

AMOS

THE LION HAS ROARED



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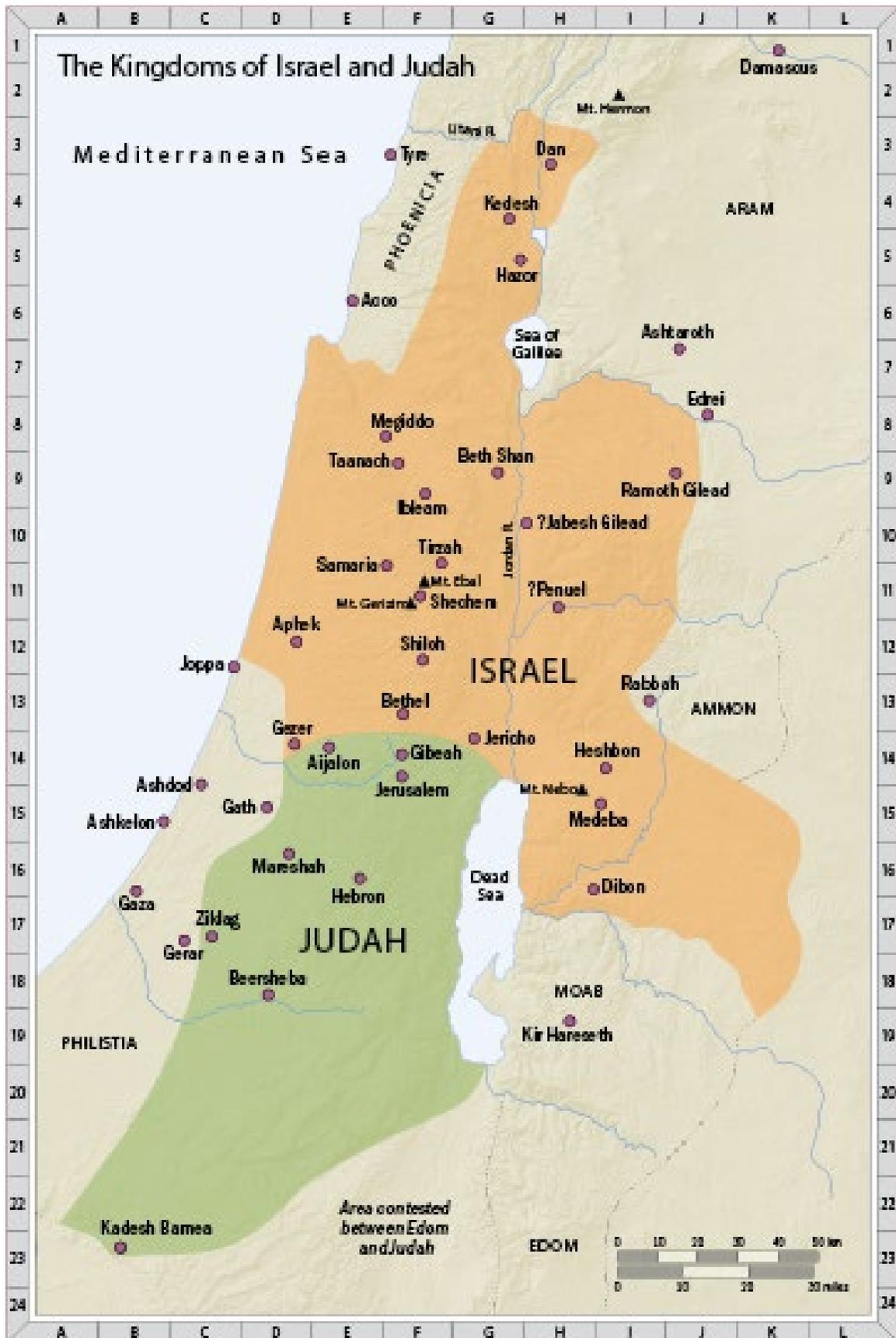
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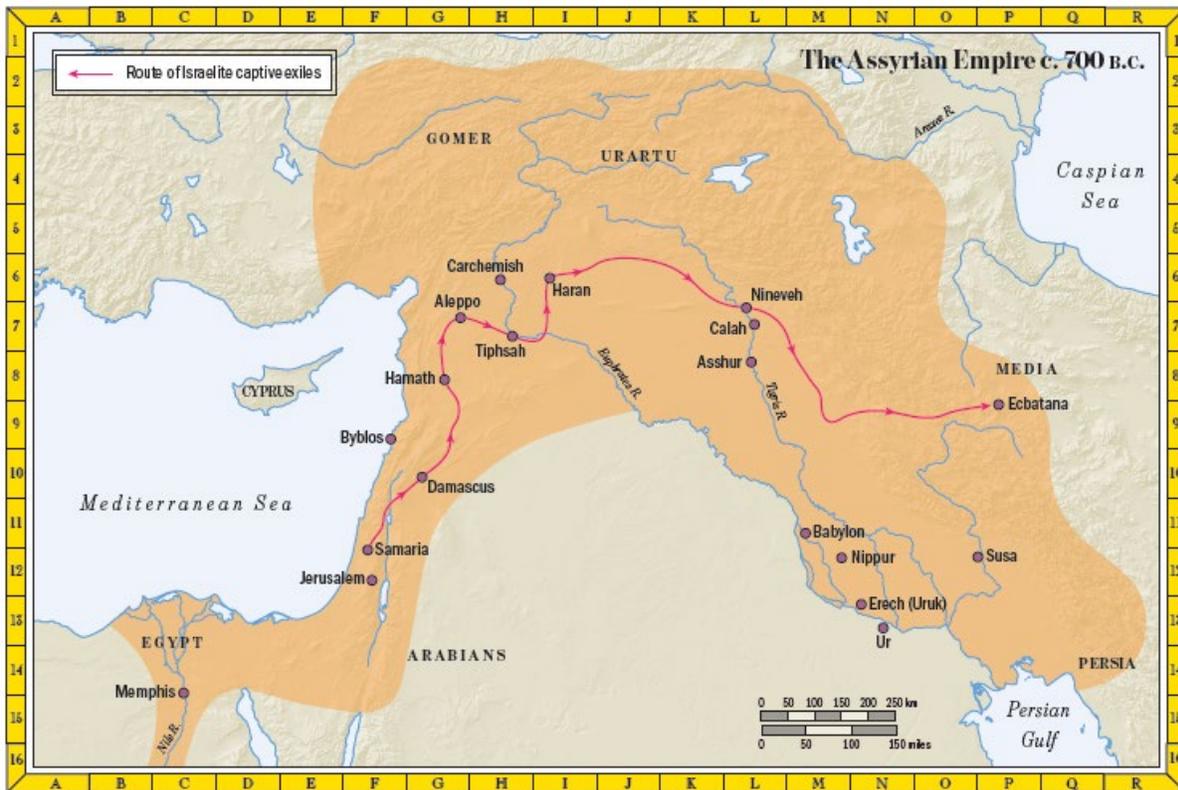
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The two maps above show:

- The geography and political states of Israel and the surrounding nations at the time of Amos, Tekoa is not shown here but it was just south-east of Jerusalem.
- The route the captives took once Samaria and the Northern Kingdom was judged by God, removed from the land, and taken to Ecbatana by the Assyrians.

2 Kings 17:6 ESV *In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria, and he carried the Israelites away to Assyria and placed them in Halah, and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.*

(see the rest of 2 Kings 17 as to why God fulfilled the prophecies of Amos).

Study One: An Introduction to the Book of Amos

(mainly taken from Bible.Org)

I. AUTHOR: Amos

- A. Southerner of Tekoa (south of Jerusalem) (1:1)
- B. Traveled north to Israel (Bethel) to preach as one called of God (7:15)
- C. Occupation: sheep breeder, perhaps a master shepherd with others under him; not a prophet until called by the LORD (1:1; 7:14f) and a grower of sycamore figs (7:14)
- D. Spoke in Bethel (center for idol worship in Israel) and then in Judah under Jeroboam II's resistance (7)
- E. May have returned to Judah to write his messages

II. DATE: *ca.* 767-753 B.C.

- A. King of Judah is Uzziah (Azariah) (790-740)
- B. King of Israel is Jeroboam II (793-753)
- C. Within the period of the joint reigns of Uzziah and Jeroboam, possibly *ca.* 767-753 B.C.
- D. Two years before the earth quake (1:1 cf. [Zech 14:5](#)) it was spoken; it may have been written down later.
- E. King of Assyria--Adad Nirari III (810-753)
- F. King of Syria--Hazeal

III. HISTORICAL SETTING:

- A. Judah is under the influence of Jeroboam II of Israel
- B. Israel appears to be outwardly at its zenith of power. Jeroboam had a successful reign ([2 Ki.14:25-28](#) cf. [Amos 6:14](#))
- C. Many of the evil characteristics described in [Amos 1](#)--2 might better be translated in the present tense of activities then being done.¹ They describe Jeroboam II's rule as painfully disrupted as His lines were breached and the enemies pressed into the territory. Israel was fighting a defensive war against the armies of Syria and Ammon. Both were true.
- D. Three periods of Israel from Jehu (841-814):

1. 839-806 -- Engaged in the East and rent by civil dissensions. Could not put pressure on Syria, suffered 30 years of humiliation during Jehu, Jehoahaz, Jehoash²

2. 806-782 -- Assyria's king Adad-Nirari III is ruler, and ruled over surrounding states, especially Syria. Israel was protected. Therefore Israel was able to restore some of its borders under Jehoash and Jeroboam II. Syria was unable to fight on two borders.³ Israel and Judah restored their borders to almost that of David and Solomon (cf. [2 Ki. 14:25](#) for the prophecy by Jonah)

3. 782-745 -- the time when Amos spoke; Assyria was under duress from the northern kingdom of Urartu which pushed Assyria down from the north, northwest, and northeast.⁴ Syria was freed up to deal with Israel and entered into drawn-out battles to regain Gilead, and Bashan.⁵

E. The people became arrogant during the northern nation's period of prosperity resulting in injustice, greed, neglect of the poor, persecution of the poor, and formalistic religion.⁶

IV. AUDIENCE: Primarily northern Israel (1:1; 7:15), but there are some references to southern Judah as well (2:4-5; 3:1; 6:1).

V. PURPOSES FOR THE BOOK:

A. To describe how the Lord of the universe will not only come to judge the nations for their evil, but will also come to judge Israel for her breach of covenant

B. To expose Israel's breach of covenant through their social oppression of the people, empty religious ritual, and arrogant self-confidence

C. To proclaim a time of restoration and blessing after judgment under a revitalized Davidic dynasty

Issues:

Amos condemns them for a lifestyle of:

1. Rejecting God, ignoring the prophets and defiling the Nazirites
2. Unjust and excessive luxury
3. Enslaving the poor and financially oppressing them
4. Being incredibly greedy and predatory, cheating people in business
5. Idolatry, the occult and false worship
6. Being even worse than the surrounding Gentile nations
7. Not knowing how to do right, having no fear or respect of God
8. Substituting worship for ethical obedience

Study Two - Amos 1:1 to 2:3 The Surrounding Nations

God demonstrates His justice on the nations surrounding Israel..

1. Read Amos 1:1 - Who was Amos? How can ordinary people still be used of God?
2. Read Amos 1:2, 3:7-8 How was God roaring? Who was God using as His messengers?

Read the following sections of Amos and for each section answer the following four questions:

- a) Which nation is being punished?
 - b) What are the divine reasons that the nation being punished?
 - c) How will they be punished?
 - d) Who among them will bear the brunt of God's wrath?
3. Amos 1:3-5
 4. Amos 1:6-8
 5. Amos 1:9,10
 6. Amos 1:11,12
 7. Amos 1:13-15
 8. Amos 2:1-3
 9. Does God still punish wicked nations today?

Study Three - Amos 2:4-16 - Judgment on Judah and Israel

After condemning the surrounding nations, Amos speaks God's judgment on Judah and Israel.

1. Amos 2:4 - "I will not revoke the punishment" – does God sometimes revoke punishment that he has planned? (see Amos 7:1-9, Exodus 32:12-14)
2. Amos 2:4,5 What were the "three sins of Judah and for four" that provoked the wrath of God? How important is covenant faithfulness to the Lord?
3. Amos 2:6-8 What were the sins of Israel that provoked God's wrath? What kinds of sins were they? How twisted had that society become?
4. Does God judge us based on the way that we treat other people, particularly the weak and the vulnerable? Can you think of some examples?
5. Amos 2:9-11 – What is God pointing out here? How good had the Lord been to them? How was Israel committing the sin of treacherous ingratitude?
6. Amos 2:12 - How did Israel react to the presence of God's anointed in their midst? Why is this important (Matthew 23:29-36)?
7. Amos 2:13 - What was God going to do to this stubborn people? What does this powerful metaphor tell us? Have you ever seen a nation that has been burdened and pressed down?
8. Amos 2:14-16 – The inescapable judgment of the Lord. Can human strength or cleverness save wicked people from the wrath of God?
9. Amos 2:16 "On that day..." Does God's wrath come at certain appointed times?

Study Four - Amos Chapter Three - A Lion Has Roared!

Judgment on "all who came out of Egypt", both Northern and Southern Kingdoms.

1. Amos 3:1,2 "You only have I known of all the families of the earth". Since God is omniscient, what is meant by this? What kind of "knowledge" is God talking about here?
2. How does the knowledge of God, if rejected, lead to judgment? (Luke 12:43-48)
3. Amos 3:3-6 A series of rhetorical questions that should each be answered with "No". What do they mean? What is the final point that they make?
4. Amos 3:7,8 What is the role of prophets in declaring the plans and purposes of God?
5. Amos 3:9,10 Who was Amos to "proclaim to" as witnesses against the sin in Israel? What was the central problem?
6. "They do not know how to do right" speaks of a totally ruined national conscience. How do nations lose all sense of right and wrong in public life? (Isaiah 5:16-23)
7. Amos 3:11,12 What sort of a devastating judgement was the Lord going to bring on the northern kingdom of Samaria? What eventually happened?
8. Amos 3:13-15 Judah is not exempt. What happens to the false altar at Bethel (a high place) and to the Judeans living in luxury? What do you think was wrong with the way the people of Judah lived in luxury? (Isaiah 5:8-15)
9. The word "strongholds" is used throughout this chapter, and the book of Amos, as a symbol of proud people trusting in great fortresses and wealth (Amos 2:5, 3:19, 3:11, 6:8) and God always hates and destroys such strongholds. What strongholds do people trust in today in such a way that they are proud and opposed to heaven?

Study Five - Amos Chapter 4 - Yet You Did Not Return to Me!

Amos condemns those with lots of religion, who utterly reject God and His commandments.

1. Amos 4:1-3 Who were the “cows of Bashan” and what was their lifestyle? Do people like this still exist today? What was their judgment? (Note the word translated Harmon is difficult to translate and may mean fortresses, loss of authority or Hamdan, also known as Ecbatana the capital of the Medes, where the people of Samaria were taken into exile)
2. Amos 4:4,5 How religious were they? Did this please God? How regularly did they bring sacrifices, freewill offerings and tithes? Can God be bribed?
3. Amos 4:6-8 How did God try to get their attention? What was their response? How can people be so stubborn?
4. Amos 4:9,10 These are extreme judgments. What was God trying to do? Why did He have to go to these lengths (Amos 2:10,11)
5. What does it mean to be a brand plucked from the burning?
Zechariah 3:1-2, 1 Corinthians 3:15, Jude 1:23
6. Amos 4:11,12 Amos prophesies a very strong word. How do you think his audience would have felt hearing this? Why do people ignore such prophets? (Romans 1:18-32)
7. What does the phrase “prepare to meet your God” mean:
 - a) to the unsaved ?
 - b) to the saved?
8. Amos 4:13 What is God like and what does God do? (See also Revelation 14:6,7) What does the term “God of hosts” mean? How does this picture of God relate to judgment?
9. The Israelites were unable to see God’s hand of discipline behind the disasters that were overtaking them. How can we be more aware of what God is doing?

Study Six - Amos Chapter 5 - Let Justice Roll Down Like Waters

Amos shows the connection between a broken justice system and the judgment of the Lord.

1. Amos 5:1-3 The prophet Amos “takes up a lamentation” over Israel, a prophetic dirge over the soon coming fate of the nation that believed it was completely secure. How can we lament the sinful state of society in a godly way?
2. Amos 5:4-6 “Seek me and live!”. God is telling them to seek God, not the religious shrines at Bethel or Gilgal. What is the difference between seeking God and seeking religious places, events and experiences?
3. Amos 5:7-9 Wormwood as bitter and poisonous. What had happened to the justice system in Israel? What was the Lord’s reaction to this perversion of justice?
4. Amos 5:10-12 What was happening in the gate (the court system) and in the taxation system? What was going to happen to all the wealth they gained from this injustice?
5. Amos 5:13-17 What should Christians do during an evil time? What would happen to them if they decided to hate evil, love good and establish justice at the gate?
6. Amos 5:18-20 What was the day of the Lord going to be like? What illustrations does Amos use to indicate that there would be no escape from the pursuing wrath of God?
7. Amos 5:21-23 Amos returns to his them that religion without justice is futile to man and insulting to God. How does God feel about such ceremonies? Does this apply to enthusiastic “Sunday Christians” who also live crooked and dishonest lives?
8. Amos 5:24 These words were made famous by Dr. Martin Luther King; what do they mean? How is social order important to God, not just individual faith?
9. Amos 5:25-27 and Acts 7:42,43 How had idol worship by the masses been part of the fabric of the people of Israel right from the start?

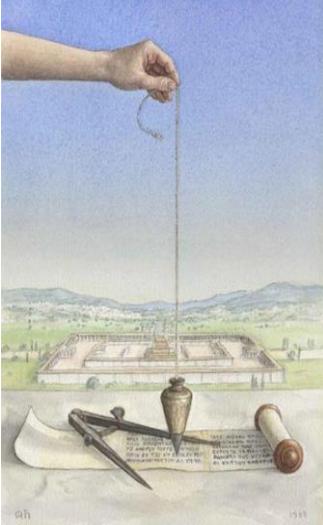
Study Seven - Amos Chapter 6 - Arrogant Militarism Destroyed

Amos condemns arrogant militarism, false security and the loss of even basic common sense.

1. Amos 6:1-3 Samaria was a fortress city, it took a three-year siege before it was captured by the Assyrians. The inhabitants felt secure, but it was a false security. How do people and nations trust in their own schemes for security to “put away the day of disaster”?
2. Amos 6:4-6 “Joseph” was another name for the Northern Kingdom. How does a life of luxury make people tone deaf to their surrounding social and spiritual conditions?
3. Amos 6:7 What would be the fate of the arrogant rulers of Samaria?
4. Amos 6:8 What is God’s attitude to their pompous national pride and militarism?
5. Amos 6:9-11 “House” here means the family, servants and all the dynastic succession similar to “the great houses of England”. What was God going to do to these social elites with their sense of utter entitlement?
6. Amos 6:12 A puzzling metaphor. The questions imply the answer “No, that would be very stupid and harmful”. So, God regards the unjust social system in Israel as equally stupid and harmful. When societies reject God they also reject common sense. How are we seeing that in society today?
7. Amos 6:13 Lo-Debar, literally “ a thing of nothing” which may have been a small town that was captured. A bit like the USA capturing Grenada. Tiny, almost imaginary victories were puffing their militarism up with pride. How do we turn tiny victories in our lives into a source of egotism?
8. Amos 6:14 “For I shall raise up against you a nation” How does God use nations to carry out His purposes, even pagan nations, to fulfill His prophecies?
9. What attitudes make a society toxic, unsafe, and detestable to God?

Study Eight - Amos Chapter 7 - The Plumb Line of The Lord

God's righteous requirements of His people.



1. Amos 7:1-6 God shows Amos two terrifying judgments, Amos pleads with God both times and God revokes the judgments. Can God change His mind?
2. How important is intercession in human history and redemptive history? How do our prayers affect history? (Revelation 8:1-5)
3. How did Amos plead with God? What does this tell us about the nature of God?
4. Amos 7:7-9 What did the plumb line signify? In Hebrew the word for “righteous” *tzedek* comes from the idea of being straight and upright. What was God seeking and testing for by using the plumb line?
5. How should our lives be aligned with the nature of God, the will of God, the plans of God and the purposes of God? (Ephesians 5:1-10)
6. Amos 7:10,11 Who opposed Amos? Why did he oppose Amos? How does speaking the truth about social situations bring opposition (Matthew 14:1-12)?
7. Amos 7:12,13 What should be our response when enemies of the gospel tell us to leave our divine assignment and go somewhere much more comfortable? (2 Corinthians 10:13)
8. Amos 7:14,15 How did God call Amos? What was his assignment from the Lord? Do you get the sense that this was a sudden and abrupt change of lifestyle? Who else did the Lord call in this way? (Matthew 4:18-22, 1 Kings 19:19-21)
9. Amos 7:16,17 Amos gives a brutal response to Amaziah. Why don't Christians react this way under the New Covenant? What changed? (1 Peter 2:21-25)

Study Nine - Amos Chapter 8 - A Basket of Summer Fruit

A Hebrew word play or pun. Summer Fruit is “kayits” and “The End” is “kets” it is the end of a nation that is now perfectly ripe for judgment. God is not going to pass by the field any more, it is time to put in the sickle.

1. Amos 8:1,2 What does this vision tell us about the spiritual state of Israel? Why does God speak to us in dreams, visions, parables, word plays?
2. God will not “pass by” any more. How does this remind us of the two End Time harvests? (Revelation 14:14-20, Matthew 13:36-43, 47-50)
3. Amos 8:3 The idol temples were normally full of pagan musical instruments and revelry. What does God do to them? What does false worship eventually lead to?
4. Amos 8:4-6 What aspects of their economic injustice enrage the Lord? (Nehemiah 13:15-21, Matthew 6:19-24)
5. Amos 8:7,8 Does the Lord forget the sins of wicked, oppressive and unrepentant people? What are they like? (Isaiah 57:20,21)
6. Amos 4:9,10 How is this also a prophesy of the Cross? Matthew 27:47, Mark 15:33
7. Amos 8:11,12 What kind of famine was going to come upon Israel? What is a spiritual famine like? What do you think causes it?
8. Amos 8:13,14 What was going to happen to the worshippers of idols, even though they were young, innocent and sincere? Why is spiritual deception so dangerous? Do all “sincere worshippers” of any and every religion enter the Kingdom of Heaven?
9. Sometimes God is portrayed as a remote Creator who just watches His Creation without ever interfering in it. How does this chapter of Amos refute this false idea of a God who never acts in human history?

Study Ten - Amos Chapter Nine - Destruction and Restoration

God's absolute control of the unfolding events of world history.

1. Read Amos 9:1-4 and Jeremiah 29:10-14 The first verses (Amos) are about the northern ten tribes, the other verses (Jeremiah) concern the southern tribes of Judah and Benjamin. List some of the differences in God's plans for each group?
2. Can sinful behavior become so bad that God becomes the relentless enemy of the unrepentant sinner? (Romans 1:18, 1 Thessalonians 2:14-26)
3. Amos 9:5,6 What are some of the attributes of the Lord of Hosts?
4. Amos 9:7 How does God arrange where the nations live? (Acts 17:26)
5. How do these verses in Amos 9 point to the sovereign hand of God as guiding all of human history?
6. Amos 9:8-10 How does arrogant self-confidence in one's own security, despite a sinful lifestyle, lead to utter destruction? What will happen to the rich, secure, sinful elites of today's world?
7. Read Amos 9:11,12 and Acts 15:13-21 How is the Old Testament fulfilled in the New?
8. Amos 9: 13-15 When will this part of the prophecy be fulfilled? How long-term are the plans and promises of the Lord?
9. List three life-changing things that you have learned from the book of Amos.

MY NOTES