

*Book of Amos*  
(NASB)

*Chapter 6:1-14*

<sup>1</sup> *Woe to those who are at ease in Zion and to those who feel secure in the mountain of Samaria, the distinguished men of the foremost of nations, to whom the house of Israel comes.*

**Woe** > Strong's > oh!: ah, alas, ho, O, woe

Clarke > The word "woe", is understood at the beginning of each of the first, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth verses.

**Zion ... Samaria** > There are two very different interpretations of this verse depending on how a specific Hebrew word is translated:

1. The NASB (*Woe to those who are at ease in Zion and to those who feel secure in the mountain of Samaria*) illustrates one interpretation ... that both Judah (Zion) and Israel (Samaria) have a false sense of security
2. The Septuagint translation (*Woe to them that set at nought Zion, and that trust in the mountain of Samaria*) reveals a second interpretation ... that Israel alone is being addressed/.

**The distinguished men of the foremost of nations** > Barnes > Literally, "the named of the chief of the nations," that is, those who, in Israel, which by the distinguishing favor of God were "chief of the nations," were themselves, marked, distinguished, "named."

<sup>2</sup> *Go over to Calneh and look, and go from there to Hamath the great, then go down to Gath of the Philistines. Are they better than these kingdoms, or is their territory greater than yours?*

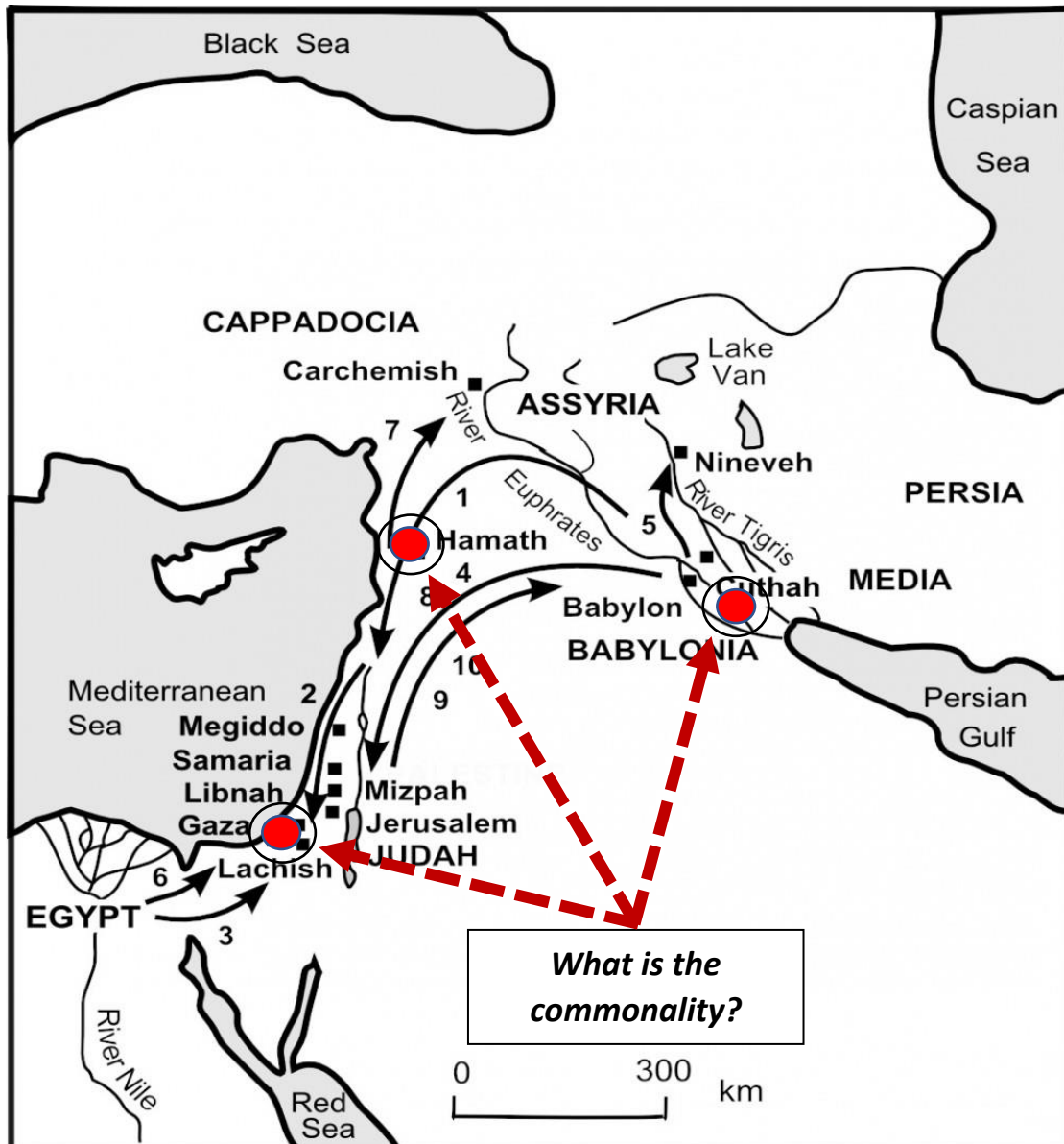
**Calneh** > Barnes > Calneh" (which Isaiah calls "Calno" Isaiah 10:9, Ezekiel, "Canneh Ezekiel 27:23), was one of the four cities, built by Nimrod "in the land of Shinar

**Hamath** > SciELO > The Aramaean kingdom Hamath was the nearest state to the north of Israel's boundaries as restored by Jeroboam II. The city Hamath, which lies a few hundred kilometers north of Damascus, ruled a district that extended a good distance to the south, where its territorial claims had expanded greatly after 800 B.C.E.

Gaebelein > They were to go from *Calneh* to *Hamath* and then down to *Gath* of the Philistines. Calneh was built by Nimrod in the land of Shinar (Genesis 10:10); Hamath was the capital of a Syrian kingdom, and Gath the center of Philistia.

Sunukjian > But God directed these proud men to go to cities which once also considered themselves great, and to learn from their fall. Calneh (also called Calno, Isa. 10:9) and Hamath were city-states in northern Aram. They had been overrun by Assyria during Shalmaneser III's campaign in 854-846 B.C. Gath in Philistia had been devastated in 815 B.C. by Hazael, king of Aram, and again in 760 B.C. by Uzziah, king of Judah (2 Kings 12:17; 2 Chron. 26:6; cf. comments on Amos 1:6). Was Israel any better prepared to fend off an attack than were those powerful kingdoms?

***Are they better off than ...*** > Keil and Delitzsch > The double question requires a negative answer.



<sup>3</sup> *(Woe) Do you **put off** the day of calamity, and would you bring near the seat of violence?*

**Put off** > (Barnes) The Hebrew idiom expresses, how they would put it off, if they could; as far as in them lay, they "assigned a distance to it, although they could not remove the day itself.

Sunukjian > Israel, arrogant and foolishly confident of its own prowess (cf. v. 13), put off the evil day. They scornfully dismissed any thought of coming calamity. But all the while, by their sinful actions, they were approaching a reign of terror. "A reign of terror" aptly describes the last years of Israel's history before her captivity by Assyria (2 Kings 15:8-17:6). In the 31 years after Jeroboam II, Israel had six kings, three of whom seized power by political coup and assassination. The fear and violence in this period is reflected in the atrocities of 2 Kings 15:16.

Bartlett > Because the people had not experienced God's punishment for their sin immediately, they thought it would never come at all. (**Ecclesiastes 8:11**).

**Ecclesiastes 8:11** > <sup>11</sup> *Because the sentence against an evil deed is not executed quickly, therefore the hearts of the sons of mankind among them are fully given to do evil.*

<sup>4</sup> *(Woe) Those who recline on beds of ivory and **sprawl** on their couches, and eat lambs from the flock and **calves** from the midst of the stall,* <sup>5</sup> *(Woe) Who **improvise** to the sound of the harp, and like David have **composed** songs for themselves,*

**Sprawl** > Strong's > to extend (even to excess)

**Calves** > our veal

**Improvise** > Strong's > to scatter words, i.e. prate (or hum) ... chant.

Barnes > Accompanying "the voice of the lyre" with the human voice; giving vocal expression and utterance to what the instrumental music spoke without words. The word, which Amos alone uses in this one place, describes probably a hurried flow of unmeaning, unconsidered words, in which the rhythm of words and music was everything, the sense, nothing.

**Composed** > Strong's > to plait or interpenetrate, i.e. (literally) to weave or (gen.) to fabricate; figuratively, to plot

<sup>6</sup> *(Woe) Who drink wine from sacrificial bowls while they anoint themselves with the **finest** of oils, yet they have not grieved over the **ruin** of Joseph.*

**Woe** > Strong's > oh!: ah, alas, ho, O, woe

**Finest** > Strong's > the first, in place, time, order or rank

**Ruin** > Strong's > a fracture, figuratively, ruin

<sup>7</sup>Therefore, they will now go into **exile** at the **head** of the **exiles**, and the **sprawlers'** **banqueting** will pass away.

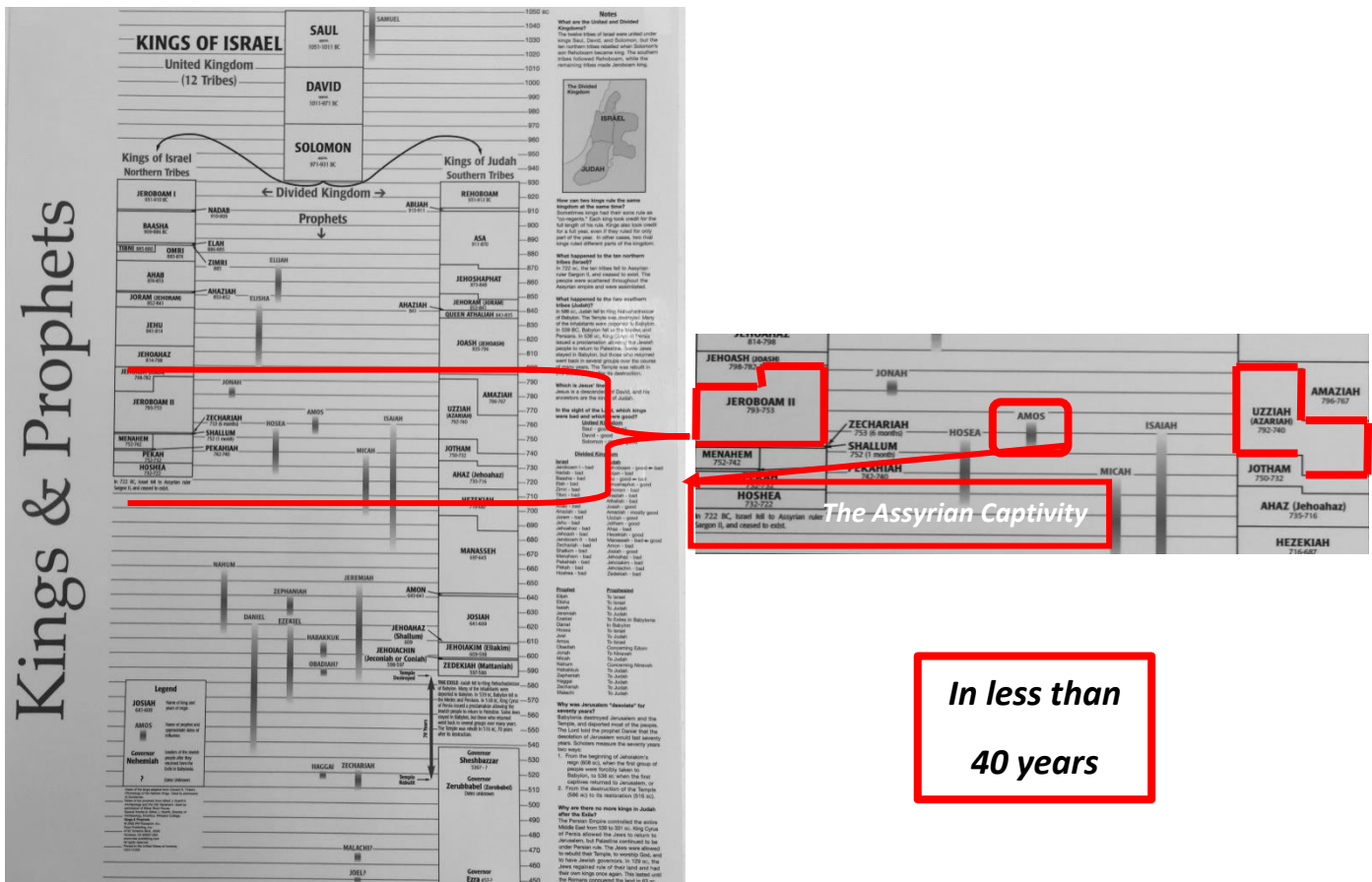
**Exile ... exiles** > Strong's > to denude (especially in a disgraceful sense); by implication, to exile (captives being usually stripped)

**Head** > Strong's > from an unused root apparently meaning to shake; the head (as most easily shaken), whether literal or figurative (in many applications, of place, time, rank, etc.)

**Barnes** > They had sought eminence; they should have it.

**Sprawlers'** > Strong's > to extend (even to excess)

**Banqueting** > Strong's > from an unused root meaning to scream; a cry, i.e. (of job), a revel:



<sup>8</sup> *The Lord GOD **has sworn by Himself**, the LORD God of hosts has declared: "I loathe the arrogance of Jacob, and **detest** his citadels; therefore, I will deliver up the city and all it contains."*

**Has sworn by Himself** > Barnes > literally, "by His soul;" as our "self" comes from the same root as "soul."

**Detest** > Strong's > to hate (personally)

<sup>9</sup> *And it will be, if ten men are left in one house, they will die. <sup>10</sup> **Then one's uncle, or his undertaker, will lift him up** to carry out his bones from the house, and he will say to the one who is in the innermost part of the house, "Is anyone else with you?" And that one will say, "No one." Then he will answer, "Keep quiet. For the name of the LORD is not to be mentioned." <sup>11</sup> For behold, the LORD is going to command that the great house be smashed to pieces and the small house to fragments.*

**Then one's uncle, or undertaker ...** > Barnes > Literally, "and there shall take him up his uncle and his burner," that is, his uncle who, as his next of kin, had the care of his interment, was himself the burner.

Clarke > Newcome says, this obscure verse seems to describe the effects of famine and pestilence during the siege of Samaria. The carcass shall be burnt, and the bones removed with no ceremony of funeral rites, and without the assistance of the nearest kinsman ...

Wiersbe >

(1) Death (vv. 9–10).

(2) Destruction (vv. 11–13).

(3) Disgrace and defeat (v. 14).

<sup>12</sup> *Do horses run on rocks? Or does one plow them with oxen? **Yet you have turned justice into poison and the fruit of righteousness into wormwood,** <sup>13</sup> **You who rejoice in Lodebar,** and say, "Have we not by our own strength taken **Karnaim** for ourselves?"*

**Yet you have turned ...** remember **Amos 5:6-7?** > "Seek the LORD that you may live, or He will break forth like a fire, O house of Joseph, and it will consume with none to quench it for Bethel, <sup>7</sup> For those who turn justice into wormwood and cast righteousness down to the earth."

**You who rejoice** > Barnes > Literally, "the rejoicers!" Amos, as is his wont, speaks of them with contempt and wonder at their folly.

**Lo Debar** > Sunukjian > Israel's leaders considered themselves immune to disaster, as the evidence of their might was obvious to them (vv. 1-3). Under Jeroboam II they had won an unbroken string of military victories (2 Kings 14:25). They had even recovered all their lands east of the Jordan. But Amos subtly and intentionally mispronounced the name of one of the captured towns, Lo Debar (a town east of the Jordan River, mentioned in 2 Sam. 9:4; 17:27), so that it came out in Hebrew as "Lo Dabar," which means "nothing."

**Lodebar** ... interesting word. "Lo" > "no" ... "Debar" > "Word", "Talk", "Pasture"

1. It could mean a specific place as it is identified as such in three areas of the scriptures.
2. However, the Septuagint gives hint of a second meaning in its opening phrase > *ye who rejoice at vanity, who say, ...*

**Karnaim** ... as above ... two possible word solutions.

1. It could mean a specific place in the scriptures.
2. The word has the source word of "Horns" ... "Strength"

<sup>14</sup> *"For behold, I am going to raise up a nation against you, O house of Israel," declares the LORD God of hosts, "And they will afflict you from the entrance of Hamath to the **brook of the Arabah.**"*

McGee "Unto the river of the wilderness" should be translated "unto the river of Arabah." Arabah is the river on the other side of the Jordan River which flowed into the Dead Sea.



