place considers the case of Israel. Paul used the same psychology in condemning the Gentiles first and then the Jews when writing Romans 1,2,3.) AND FOR FOUR, I WILL NOT TURN AWAY THE PUNISHMENT THEREOF; (It will be interesting to see why God condemned them. Notice that it was not for one thing, but for many.) BECAUSE THEY SOLD THE RIGHTEOUS FOR SILVER, AND THE POOR FOR A PAIR OF SHOES; (It is generally held that this refers to a perversion of justice through bribes—"silver" being large bribes and a "pair of shoes" small bribes. God is against social injustices.)

7. THAT PANT AFTER THE DUST OF THE EARTH ON THE HEAD OF THE POOR, AND TURN ASIDE THE WAY OF THE MEEK: (The former statement is difficult, but both statements apparently represent the oppression of the poor and the meek by the rich and mighty.) AND A MAN AND HIS FATHER WILL GO IN UNTO THE SAME

MAID, TO PROFANE MY HOLY NAME; (The most disgraceful kind of immorality. It could be speaking of prostitution connected with their idolatrous worship.)

8. AND THEY LAY THEMSELVES DOWN UPON CLOTHES LAID TO PLEDGE (The law required that if one borrowed money and gave his raiment as a pledge, the raiment was to be returned to the poor man at night to sleep under, Exo. 22:26. They were keeping them—more oppression of the poor.) BY EVERY ALTAR, (Idolatrous altars.) AND THEY DRINK THE WINE OF THE CONDEMNED IN THE HOUSE OF THEIR GOD. (Their participation in idolatrous practices for which they would be justly punished.)

9. YET DESTROYED I THE AMORITE BEFORE THEM, (Rahab said they had heard what Israel had done to Sihon and Og, the two kings of the Amorites, Joshua 2:10. Num. 21:21-35 records these victories.) WHOSE HEIGHT WAS LIKE THE HEIGHT OF THE CEDARS, AND HE WAS STRONG AS THE OAKS; YET I DESTROYED HIS FRUIT FROM ABOVE, AND HIS ROOTS FROM BENEATH. (It made no difference to God how big they were. Amos is pointing out just how good God had been in giving Israel the land east of the Jordan, where the two and one-half tribes later settled.)

10. ALSO I BROUGHT YOU UP FROM THE LAND OF EGYPT, AND LED YOU FORTY YEARS THROUGH THE WILDERNESS TO POSSESS THE LAND OF THE AMORITE. (He recalls God's goodness at the exodus and during the forty years in the wilderness. The victories over the Amorites were toward the end of the wilderness period.)

11. AND I RAISED UP OF YOUR SONS FOR PROPHETS, (Further blessings and honors conferred by God upon them.) AND OF YOUR YOUNG MEN FOR NAZARITES. ("Nazarite" means "separated one". Num. 6:1-21 gives the manner of becoming Nazarites. This again was a grace shown to the Israelites.) IS IT NOT EVEN THUS, O YET CHILDREN OF ISRAEL? SAITH THE LORD. (The piercingness of God's questions! It was so—as their history well showed. It was too bad that they had received so many kindnesses from God and then treated His Word as they did.)

12. BUT YE GAVE THE NAZARITES WINE TO DRINK; (In violation to their oath.) AND COMMANDED THE PROPH-

ETS, SAYING, PROPHECY NOT. (The very thing they were to do. Some of those prophets had been the young prophet of I Kings 13:1-4, Micalah, Elijah, and Elisha.)

13. BEHOLD, I AM PRESSED UNDER YOU, AS A CART IS PRESSED THAT IS FULL OF SHEAVES. (Various versions give various translations of this statement, but each one boils down to the thought that God had had enough!)

14. THEREFORE THE FLIGHT SHALL PERISH FROM THE SWIFT, AND THE STRONG SHALL NOT STRENGTHEN HIS FORCE, NEITHER SHALL THE MIGHTY DELIVER HIMSELF:

15. NEITHER SHALL HE STAND THAT HANDLETH THE BOW; AND HE THAT IS SWIFT OF FOOT SHALL NOT DELIVER HIMSELF: NEITHER SHALL HE THAT RIDETH THE HORSE DELIVER HIMSELF.

16. AND HE THAT IS COURAGEOUS AMONG THE MIGHTY SHALL FLEE AWAY NAKED IN THAT DAY, SAITH THE LORD. (Under the second Jeroboam, who was ruling in Amos's day, these words of coming doom seemed inconceivable to the hearers. But, time proved them to be true. The very things in which they trusted—swiftness, strength, military might, the bow, the horse, and their courage—were not sufficient in the day of destruction. Sixty some years later, the northern kingdom fell to Assyria just as Amos here predicted.)

CHAPTER 3

1. HEAR THIS WORD THAT THE LORD HATH SPOKEN AGAINST YOU (How people fear when people of might threaten them! How much more should Israel have feared when it was God who had spoken!) O CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, AGAINST THE WHOLE FAMILY (Amos condemned both northern and southern sections of the kingdom.) WHICH I BROUGHT UP FROM THE LAND OF EGYPT, (The people whom He started out to bless, He must now denounce and punish.) SAYING,

2. YOU ONLY HAVE I KNOWN OF ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH: (Israel alone was God's people under the Old Testament, Exo. 19:5 and Deut. 7:6.) THEREFORE I WILL PUNISH YOU FOR ALL YOUR INIQUITIES. (Exalted

privilege abused is followed by stern judgment. Where much is given, much is required, Luke 12:48.)

3. CAN TWO WALK TOGETHER, EXCEPT THEY BE AGREED? (The answer is "no". Whether this question goes with that which has just been discussed or with the chain of questions that follows is debatable. If with the foregoing, it refers to God and His people. I personally favor its going with what follows, it being the first of several questions whose conclusion is reached in vs. 7 and 8.)

4. WILL A LION ROAR IN THE FOREST, WHEN HE HATH NO PREY? (This second question, like all the others in this series, is answered by "no", for the lion roars over the prey he is about to catch.) WILL A YOUNG LION CRY OUT OF HIS DEN, IF HE HAVE TAKEN NOTHING?

5. CAN A BIRD FALL IN A SNARE UPON THE EARTH, WHERE NO GIN IS FOR HIM? (A gin was a stick that acted as a spring in a trap for birds or beasts.) SHALL ONE TAKE UP A SNARE FROM THE EARTH, AND HAVE TAKEN NOTHING AT ALL? (Two questions about lions are here followed by two questions about trapping birds. The next verse presents two questions about calamities befalling a city.)

6. SHALL A TRUMPET BE BLOWN IN THE CITY, AND THE PEOPLE NOT BE AFRAID? (The paralyzing fear that the alarm of a trumpet sent through people!) SHALL THERE BE EVIL IN A CITY, AND THE LORD HATH NOT DONE IT? (The word "evil" here does not mean sin, for God does not cause sin. It means "trouble" or "difficulties" here as it does in numerous other passages. See Eccl. 12:1; Job 2:10; and Isa. 45:7.)

7. SURELY THE LORD GOD WILL DO NOTHING, BUT HE REVEALETH HIS SECRET UNTO HIS SERVANTS THE PROPHETS. (Whatever calamity God is going to bring upon His people, He will first reveal it to the prophets that they might warn the people and call them to repentance. Furthermore, that which the prophets foretold was of divine origin; the prophets did not make up their own message.)

8. THE LION HATH ROARED, (God is ready to spring.) WHO WILL NOT FEAR? THE LORD GOD HATH SPOKEN, (Revealed His intentions to the prophets of whom Amos

was one.) WHO CAN BUT PROPHECY? (Amos was but speaking what God had declared to him. He should not be blamed for speaking it. If we take verse 3 as the first of this series of questions, it would be that God and the prophets were walking together because they agreed as to what was to happen and what the people should do.)

9. PUBLISH IN THE PALACES AT ASHDOD, (A city of the Philistines,) AND IN THE PALACES IN THE LAND OF EGYPT, AND SAY, ASSEMBLE YOURSELVES UPON THE MOUNTAINS OF SAMARIA, (The capital of the northern kingdom.) AND BEHOLD THE GREAT TUMULTS IN THE MIDST THEREOF, AND THE OPPRESSED IN THE MIDST THEREOF. (The news of the tumults in Samaria would indeed be welcome news to Philistia and Egypt that were enemy nations. They would be glad to gather on the surrounding mountains to watch the destruction. The God who had judged Egypt years before and had led David to such triumphs over Philistia was going to bring judgment upon Samaria.)

10. FOR THEY KNOW NOT TO DO RIGHT, SAITH THE LORD, WHO STORE UP VIOLENCE AND ROBBERY IN THEIR PALACES. (Samaria would not fall because of Assyria's military might. God could deliver from Assyria if they were obedient. But, Samaria would fall because she had forgotten God.)

11. THEREFORE THUS SAITH THE LORD GOD; AN ADVERSARY THERE SHALL BE EVEN ROUND ABOUT THE LAND; (The Assyrian army from Nineveh,) AND HE SHALL BRING DOWN THY STRENGTH FROM THEE, (Israel was in a powerful condition under Jeroboam II at the time of Amos's prophecy.) AND THY PALACES SHALL BE SPOILED. (Samaria had become the capital city under Omri, a very wicked king. His son Ahab succeeded him and was the most wicked of all the Israelitish kings. Through his marriage to Jezebel, Phoenician Baal worship had come into Israel. God had not had very good thoughts concerning Samaria from its beginning as capital.)

12. THUS SAITH THE LORD; AS THE SHEPHERD TAKETH OUT OF THE MOUTH OF THE LION TWO LEGS, OR A PIECE OF AN EAR: (Only fragments,) SO SHALL THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL BE TAKEN OUT THAT DWELL IN SAMARIA IN THE CORNER OF A BED, AND IN DAMASCUS IN A COUCH. (The lamb was

gone, though the bony legs and a piece of an ear remained. So Israel would be destroyed, though there would be a few survivors.)

13. HEAR YE, AND TESTIFY IN THE HOUSE OF JACOB, SAITH THE LORD GOD, THE GOD OF HOSTS,

14. THAT IN THE DAY THAT I SHALL VISIT (Punish,) THE TRANSGRESSIONS OF ISRAEL UPON HIM I WILL ALSO VISIT THE ALTARS OF BETHEL; AND THE HORNS OF THE ALTAR SHALL BE CUT OFF, AND FALL TO THE GROUND. (Jeroboam I, the northern kingdom's first king, had inaugurated calf worship at Bethel in the south and at Dan in the north to keep his people out of Jerusalem at feast times. From that day, God had set Himself against the northern kingdom. Even the religious objects to which the northern kingdom looked for deliverance could not even deliver themselves, but would share in the destruction of the hand of Jehovah.)

15. AND I WILL SMITE THE WINTER HOUSE WITH THE SUMMER HOUSE; AND THE HOUSES OF IVORY SHALL PERISH, AND THE GREAT HOUSES SHALL HAVE AN END, SAITH THE LORD. (The luxury of Israel at that time is suggested in this verse. So often, luxury leads to sin. Security usually typifies the attitude of the prosperous nation. But, Amos by inspiration could see beyond the splendor of the present to the ruins of the future.)

CHAPTER 4

1. HEAR THIS WORD, YE KINE OF BASHAN, (Bashan was a great pasture country east of the Sea of Galilee. Besides this reference in Amos, Psa. 22:12 speaks of the "bulls of Bashan".) THAT ARE IN THE MOUNTAIN OF SAMARIA, (Amos is speaking to the well fed—prosperous—ruling class of the northern kingdom under the language of "kine of Bashan". For other times when people were best described by characteristic animals, Jesus called Herod a "fox", John the Baptist called the Pharisees and Sadducees "vipers", etc. These are not complimentary titles, but they fit.) WHICH OPPRESS THE POOR, WHICH CRUSH THE NEEDEY, WHICH SAY TO THEIR MASTERS, BRING, AND LET US DRINK. (The prophets believed in social righteousness and sharply rebuked the oppressions of the rich.)

2. THE LORD GOD HATH SWORN (Taken an oath,) BY HIS HOLINESS, (The custom with oaths is for the one taking the oath to swear by something greater than himself. In this, God has a difficult time. He can do no better than to swear by Himself, Heb. 6:13,14, or by one of His attributes as in this verse,) THAT, LO, THE DAYS SHALL COME UPON YOU, (He didn't say how soon, but that they could be sure that in time it would happen,) THAT HE SHALL TAKE YOU AWAY WITH HOOKS, AND YOUR POSTERITY (Offspring,) WITH FISHHOOKS, (For similar language concerning the southern kingdom, see Jer. 16:16.)

3. AND YE SHALL GO OUT AT THE BREACHES, (The kingdom would collapse with rents here and there in the time of its defense. They would go out of their land like cows going through the breaches of a pasture fence. In this verse, Amos returns to the figure of "cows" first raised in verse 1.) AND YE SHALL CAST THEM INTO THE PALACE, SAITH THE LORD. (This clause has been rendered variously because of variations in the Hebrew text.)

4. COME TO BETHEL, (One of the first places of northern kingdom idolatry,) AND TRANSGRESS; AT GILGAL (That sacred place where Joshua and the children of Israel had first encamped inside the Promised land, Joshua 4:19, had apparently become another place of idolatry in Israel by Amos's time,) MULTIPLY TRANSGRESSION; AND BRING YOUR SACRIFICES EVERY MORNING, (The substitute religion of Jeroboam had borrowed many of the practices of the true religion, such as the sacrifice of the morning, Num. 28:3,4, just as denominationalism today has borrowed some of the aspects of the divine religion,) AND YOUR TITHES AFTER THREE YEARS: (This was in imitation of the three-year tithe of Deut. 14:28.)

5. AND OFFER A SACRIFICE OF THANKSGIVING WITH LEAVEN (In imitation of Lev. 7:13 and Lev. 23:17.) AND PROCLAIM AND PUBLISH THE FREE OFFERINGS: (They copied the free will offerings also. How disgusting it must be to God to see people pick out what they want of His religion and leave out what they don't want as they spin a religion of their own!) FOR THIS LIKETH YOU, O YE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, SAITH THE LORD GOD. (This "pleaseth" you, the American Standard version gives.

This is no higher than some people go in religion—just whatever pleases them instead of striving to do what will please God. But, the northern kingdom had ceased long ago striving to please Jehovah in their religion.)

6. AND I ALSO HAVE GIVEN YOU CLEANNESSE OF TEETH (Food shortages.) IN ALL YOUR CITIES, AND WANT OF BREAD (The staff of life,) IN ALL YOUR PLACES; (He had done this as chastening to get them to repent. When people fail to listen to the law of God, He has one recourse left in this world—chastening—and He uses it. His purpose in it is to get people to repent, Rev. 3:19.) YET HAVE YE NOT RETURNED UNTO ME, SAITH THE LORD. (Four other times in this chapter does Amos make the same statement; vs. 8,9,10,11. No matter what is done to some people, they will not repent. It is for such people that God has reserved wrath for eternity.)

7. AND ALSO I HAVE WITHHOLDEN THE RAIN FROM YOU, WHERE THERE WERE YET THREE MONTHS TO THE HARVEST: (That would ruin their hopes of a harvest.) AND I CAUSED IT TO RAIN UPON ONE CITY, AND CAUSED IT NOT TO RAIN UPON ANOTHER CITY: (Where they were godly, it rained; where they weren't, it didn't. God purposely made a distinction.) ONE PIECE HAS RAINED UPON, AND THE PIECE WHEREUPON IT RAINED NOT WITHERED. (Water is absolutely essential to agriculture.)

8; SO TWO OR THREE CITIES WANDERED UNTO ONE CITY, TO DRINK WATER: (The chastened cities had to go to the unchastened. You would think they would have put "two and two together", but they didn't. Satan has ways of blinding the thoughts of those who ought to repent. An unspiritual nature does not produce spiritual thoughts.) BUT THEY WERE NOT SATISFIED; YET HAVE YE NOT RETURNED UNTO ME, SAITH THE LORD.

9. I HAVE SMITTEN YOU WITH BLASTING AND MILDEW; (Numerous passages in the Old Testament link these two together: Deut. 28:22; I Kings 8:37; and Haggai 2:17. "Blasting" was hot wind, Gen. 41:6, and "mildew" was that which followed. The crops were ruined as a result.) WHEN YOUR GARDENS AND YOUR VINEYARDS AND YOUR FIG TREES AND YOUR OLIVE TREES INCREASED, (Vegetables, grapes, figs, and olives were among the leading products of the gardens and orchards of Palestine.)

THE PALMERWORM DEVOURED THEM: (Joel also spoke of the palmerworm, Joel 1:4.) YET HAVE YE NOT RETURNED UNTO ME, SAITH THE LORD.

10. I HAVE SENT AMONG YOU THE PESTILENCE AFTER THE MANNER OF EGYPT: (What a terrible plague that must have been!) YOUR YOUNG MEN HAVE I SLAIN WITH THE SWORD, AND HAVE TAKEN AWAY YOUR HORSES; (The northern kingdom had experienced numerous wars. Even the loss of their young men and their horses hadn't brought them to their knees. Horses were used for military rather than agricultural purposes in those years, oxen being the beasts of burden in the field.) AND I HAVE MADE THE STINK OF YOUR CAMPS TO COME UP UNTO YOUR NOSTRILS: (How revolting and distasteful!) YET HAVE YE NOT RETURNED UNTO ME, SAITH THE LORD.

11. I HAVE OVERTHROWN SOME OF YOU, AS GOD OVERTHREW SODOM AND GOMORRAH, AND YE WERE AS A FIREBRAND PLUCKED OUT OF THE BURNING: (Just as God had made distinction in cities in giving and withholding rain, so had He done with reference to the destruction of certain cities and the sparing of others.) YET HAVE YE NOT RETURNED UNTO ME, SAITH THE LORD.

12. THEREFORE (In view of their failure to repent when He had chastened them so many, many times and in so many different ways,) THUS WILL I DO UNTO THEE, O ISRAEL: (Amos's book starts out with brief condemnations of other nations, but he settles down to preach to and predict the doom of Israel.) PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD, O ISRAEL. (Many take this as an evangelistic appeal, calling upon the nation to repent. However, everything God has done has failed to bring them to repentance. Amos is sent to tell them that God is going to wipe them out. In military language, they are called upon to "prepare" to withstand God in battle if they can. God will show them that they have trampled His will underfoot and that He is the only true God whom they should have been serving faithful.)

13. FOR, LO, HE THAT FORMETH THE MOUNTAINS, AND CREATETH THE WIND, AND DECLARETH UNTO MAN WHAT IS HIS THOUGHT, THAT MAKETH THE MORNING DARKNESS, AND TREADETH UPON THE HIGH

PLACES OF THE EARTH, THE LORD, THE GOD OF HOSTS, IS HIS NAME. (Here Amos exalts God in nature. In later portions of the book, there will be found other choice thoughts upon this subject. What a God to hope to resist in the day of His judgment! The sinners in Israel were "asking for it" just as slumbering, refusing-to-repent sinners are doing today.)

CHAPTER 5

1. HEAR YE THIS WORD WHICH I TAKE UP AGAINST YOU, EVEN A LAMENTATION, O HOUSE OF ISRAEL. (So certain was their doom that Amos was even penning a lamentation over them.)

2. THE VIRGIN OF ISRAEL IS FALLEN; SHE SHALL NO MORE RISE: (This flatly contradicts the doctrine that the northern kingdom will one day be restored. Amos 8; 14 also affirms the final doom of the north. Passages elsewhere that are sometimes cited to prove that the north will be restored have a spiritual fulfillment.) SHE IS FORSAKEN UPON HER LAND: THERE IS NONE TO RAISE HER UP. (What happened to her gods? What happened to her military might? What happened to her alliances? Hezekiah trusted God to spare his southern kingdom from the same Assyria that overthrew the northern kingdom. His trust in the true God was not in vain, for in one night God smote the enemy's proud army with death—185,000 casualties in one night, II Kings 18 and 19. The north trusted in its idols, its military power, and its alliances and fell; Hezekiah trusted in God, and his kingdom was spared. David, that great warrior, wrote, "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God," Psa. 20:7. He also wrote, "I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me. But thou hast saved us from our enemies," Psa. 44: 6,7. Psa. 118:8 says, "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in men." And Isa. 42:17 says, "They shall be turned back, they shall be greatly ashamed, that trust in graven images, that say to the molten images, Ye are our gods." These passages tell the difference between the northern and southern kingdoms in the eighth century B.C.)

3. FOR THUS SAITH THE LORD GOD: THE CITY THAT WENT OUT BY A THOUSAND SHALL LEAVE AN HUN-

DRED, (Nine-tenths wiped out!) AND THAT WHICH WENT FORTH BY AN HUNDRED SHALL LEAVE TEN, (Not enough even to make a town,) TO THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL.

4. FOR THUS SAITH THE LORD UNTO THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL, SEEK YE ME, AND YE SHALL LIVE: (God always promised to perpetuate the nation with blessings if it served Him. Though they have spent so many years in disobedience, nothing would please God more than for them to have turned to Him. He would have abundantly pardoned!)

5. BUT SEEK NOT BETHEL, NOR ENTER INTO GILGAL, AND PASS NOT TO BEERSHEBA: FOR GILGAL SHALL SURELY GO INTO CAPTIVITY, AND BETHEL SHALL COME TO NOUGHT. (God would not have been pleased to have been just one of the gods of the Israelites. He says, "Seek me, but not Bethel or Gilgal or anybody else or any other place." "Bethel" meant "house of God" and was a place sacred to the memory of the Israelites as the place where their father Jacob saw the ladder to heaven, Gen. 28:11-19. Gilgal was another place connected with their sacred history as the first place of encampment inside the Promised Land, Joshua 4:19. Beersheba was the place where God appeared to Isaac and gave him the Abrahamic promises, Gen. 26:23-25. The northern kingdom had turned all of these venerable places into centers of idolatry.)

6. SEEK THE LORD, AND YE SHALL LIVE LEST HE BREAK OUT LIKE FIRE IN THE HOUSE OF JOSEPH, (Both Ephraim and Manasseh, the tribes representing Joseph's offspring, were in the northern kingdom,) AND DEVOUR IT, AND THERE BE NONE TO QUENCH IT IN BETHEL. (When God started a fire, the "fire department" of Bethel could not put it out.)

7. YE WHO TURN JUDGMENT (Social justice—something desirable,) TO WORMWOOD (Something bitter and undesirable,) AND LEAVE OFF RIGHTEOUSNESS IN THE EARTH,

8. SEEK HIM THAT MAKETH THE SEVEN STARS (Something called the Pleides,) AND ORION, (These two groups of stars are spoken of in Job 9:9 and Job 38:31. Orion is the brightest constellation in the northern heavens and in Greek mythology was placed with his hound among the stars and pictured with a girdle, sword, lion's skin,

and club. The three bright stars across the center of the constellation are called Orion's belt. The seven stars of the Pleiades were in Greek mythology seven sisters who were being pursued by Orion. Many today can point out the seven stars and Orion on a starry night. Many ancients worshipped these various constellations. Amos says, "Seek him who made these stars.") AND TURNETH THE SHADOW OF DEATH (Darkness of night,) INTO THE MORNING, AND MAKETH THE DAY DARK WITH NIGHT: (Again Amos exalts the God of nature.) THAT CALLETH FOR THE WATERS OF THE SEA, (Evaporation,) AND POURETH THEM OUT UPON THE FACE OF THE EARTH: (Rain. Amos, living centuries before our scientific age, accurately traced the water cycle, Inspiration guiding him to do so.) THE LORD IS HIS NAME:

9. THAT STRENGTHENETH THE SPOILED (The attacked, the oppressed, the weak,) AGAINST THE STRONG, (THE aggressor, the oppressor,) SO THAT THE SPOILED SHALL COME AGAINST THE FORTRESS. (The language reminds one of Paul's words in I Cor. 1:27,28.)

10. THEY HATE HIM THAT REBUKETH IN THE GATE, (Generally speaking, correction is grievous, Prov. 15:10. Jesus said this was why the world hated Him, John 7:7. People would rather be flattered than corrected. Ahab hated the prophet Micaiah because he never prophesied good concerning him, I Kings 22:7,8. He considered Elijah an enemy because he opposed his sins, I Kings 21:20. Paul asked the Galatians in 4:16, "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" The northern kingdom would not appreciate the rebukes of Amos either.) AND THEY ABHOR HIM THAT SPEAKETH RIGHTLY. (They should respect him and listen to him, but so often they don't. There is a "rub" existing between the just and the wicked, Prov. 29:27.)

11. FORASMUCH THEREFORE AS YOUR TREADING IS UPON THE POOR, AND YE TAKE FROM HIM BURDENS OF WHEAT; YE HAVE BUILT HOUSES OF HEWN STONE. (Expensive, luxurious houses at the expense of the poor.) BUT YE SHALL NOT DWELL IN THEM; YE HAVE PLANTED PLEASANT VINEYARDS, BUT YE SHALL NOT DRINK WINE OF THEM, (God had given their forefathers houses that they had not built and vineyards that they had not planted, Josh. 24:13. Now, because of their disobedience, the tables were to be reversed,)

12. FOR I KNOW YOUR MANIFOLD TRANSGRESSIONS AND YOUR MIGHTY SINS; (What a dual description of their sinning! They had gone "hog wild" in their sins.) THEY AFFLICT THE JUST, THEY TAKE A BRIBE, AND THEY TURN ASIDE THE POOR IN THE GATE FROM THEIR RIGHT. (Amos is here laying it on the leaders, who sat in the gate of the city to render verdicts regarding civil difficulties. With them, it was not a matter of which one was right, but who gave them a bribe. A perversion of justice has always been counted so wrong by the Lord.)

13. THEREFORE THE PRUDENT SHALL KEEP SILENCE IN THAT TIME; FOR IT IS AN EVIL TIME. (There comes a time that further talk is but "casting pearls before swine", Matt. 7:6. On the other hand, the "prudent" may mean the diplomatic person who is all for righteousness when righteousness is in sway, but who says nothing against evil when evil is in sway.)

14. SEEK GOOD, AND NOT EVIL, (Goodness is something to be sought, Matt. 6:33, and to be pursued, I Tim. 6:11. So often, though, people seek the evil and neglect the good. Good and evil are exact opposites; one must determine which he is going to seek, for he cannot seek both.) THAT YE MAY LIVE; AND SO THE LORD, THE GOD OF HOSTS, SHALL BE WITH YOU, (God will not bless those dedicated to wrongdoing, I Pet. 3:12. He answers the prayers of the godly, Jas. 5:16; I Tim. 2:8; I John 3:22.) AS YE HAVE SPOKEN. (They claimed that God was with them. That was probably because of the material prosperity and peace reigning in the time of Jeroboam II.)

15. HATE THE EVIL, AND LOVE THE GOOD, (Their feelings were to be involved, too. Merely seeking the good is not sufficient—love the good; merely refraining from evil is not sufficient—hate the evil. Rom. 12:9, Paul's instruction to Christians, parallels Amos's instruction here. Heb. 1:8,9 takes particular note of the fact that Christ loved righteousness and hated iniquity; we are to follow His example.) AND ESTABLISH JUDGMENT IN THE GATE; (In the foregoing, Amos was urging the judges to hate the evil and love the good, which would result in their giving righteous decisions, upholding the righteous man and condemning the wicked.) IT MAY BE (It may not be too late.) THAT THE LORD GOD OF HOSTS WILL BE GRACIOUS UNTO THE REMNANT OF JOSEPH. (When

leaders are corrupt, the times become corrupt, calling for the wrath of God. Therefore, Amos and most of the prophets directed their messages to the leaders. If they could be corrected, there might yet be hope for the sparing of the nation.)

16. THEREFORE THE LORD, THE GOD OF HOSTS, THE LORD, SAITH THUS; WAILING SHALL BE IN ALL STREETS; AND THEY SHALL SAY IN ALL THE HIGHWAYS, ALAS! ALAS! (When God punishes the wicked, the joy of their sinning is replaced by weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth; Jas. 5:1-3; Luke 6:25; Matt. 22:13; Matt. 13:41, 42. Oh that man would think of this fact ahead of time!) AND THEY SHALL CALL THE HUSBANDMAN TO MOURNING, AND SUCH AS ARE SKILLFUL OF LAMENTATION TO WAILING. (In those times, they hired mourners to weep and wail and carry on; Jer. 9:17; Matt. 9:23; and others. They were usually women because of their greater emotional expression. The husbandmen would wall because of the pathetic condition of their vineyards.)

17. AND IN ALL VINEYARDS SHALL BE WAILING: (Places where their festivals had once prevailed,) FOR I WILL PASS THROUGH THEE, SAITH THE LORD, (When the Lord passes through in judgment, He is like a destructive storm, Nah. 1:3; like a flood, Nah. 1:8; like a burning fire, Nah. 1:10. It is a fear thing to fall into the hands of the living God, Heb. 10:31.)

18. WOE UNTO YOU THAT DESIRE THE DAY OF THE LORD! (Many did not fear the coming day of judgment as they should—much like people today, who acknowledge a coming judgment, but who are little disturbed about it.) TO WHAT END IS IT FOR YOU? THE DAY OF THE LORD IS DARKNESS, AND NOT LIGHT. (Joel 2:2 and Zeph. 1:15 similarly describe that day. It will be a most undesirable day for those who are not on God's side.)

19. AS IF A MAN DID FLEE FROM A LION, AND A BEAR MET HIM; (Darkness is a fearful thought to many people, and the Bible speaks of the wicked being cast into outer darkness, Matt. 22:13. But, some would be unaffected by a threat of darkness. Consequently, Amos describes it in terms that all would fear—a man fleeing from a lion. Normally, he would have very little chance of escape, but to make matters worse, in his flight he meets a bear. What is he going to do now? Fortunately, he sees a door

and dashes inside with a sigh of relief. In exhaustion, he leans against the wall of the house, and see what happens to him.) OR WENT INTO THE HOUSE, AND LEANED ON THE WALL, AND A SERPENT BIT HIM, (The dirt walls of their houses were sometimes infested with serpents. In some places, the mongoose was kept as a pet to keep the dwelling free of them.)

20. SHALL NOT THE DAY OF THE LORD BE DARKNESS, AND NOT LIGHT? EVEN VERY DARK, AND NO BRIGHTNESS IN IT? (There will be nothing good about it to the condemned—no happiness, no comfort, no hope. That these words were fulfilled upon the northern history is indelibly written into the history of that people, and God's warnings of future judgment should be carefully respected and heeded.)

21. I HATE, I DESPISE YOUR FEAST DAYS, (No stronger words could be employed to show God's feelings toward the part of their religious life that was directed to Him. God was no more pleased for Israel to two-time Him than a husband is for his wife to do so. What man would be pleased to have his wife have a suitor? God is no different. When Israel turned from a complete and hearty obedience to Jehovah, every act of worship by them was abominable to Him, Prov. 28:9 and Prov. 15:8.) AND I WILL NOT SMELL IN YOUR SOLEMN ASSEMBLIES, (An acceptable sacrifice is said to have a sweet smelling savour to God, Eph. 5:2 and Gen. 8:21. The burning of incense likewise sent up a sweet aroma. God is likened to one who would come to the bowers of heaven when His people sacrificed or burned incense to smell their sweet savour, but when they were wicked, God did not like the smell; incense is said to have been offensive to His smell—"abomination" means to have a terribly offensive smell, Isa. 1:13.)

22. THOUGH YE OFFER ME BURNT OFFERINGS AND YOUR MEAT OFFERINGS, I WILL NOT ACCEPT THEM: (This corrects the prevailing idea that God will accept anything that is done in the name of religion. He will not. God had commanded these very things—burnt offerings and meat offering—but even these He rejected when the other aspects of their lives and religion were not right. God later sent a similar message to the southern kingdom by the prophet Isaiah, Isa. 1:10-15.) NEITHER WILL I REGARD THE PEACE OFFERINGS OF YOUR FAT BEASTS. (All their religion, then, really amounted to a lot of waste

since God did not regard it. They might as well have kept their fat beasts and have done as they pleased with the time that they spent in their religious acts, for their religion was unavailing with God.)

23. TAKE THOU AWAY FROM ME THE NOISE OF THY SONGS; (To God, their songs were nothing but noise. When music on the radio sounds like noise rather than music to us, we shut it off, and God said, "Take away from me the noise.") FOR I WILL NOT HEAR THE MELODY OF THY VIOLS, (The musicians worked hard to produce what to them was very beautiful music, but because of their unscriptural, unspiritual religion, God would not listen to their music. Some try to see in this passage a charge against instrumental music, but if that be true, "songs" would be outlawed too, for they were likewise condemned in this same verse. The truth is that God had commanded all of these things—burnt offerings, meat offerings, peace offerings, singing, and instrumental music—but He wanted such corrupt people to refrain from doing these things for which they were no longer qualified.)

24. BUT LET JUDGMENT RUN DOWN (The marginal reading says, "Roll down.") AS WATERS, AND RIGHTEOUSNESS AS A MIGHTY STREAM. (To me, this is one of the most beautiful pictures in all the Bible; righteousness rolling down like a great waterfall and moving its way through the countryside like a mighty stream. This appeal of Amos is parallel to praying, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven," Matt. 6:10. How delighted God would have been if the wickedness of Israel could have been turned to such righteousness!)

25. HAVE YE OFFERED UNTO ME SACRIFICES AND OFFERINGS IN THE WILDERNESS FORTY YEARS, O HOUSE OF ISRAEL? (They sacrificed in the wilderness, but God apparently regarded very little of their wilderness religion as acceptable. Their murmurings, disbelief, and constant disobedience rendered their religion invalid as far as He was concerned.)

26. BUT YE HAVE BORNE THAT TABERNACLE OF YOUR MOLOCH AND CHIUN YOUR IMAGES, THE STAR OF YOUR GOD, WHICH YE MADE TO YOURSELVES. (Stephen in his sermon refers to this passage, Acts 7:41-43. God disclaims any connection with such abominations; He calls them "your Moloch and Chiun," "your images",

"your god," Moloch, in other places called Molech, Malcam, and Milcom, was an Ammonite god corresponding to the Moabite god Chemosh. Acts 7:43 gives "Remphan" instead of "Chiun". It is thought to have represented some planet or star which they worshipped. At least, they were gods of their own making.)

27. THEREFORE WILL I CAUSE YOU TO GO INTO CAPTIVITY BEYOND DAMASCUS, (Assyria, who would be their captor, lay beyond Damascus, the capital of Syria.) SAITH THE LORD, WHOSE NAME IS THE GOD OF HOSTS. He would be abundantly able to accomplish this which He said was to come upon the northern kingdom.)

CHAPTER 6

1. WOE TO THEM THAT ARE AT EASE IN ZION, (The marginal reading is, "Them that are secure," which is likely correct. It is similar to the woe that Jesus pronounced in Luke 6:24,25. The mention of "Zion" indicates that momentarily Amos has sidestepped long enough to include a brief message concerning the southern kingdom, though he returns to the northern kingdom in the next statement.) AND TRUST IN THE MOUNTAIN OF SAMARIA, (The northern kingdom was doing the same thing concerning their governmental setup.) WHICH ARE NAMED CHIEF OF THE NATIONS, TO WHOM THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL CAME! (The Revised version gives, "The notable men of the chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came!" The leaders of Israel considered themselves chief among all nations. This thought parallels the warnings just given in this verse.)

2. PASS YE UNTO CALNEH, AND SEE; AND FROM THENCE GO YE TO HAMATH THE GREAT; THEN GO DOWN TO GATH OF THE PHILISTINES: (Calneh was a city in Babylon, Hamath a city of Syria, and Gath a city of neighboring Philistia. These cities, all idol worshippers, had either fallen or would fall before Israel and Judah. They were to take warning from them.) BE THEY BETTER THAN THESE KINGDOMS? OR THEIR BORDER GREATER THAN YOUR BORDER? (Because of their sins, they would all fall in due time—none would be better off than the others.)

3. YE THAT PUT FAR AWAY THE EVIL DAY, (These

words were addressed to the leaders, who had fallen into the prevailing thought that their nation would probably someday fall, just as all nations do in time, but they had said in their minds that that day was far off. Doom is sometimes closer than people realize.) AND CAUSE THE SEAT OF VIOLENCE TO COME NEAR; (When men think of judgment as something far off, they continue to sin, Eccl. 8:11. Nineveh repented immediately because they understood that judgment was but forty days away.)

4. THAT LIE UPON BEDS OF IVORY, (Luxury and licentiousness usually go hand in hand.) AND STRETCH THEMSELVES UPON THEIR COUCHES, AND EAT THE LAMBS OUT OF THE FLOCK, AND THE CALVES OUT OF THE MIDST OF THE STALL;

5. THAT CHANT TO THE SOUND OF THE VIOL, AND INVENT TO THEMSELVES INSTRUMENTS OF MUSICK LIKE DAVID;

6. THAT DRINK WINE IN BOWLS, AND ANOINT THEMSELVES WITH THE CHIEF OINTMENTS; (In short, they were eating, drinking, and making sinful merry while the time of judgment drew nearer and nearer. But, such fun can come to an abrupt halt when judgment suddenly falls, as it did at the feast of Belshazzar in Daniel's time.) BUT THEY ARE NOT GRIEVED FOR THE AFFLICTION OF JOSEPH. (They should have been weeping over the sinful conditions that would bring God's wrath upon the nation. But, when there is the most to grieve about, there is usually little of it done.)

7. THEREFORE NOW SHALL THEY GO, CAPTIVE WITH THE FIRST THAT GO CAPTIVE, AND THE BANQUET OF THEM THAT STRETCHED THEMSELVES SHALL BE REMOVED. (First in privilege, first in sinning, first in punishment, and punishment would put an end to their revelry.)

8. THE LORD GOD HATH SWORN (Made an oath, which cannot be changed,) BY HIMSELF, SAITH THE LORD GOD OF HOSTS, I ABHOR THE EXCELLENCY OF JACOB, AND HATE HIS PALACES; ("Abhor" and "hate" are strong words. He deplored their earthly elegance, security, and revelry.) THEREFORE WILL I DELIVER UP THE CITY WITH ALL THAT IS THEREIN. (And He did in the year 721 B.C., when the northern kingdom fell to Assyria.)

9. AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS, IF THERE REMAIN TEN MEN IN ONE HOUSE, THAT THEY SHALL DIE. (By famine, we suppose from what follows.)

10. AND A MAN'S UNCLE (His nearest relatives are dead, so an uncle assumes the disposition of the dead body with no pomp or ceremony.) SHALL TAKE HIM UP, AND HE THAT BURNETH HIM, (The city was shut up because of the enemy encamped without, who not only caused the starvation, but now made it impossible to take the bodies to the customary burial grounds, leaving cremation the only way to dispose of the remains.) TO BRING OUT THE BONES OUT OF THE HOUSE, AND SHALL SAY UNTO HIM THAT IS BY THE SIDES OF THE HOUSE, IS THERE YET ANY WITH THEE? (One of the few remaining persons, and he was probably too weak to assist the uncle with the dead.) AND HE SHALL SAY, NO. THEN SHALL HE SAY, HOLD THY TONGUE: FOR WE MAY NOT MAKE MENTION OF THE NAME OF THE LORD. (This punishment having come because of God's oath made because of their disobedience, it would do no good to pray to Him now to have mercy. The day of mercy for them had ended when the punishment began.)

11. FOR, BEHOLD, THE LORD COMMANDETH, AND HE WILL SMITE THE GREAT HOUSE WITH BREACHES, AND THE LITTLE HOUSE WITH CLEFTS, (Great and small alike would suffer as a result of this punishment.)

12. SHALL HORSES RUN UPON THE ROCK? (No, that is no place for a race.) WILL ONE PLOW THERE WITH OXEN? (Of course, not.) FOR YE HAVE TURNED JUDGMENT INTO GALL, AND THE FRUIT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS INTO HEMLOCK: (Israel's conduct had been as foolish and as inconsistent as having a horse race on a rock or trying to plow a rock with oxen. Their judicial system, which should have been a blessing to the people, had become as bitter as gall because of a perversion of justice, and the fruit of righteousness, which should have been a desirable thing, had been turned to hemlock, a plant whose juice was extremely bitter.)

13. YE WHICH REJOICE IN A THING OF NOUGHT, (Probably meaning their idolatry.) HAVE WE NOT TAKEN TO US HORNS (Great power.) BY OUR OWN STRENGTH? (They felt very independent of Jehovah, who had constituted them a nation and had given them their place in the land

of Palestine.)

14. BUT, BEHOLD, I WILL RAISE UP AGAINST YOU A NATION, (The Assyrians, according to history,) O HOUSE OF ISRAEL, (He speaks with great feeling,) SAITH THE LORD GOD OF HOSTS; AND THEY SHALL AFFLICT YOU FROM THE ENTERING IN OF HEMATH (On the north,) UNTO THE RIVER OF THE WILDERNESS. (Probably one of the streams near their southern border.)

CHAPTER 7

1. THUS HATH THE LORD GOD SHEWED UNTO ME: (With this verse, Amos begins a series of five visions running through chapters 7 and 8 and into chapter 9. The visions had to do with the fall of the northern kingdom, which has been the theme of the book.) AND, BEHOLD, HE FORMED GRASSHOPPERS (The Revised Version says "locusts" while the King James margin gives "green worms". Any of the three was a devourer of crops, which is the thought,) IN THE BEGINNING OF THE SHOOTING UP OF THE LATTER GROWTH; AND, LO, IT WAS THE LATTER GROWTH AFTER THE KING'S MOWINGS. (The king apparently took his hay out of the first cutting, and the plague would move in to devour the latter cutting. A hard winter would face the people.)

2. AND IT CAME TO PASS, THAT WHEN THEY HAD MADE AN END OF EATING THE GRASS OF THE LAND, THEN I SAID, O LORD GOD, FORGIVE, I BESEECH THEE: BY WHOM SHALL JACOB ARISE? FOR HE IS SMALL. (For Amos to behold their destruction even by vision was more than he could bear. He prayed for mercy for the northern kingdom, showing that God has called such men to denounce the sins of the people who have a genuine feeling for them and who would rather see them repent than see them destroyed.)

3. THE LORD REPENTED FOR THIS; IT SHALL NOT BE, SAITH THE LORD. (It is thought that this vision prophesied of the Assyrians' first invasion of Israel when King Menahem paid the king of Assyria to withdraw from the land, II Kings 15:19,20. The nation would have been destroyed at that time had Assyria fought on, but God mercifully spared it.)

4. THUS HATH THE LORD GOD SHEWED UNTO ME: AND, BEHOLD, THE LORD GOD CALLED TO CONTEND BY FIRE, AND IT DEVOURED THE GREAT DEEP, AND DID EAT UP A PART. (Many fiery trials lay before Israel. Most of her kings following Jeroboam's reign were assassinated by aspirants for the throne, II Kings 15:8-25, and the Assyrians under Tiglath-pileser again entered the land, taking some of the land and carrying off some of the people, II Kings 15:29.)

5. THEN SAID I, O LORD GOD, CEASE, I BESEECH THEE: BY WHOM SHALL JACOB ARISE? FOR HE IS SMALL. (When Amos beheld this vision of destruction, he prayed that it might not be the final end of the northern kingdom, and it wasn't, as the following verse brings out.)

6. THE LORD REPENTED FOR THIS: THIS ALSO SHALL NOT BE. (Probably meaning, "Shall not be the end.") SAITH THE LORD GOD.

7. THUS HE SHEWED ME: AND, BEHOLD, THE LORD STOOD UPON A WALL MADE BY A PLUMBLINE, (What a builder uses to see if the wall is perpendicularly true.) WITH A PLUMBLINE IN HIS HAND. (To test the plumbness of the wall.)

8. AND THE LORD SAID UNTO ME, AMOS, WHAT SEEST THOU? AND I SAID, A PLUMBLINE. THEN SAID THE LORD, BEHOLD, I WILL SET A PLUMBLINE IN THE MIDST OF MY PEOPLE ISRAEL: (And, of course, He found them far from plumb. God was doing the same thing to the northern kingdom that Jesus did to the seven churches of Asia in Revelation 2 and 3.) I WILL NOT AGAIN PASS BY THEM ANY MORE: (God was tired of repenting. This time, He declared He would forgive them no more. Amos does not pray for them this time, for prayer could not change the intention of God concerning the sinfulness of the nation.)

9. AND THE HIGH PLACES OF ISAAC (The places of idolatrous worship.) SHALL BE DESOLATE, AND THE SANCTUARIES OF ISRAEL (Idolatrous sanctuaries.) SHALL BE LAID WASTE; AND I WILL RISE AGAINST THE HOUSE OF JEROBOAM (The northern kingdom which he had built to such a glorious state.) WITH THE SWORD. (The sword of the Assyrians. II Kings 17:1-23 tells of the last days of the kingdom under King Hoshea and of its final overthrow.)

10. THEN AMAZIAH THE PRIEST OF BETHEL (An idolatrous priest,) SENT TO JEROBOAM KING OF ISRAEL, (If the king could be enlisted against Amos, he would soon be gotten rid of.) SAYING, AMOS HATH CONSPIRED AGAINST THEE (Amos's mention of Jeroboam's house in verse 9 gave Amaziah an opportunity to run to the king about his prophesying.) IN THE MIDST OF THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL: THE LAND IS NOT ABLE TO BEAR ALL HIS WORDS. (He was preaching a message they did not like and did not propose to see continued.)

11. FOR THUS AMOS SAITH, JEROBOAM SHALL DIE BY THE SWORD, (Not exactly what Amos said in verse 9, but about as near as you can expect an angry enemy to report it,) AND ISRAEL SHALL SURELY BE LED AWAY CAPTIVE OUT OF THEIR OWN LAND. (We are not told whether the king became alarmed at Amos or not. Probably he didn't. Amaziah apparently took it upon himself to banish Amos according to the next verses.)

12. ALSO AMAZIAH SAID UNTO AMOS, O THOU SEER, GO, FLEE THEE AWAY INTO THE LAND OF JUDAH, AND THERE EAT BREAD, AND PROPHECY THERE:

13. BUT PROPHECY NOT AGAIN ANY MORE AT BETHEL: FOR IT IS THE KING'S CHAPEL, AND IT IS THE KING'S COURT. (By telling him to "flee", he may have been trying to scare him, but God's preachers have never "scared" very easily. "Get back to Judah" where Jeroboam cannot get you. "Prophecy there" where they believe as you do, but don't preach any more here. Many preachers have been told similarly when trying to straighten out congregations. "Why don't you preach where they believe in immersion? Leave us alone." "Why don't you preach where they believe in sending their money direct. We have always sent our money to our missionary headquarters." "Why don't you preach where people are narrow minded in their beliefs. We want to have fellowship with all the churches." And so the tendency to apostatize and to refuse reformatory measures is the same today as it was 800 years before Christ.)

14. THEN ANSWERED AMOS, AND SAID TO AMAZIAH, I WAS NO PROPHET, (This had not been his work.) NEITHER WAS I A PROPHET'S SON; (A younger man coming up who would someday be a prophet.) BUT I WAS AN HERDMAN, AND A GATHERER OF SYCAMORE FRUIT:

(A rural man altogether with no connections with the prophetic office before.)

15. AND THE LORD TOOK ME AS I FOLLOWED THE FLOCK, AND THE LORD SAID UNTO ME, GO, PROPHECY (Many of God's special servants have come from lowly, rural beginnings.) UNTO MY PEOPLE ISRAEL. (Amos carefully notes to Amaziah that God called the northern kingdom "my people Israel". Amos still wished for their spiritual welfare whom God designated as His people. It was not with glee that he bore his message of doom to the people of the north.)

16. NOW THEREFORE HEAR THOU THE WORD OF THE LORD: (This is not what Amos says, but what God says.) THOU SAYEST, PROPHECY NOT AGAINST ISRAEL, AND DROP NOT THY WORD AGAINST THE HOUSE OF ISAAC.

17. THEREFORE THUS SAITH THE LORD; THY WIFE SHALL BE AN HARLOT IN THE CITY, (Amos here announces God's personal judgment upon Amaziah and his family because of his attempt to resist the message of Amos. Elisha did the same to the official who refused his prophecy, II Kings 7:1,2. Jeremiah did the same to Jekoiakim, Jer. 36:21-32.) AND THY SONS AND THY DAUGHTERS SHALL FALL BY THE SWORD, AND THY LAND SHALL BE DIVIDED BY LINE; AND THOU SHALT DIE IN A POLLUTED LAND: (And then he went on to reaffirm what he had previously said concerning Israel.) AND ISRAEL SHALL SURELY GO INTO CAPTIVITY FORTH OF HIS LAND.

CHAPTER 8

1. THUS HATH THE LORD GOD SHEWED UNTO ME: (The visions continue after the interruption caused by Amaziah.) AND BEHOLD A BASKET OF SUMMER FRUIT. (Harvest time.)

2. AND HE SAID, AMOS, WHAT SEEST THOU? AND I SAID, A BASKET OF SUMMER FRUIT. THEN SAID THE LORD UNTO ME, THE END IS COME UPON MY PEOPLE OF ISRAEL; (Judgment is often pictured as harvest time in the Bible: Matt. 3:12; Rev. 14:14-20; and others.) I WILL NOT AGAIN PASS BY THEM ANY

MORE. (He would be merciful to them no more. When God withdraws His mercy, eternal night has set in upon that soul or upon that nation. The result would be that mentioned in the next verse.)

3. AND THE SONGS OF THE TEMPLE SHALL BE HOWLINGS IN THAT DAY, SAITH THE LORD GOD: (Their joy would be turned to sorrow, their happy occasions to howlings.) THERE SHALL BE MANY DEAD BODIES IN EVERY PLACE; THEY SHALL CAST THEM FORTH WITH SILENCE. (Many would die of starvation in the siege, and many would die in the battle.)

4. HEAR THIS, O YE THAT SWALLOW UP THE NEEDY, EVEN TO MAKE THE POOR OF THE LAND TO FAIL, (The rich who had gotten rich by making the poor people poorer.)

5. SAYING, WHEN WILL THE NEW MOON (A feast that came every twenty-eight days.) BE GONE, THAT WE MAY SELL CORN? AND THE SABBATH, THAT WE MAY SET FORTH WHEAT, (They were forbidden to engage in their merchandising at such stated times. They refrained outwardly from selling them, but they did not refrain willingly. They are like those who cease their work on Sunday today to go to church, but who think about their business while in church instead of thinking on the purpose for which they have attended.) MAKING THE EPHAH (One of their measures, about a bushel.) SMALL, AND THE SHEKEL (One of their coins.) GREAT, AND FALSIFYING THE BALANCES (Scales.) BY DECEIT? (Crookedness in business—upping the price, shorting the measure, and using tricky scales.)

6. THAT WE MAY BUY THE POOR FOR SILVER, AND THE NEEDY FOR A PAIR OF SHOES; YEA, AND SELL THE REFUSE OF THE WHEAT? (The poor of the wheat that should not be sold, but which the poor were forced to buy and use because of their circumstances.)

7. THE LORD HATH SWORN BY THE EXCELLENCY OF JACOB, (Thought in this case to refer to God Himself.) SURELY I WILL NEVER FORGET ANY OF THEIR WORKS, (In judgment, God would not overlook a single sin which they had committed.)

8. SHALL NOT THE LAND TREMBLE FOR THIS, AND

EVERY ONE MOURN THAT DWELLETH THEREIN? AND IT SHALL RISE UP WHOLLY AS A FLOOD; (They would be helpless before it.) AND IT SHALL BE CAST OUT AS BY THE FLOOD OF EGYPT, (Possibly referring to the inundations of the Nile.)

9. AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS IN THAT DAY, SAITH THE LORD GOD, THAT I WILL CAUSE THE SUN TO GO DOWN AT NOON, AND I WILL DARKEN THE EARTH IN THE CLEAR DAY; (In prophecy, God often uses the darkening of the earth and the heavenly bodies' ceasing to shine to portray the coming gloominess and sorrow to overtake them.)

10. AND I WILL TURN YOUR FEASTS (Happy occasions,) INTO MOURNING, AND ALL YOUR SONGS (Expressing joy.) INTO LAMENTATION; (Much as Jesus taught in Luke 6:25.) AND I WILL BRING UP SACKCLOTH UPON ALL LOINS, (The ancients, in times of great grief, laid aside their customary clothes and made themselves coverings made out of their cheap cloth of which they customarily made sacks. This practice is alluded to many times throughout the Bible.) AND BALDNESS UPON EVERY HEAD; (They also shaved their heads during lamentation.) AND I WILL MAKE IT AS THE MOURNING OF AN ONLY SON, (One of the strongest lamentations known to man, Especially was this true among the Jews, who thought much of one's name being blotted out with no son to perpetuate it.) AND THE END THEREOF AS A BITTER DAY.

11. BEHOLD, THE DAYS COME, SAITH THE LORD GOD, THAT I WILL SEND A FAMINE IN THE LAND, (Nothing could have been worse news to the carnally minded nation than that God was about to send a famine. To realize that one's nation was about to be plunged into a devastating famine would bring a fear of the future.) NOT A FAMINE OF BREAD, NOR A THIRST FOR WATER, BUT THE HEARING THE WORDS OF THE LORD: (That would not be so bad, the people probably thought. The only famine that unspiritual people can conceive as being something to worry about would be a famine of food and drink. This predicted famine, however, was to be a famine of the Word of God. At that time, they had ample access to it, but often the thing that we have and neglect is in time taken from us, and it is then that we would give anything to have it back. That would be the case with the northern kingdom after it went into Assyrian captivity. They would be taken from

their land; their nation would be forever disorganized; they would be slaves of the Assyrians and to whatever other nations some of them would be sold; never again would they meet as a people for their religious ceremonies; their false prophets would be dead, and even if they were alive, they would not listen to them because of the ruin they had brought upon them; and to top matters off, God was through with the nation—He had had enough, they had refused the correction of His prophets, and it was after long forbearing that He had cast them off forever.)

12. AND THEY SHALL WANDER FROM SEA TO SEA, AND FROM THE NORTH EVEN TO THE EAST, THEY SHALL RUN TO AND FRO TO SEEK THE WORD OF THE LORD, AND SHALL NOT FIND IT.

13. IN THAT DAY SHALL THE FAIR VIRGINS AND YOUNG MEN FAINT FOR THIRST. (Oh for the good days of the past to be back when they had access to God's Word! But, when God abandons people, they are abandoned, and they feel it! The "thirst" of the virgins and young men would be for the Word of the Lord.)

14. THEY THAT SWEAR BY THE SIN OF SAMARIA, AND SAY, THY GOD, O DAN, LIVETH; AND THE MANNER OF BEERSHEBA LIVETH: EVEN THEY SHALL FALL, AND NEVER RISE UP AGAIN. (Their fall would be because of their idolatry, three places that were centers of it being pointed out. To "swear" by something meant that they claimed it as their god. But, while they were swearing by a Dan that was supposed to continue indefinitely and the same with Beersheba, Amos was here announcing that the whole kingdom, including those idol centers, was going to fall, and he said, "They shall never rise up again," and they have not.)

CHAPTER 9

1. I SAW THE LORD STANDING UPON THE ALTAR: (The American Standard Version says, "Beside the altar," though it gives "upon the altar" as a marginal note.) AND HE SAID, SMITE THE LINTEL OF THE DOOR, THAT THE POSTS MAY SHAKE; AND CUT THEM IN THE HEAD, ALL OF THEM; AND I WILL SLAY THE LAST OF THEM WITH THE SWORD; HE THAT FLEETH OF THEM SHALL NOT FLEE AWAY, AND HE THAT ESCAPETH

OF THEM SHALL NOT BE DELIVERED. (This is the last of Amos's five visions, and it pictures the Lord taking vengeance upon the idolatry, the leaders, and the idol-worshippers of the northern kingdom. The following verses, as well as this verse, show how futile will any attempt at escape be.)

2. THOUGH THEY DIG INTO HELL, (The American Standard Version says, "Sheol," the Hebrew correspondent of "Hades" in Greek, It does not refer to a state in eternity like our word "Hell", which is a translation of the Greek "Gehenna". Nations that forget God will be turned into "Sheol", Psa. 9:17 R.V.) THENCE SHALL MINE HAND TAKE THEM: THOUGH THEY CLIMB UP TO HEAVEN, THENCE WILL I BRING THEM DOWN:

3. AND THOUGH THEY HIDE THEMSELVES IN THE TOP OF CARMEL, I WILL SEARCH AND TAKE THEM OUT THENCE; AND THOUGH THEY BE HID FROM MY SIGHT IN THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA, THENCE WILL I COMMAND THE SERPENT, AND HE SHALL BITE THEM:

4. AND THOUGH THEY GO INTO CAPTIVITY BEFORE THEIR ENEMIES, THENCE WILL I COMMAND THE SWORD, AND IT SHALL SLAY THEM: (All of this reminds one of Psa. 139:7-12 and of Jonah's futile attempt to flee from the presence of God, Jonah 1:3,4,7,15,17.) AND I WILL SET MINE EYES UPON THEM FOR EVIL, AND NOT FOR GOOD. (That divine power that would have blessed them must now curse them because of their sins.)

5. AND THE LORD GOD OF HOSTS IS HE THAT TOUCHETH THE LAND, AND IT SHALL MELT, AND ALL THAT DWELL THEREIN SHALL MOURN: AND IT SHALL RISE UP WHOLLY LIKE A FLOOD; AND SHALL BE DROWNED, AS BY THE FLOOD OF EGYPT. (At God's command, all nature obeys. See note on Amos 8:8 for an explanation of similar language.)

6. IT IS HE THAT BUILDETH HIS STORIES IN THE HEAVEN, AND HATH FOUNDED HIS TROOP IN THE EARTH; (The American Standard reads, "His chambers in the heavens, and hath founded his vault upon the earth.") HE THAT CALLETH FOR THE WATERS OF THE SEA, AND POURETH THEM OUT UPON THE FACE OF THE EARTH: (The foregoing is an exaltation of God in nature

and what He is able to do.) THE LORD IS HIS NAME.

7. ARE YE NOT AS CHILDREN OF THE ETHIOPIANS UNTO ME, O CHILDREN OF ISRAEL? SAITH THE LORD. (Because of their idolatry, God was not claiming them any more than He was the Ethiopians.) HAVE NOT I BROUGHT UP ISRAEL OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT? AND THE PHILISTINES FROM CAPHTOR, AND THE SYRIANS FROM KIR? (Their actions meant that their deliverance from Egyptian bondage now meant no more to God than the deliverance of one nation from the hands of another. They had lost their election,)

8. BEHOLD THE EYES OF THE LORD GOD ARE UPON THE SINFUL KINGDOM, AND I WILL DESTROY IT FROM OFF THE FACE OF THE EARTH; SAVING THAT I WILL NOT UTTERLY DESTROY THE HOUSE OF JACOB, SAITH THE LORD. (The northern kingdom was destroyed, but the southern kingdom still stood, and given individuals of the northern kingdom survived,)

9. FOR, LO, I WILL COMMAND, AND I WILL SIFT THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AMONG ALL NATIONS, LIKE AS CORN IS SIFTED IN A SIEVE, YET SHALL NOT THE LEAST GRAIN FALL UPON THE EARTH.

10. ALL THE SINNERS OF MY PEOPLE SHALL DIE BY THE SWORD, WHICH SAY, THE EVIL SHALL NOT OVERTAKE NOR PREVENT ("Meet," American Standard US. (In this great sifting, every evil Israelite would get what was coming to him, and every good Israelite would be spared. The Lord will judge His people, Heb. 10:30. His vengeance will be upon the evildoers, Heb. 10:30. He knoweth them that are His, II Tim. 2:19. The wheat will be gathered into His garner, but the chaff will be burned, Matt. 3:12. The good will be gathered into vessels, but the bad will be cast away, Matt. 13:48-50,)

11. IN THAT DAY WILL I RAISE UP THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID THAT IS FALLEN, AND CLOSE UP THE BREACHES (Rents.) THEREOF; (God's people were united under David, but the decree that the kingdom would be divided came in the reign of his son Solomon, I Kings 11: 11-13. God is here forecasting a coming together of all of His people.) AND I WILL RAISE UP HIS RUINS, AND I WILL BUILD IT AS IN THE DAYS OF OLD:

12. THAT THEY MAY POSSESS THE REMNANT OF EDOM, AND OF ALL THE HEATHEN, (The kingdom was at a peak in David's day, and his conquering exploits are recalled in this passage. Were we given no clue as to how and when these predictions would come true, we would naturally suppose them to have literal, material fulfillments; that is, the physical kingdom of Israel would be restored, and it would again reach forth in a strong military way. But, we are not left unguided in our understanding of this prediction. At the Jerusalem circumcision council in the days of the apostles, they were discussing the standing of the Gentiles who were embracing Christianity. After Peter told about God's sending him to the Gentile Cornelius, and after Paul related God's dealings with the Gentiles through him and Barnabas, the apostle James arose and commented upon Gentile evangelism in words that involved these words from Amos, "Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets: as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up; that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things," Acts 15:14-17. The conquest of the Edomites and other nations predicted by Amos, then, was evangelistic conquest of the surrounding Gentiles. The New Testament does apply military language to the Christian: the graces are referred to as "armor", Eph. 6:13; the Scriptures are the "sword of the Spirit", Eph. 6:17; and they are commanded to war a good warfare, I Tim. 1:18. We, therefore, understand that this closing section of Amos has a spiritual rather than a material fulfillment.) WHICH ARE CALLED BY MY NAME, SAITH THE LORD THAT DOETH THIS.

13. BEHOLD, THE DAYS COME, SAITH THE LORD, THAT THE PLOWMAN SHALL OVERTAKE THE REAPER, AND THE TREADER OF GRAPES HIM THAT SOWETH SEED; (Before the reaper can get the bumper crop reaped, it will be time to plow for the next crop, etc. Great spiritual times are prophesied under the figure of material prosperity.) AND THE MOUNTAINS SHALL DROP SWEET WINE, AND ALL THE HILLS SHALL MELT. (Great flights of oratory often characterized the prophets when describing the glories of the Messianic Age. Joel 3:18 uses similar language concerning the same subject.)

14. AND I WILL BRING AGAIN THE CAPTIVITY OF MY PEOPLE OF ISRAEL, AND THEY SHALL BUILD THE WASTE CITIES, AND INHABIT THEM; AND THEY SHALL PLANT VINEYARDS, AND DRINK THE WINE THEREOF; THEY SHALL ALSO MAKE GARDENS, AND EAT THE FRUIT OF THEM.

15. AND I WILL PLANT THEM UPON THEIR LAND, AND THEY SHALL NO MORE BE PULLED UP OUT OF THEIR LAND WHICH I HAVE GIVEN THEM, SAITH THE LORD THY GOD. (The Jews of Jesus' day interpreted these Old Testament predictions in a material sense. This mistaken notion caused them to reject Jesus as their king, His parables about the kingdom did not make sense to them, and they didn't accept the kingdom of God when it came. Jesus declared that His kingdom was not of this world, and it is not. It is not an earthly type of kingdom at all such as they were looking for. Those today who reject the spiritual fulfillment of these predictions are making the same mistake made by the Jews of Jesus' day.)