

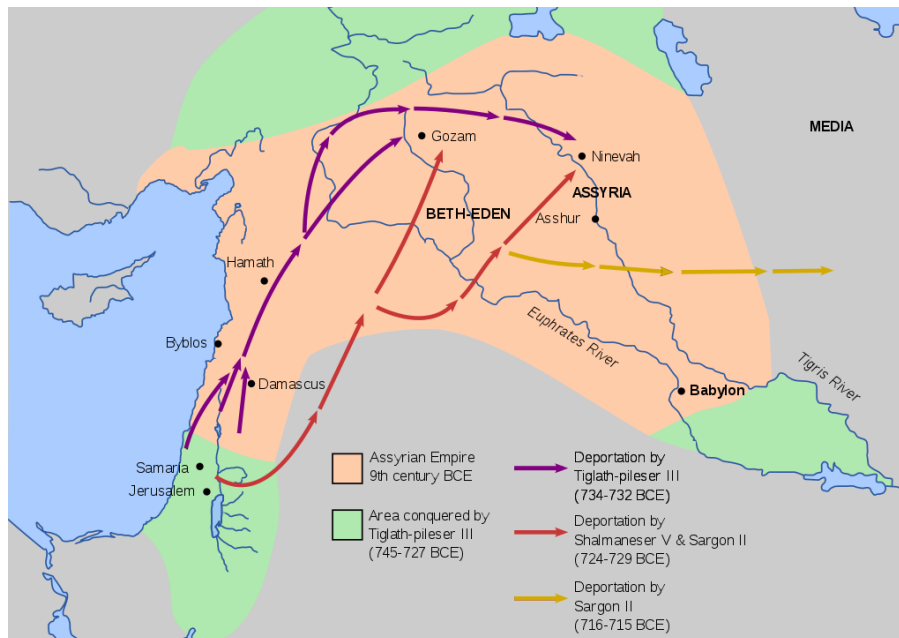
*Book of Amos*  
(NASB)

*Chapter 7:1-17*

<sup>1</sup> Thus the Lord GOD showed me, and behold, He was *forming a locust-swarm* when the spring crop began to sprout. And behold, the spring crop was after the king's mowing.

Barnes > The visions of this chapter Amos 7 continue the direct prophecy of the last. That closed in the prophecy of the affliction of Israel through the Assyrian: this foretells three gradations, in which it took place. That spoke of a recovery of Israel after its extreme depression under Hazael; the first of these visions exhibit it as a field shorn to the ground, shooting out anew, but threatened with a fresh destruction. The chastisements are three-fold. Two, at the intercession of Amos, stop short of utter destruction; the third was final. Each also increased in severity.

Such were the three invasions of the Assyrians. Pul, invited by Menahem, amid civil war, to establish him on his throne, exacted only a heavy fine. Tiglath-pileser, called in by Ahaz against Pekah, carried off the inhabitants of the east and north of Israel; the invasion of Shalmaneser ended the empire and its idolatry.



**Forming** > Strong's > to mold into a form; especially as a potter; figuratively, to determine (i.e. form a resolution)

**A locust-swarm** > Utley > It was specifically one of the curses mentioned in Deut. 28:38-42, if God's people did not keep his commandments.

<sup>2</sup> *And it came about, when it had **finished** eating the vegetation of the land, **that I said**, "Lord GOD, **please pardon!** How can Jacob stand, For he is small?"* <sup>3</sup> *The LORD **changed His mind** about this. "It shall not be," said the LORD.*

**Finished** > Utley > This verb has the connotation of "to complete" or "destroy". Here it functions in both senses.

**That I said** > Utley > The Prophets often serve as intercessors (cf. Exod. 32:11; Jer. 15:1; 18:20; Ezek. 9:8; Dan. 9:15-19)

Swindoll > Amos joined that select group of "Intercessors", which would include:

- Abraham In Genesis 8 (*look at Abraham's argument here*)
- Moses in Exodus 32
- Moses in Numbers 14 (*look at the Lord's decision here*)
- Samuel in I Samuel 12
- Elijah in I Kings 18
- Paul in Romans 9:1-3; 10:1, 2

**Please pardon** > Utley > This word is always used for God's forgiveness of humans. Amos, the prophet of social justice, has become the intercessor for mercy! The hammer of the message of judgment has mellowed at the consequences of judgment!

It is noteworthy that Amos asked God to pardon. One wonders if this means

1. Let the judgment pass
2. Forgive their sin so there is no need for judgment

Amos makes this same request for the first two visions. However, Amos meant the prayer, YHWH took it in sense #1.

**Changed His mind** > Strong's > to sigh, i.e. breathe strongly; by implication, to be sorry, i.e. (in a favorable sense) to pity, console or (reflexively) rue; or (unfavorably) to avenge (oneself)

The Septuagint gives us another understanding of what may of happening. Look at the opening sentence > *Repent, O Lord, for this. And this shall not be, saith the Lord.*

Utley > This Arabic root means "to breathe heavy". This is anthropomorphic imagery. The root of this word expresses deep feelings

***It shall not be*** > Constable > In response to Amos' prayer, the LORD "relented" (changed His mind), and said that He would not bring a completely devastating judgment on Israel—at least then. He would be merciful and patient, and would grant Israel more grace.

Barnes > Pul and Tiglath-pileser, when they came with their armies on Israel, were instruments of God's chastening. According to the ways of God's justice, or of man's ambition, the evil now begun, would have continued, but that God, at the prayer of the prophet, said, "Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further" Job 38:11

Uteley > When the third and fourth visions come there is no mercy because there has been no repentance! The time of respite was not used for spiritual renewal, but further rebellion.

<sup>4</sup> *Thus the Lord GOD showed me, and behold, the Lord GOD was calling to **contend** with them **by fire**, and it **consumed** the **great deep** and began to consume the farmland.*

**Contend** > Strong's > properly, to toss, i.e. grapple; mostly figuratively, to wrangle, i.e. hold a controversy; (by implication) to defend:

**By fire** > Constable > What he saw may have been a scorching heatwave that resulted in a drought. The "great deep" is a phrase that refers to subterranean waters that feed springs (cf. Gen. 1:2; 7:11; 8:2; 49:25; Deut. 8:7; Ezek. 31:4). So intense was the fire that Amos saw that it dried up even these underground water reservoirs. Great heat with consequent drought was another of the punishments that the LORD warned of for covenant unfaithfulness (Deut. 28:22).

**Consumed** > Strong's > to eat

**Great deep** > Strong's > an abyss (as a surging mass of water), especially the deep (the main sea or the subterranean water-supply)

Uteley > This refers to the underground water source of rivers (cf. Gen. 1:2; 7:11; 49:15; Ps. 36:6; Isa. 51:10). This is a mythological term from the earliest known Mesopotamian nations, Sumer and Babylon, but in the OT it has been totally stripped of its mythological connotation.

<sup>5</sup> *Then I said, "**Lord GOD, please stop!** How can Jacob stand, for he is small?"* <sup>6</sup> *The LORD changed His mind about this. "**This too shall not be,**" said the Lord GOD.*

**Lord God, please stop! ... This too shall not be** > Uteley > However, notice this time the prophet did not appeal for forgiveness, but for the cessation of judgment. YHWH is merciful, but there is an end to His patience

Barnes > To human sight, what so strange and unexpected, as that the Assyrian and his army, having utterly destroyed the kingdom of Damascus, and carried away its people, and having devoured, like fire, more than half of Israel, rolled back like an ebb-tide, swept away to ravage other countries, and spared the capital? And who, looking at the mere outside of things, would have thought that that tide of fire was rolled back, not by anything in that day, but by the prophet's prayer some 47 years before?

Ironside > It was the awfulness of overwhelming wrath without discrimination, falling on all alike, that appalled the prophet. Therefore, in the next vision he is shown that which assures him that each one shall be dealt with according to his own iniquity.

<sup>7</sup> Thus He showed me, and behold, the Lord was standing **by a vertical wall with a plumb line** in His hand. <sup>8</sup> The LORD said to me, "What do you see, Amos?" And I said, "A **plumb line.**" Then the Lord said, "Behold I am about to put a **plumb line** in the midst of My people Israel. I will **spare them** no longer.

**By a vertical wall** > Barnes > Rather "over" "a wall" made by "a plumbline;" lit. "a wall of a plumbline," that is, "made" straight, perpendicular, "by" it.

**Plumb line** > Strong's > according to most a plumb line, and to others a hook

Tie Strong's comment above to an interesting comment by Barnes > "The plumbline" was used in pulling down, as well as in building up.

**Then the Lord said** > You will want to tie this comment to the rest of the predictions found in verses 8 and 9. Amaziah missed some important information in his accusation of Amos found in verses 10 and 11.

**Spare them** > Strong's > to cross over

Barnes > literally, "I will not pass over"

Utley > Literally "I will never again pass by them." Amos realizes the depth of Israel's rebellion and ceases to intercede on her behalf.

<sup>9</sup> "The **high places of Isaac** will be **desolated** and the sanctuaries of Israel laid waste. Then **I will rise up against the house of Jeroboam with the sword.**"

**I will rise up against the high places of Isaac** > Clarke > The high place of Isaac was Beer-sheba, where Isaac had built an altar to the Lord, (Genesis 26:25). This high place, which had been abused to idolatrous uses, was demolished by Josiah, king of Judah, as we read in II Kings 23:8, for he defiled all the high places from Geba to Beersheba.

**Genesis 26:22-25** > <sup>22</sup> Then he moved away from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it; so he named it Rehoboth, for he said, "At last the Lord has made room for us, and we will be fruitful in the land." <sup>23</sup> And he went up from there to Beersheba. <sup>24</sup> And the Lord appeared to him the same night and said, "I am the God of your father Abraham; Do not fear, for I am with you. I will bless you and multiply your descendants, For the sake of My servant Abraham." <sup>25</sup> So he built an altar there and called upon the name of the Lord and pitched his tent there; and there Isaac's servants dug a well.

**II Kings 23:8** (The reforms of Josiah) > <sup>8</sup> Then he brought all the priests from the cities of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests had burned incense, from Geba to Beersheba;

**Desolated** > Strong's > to stun (or intransitively, grow numb), i.e. devastate or (figuratively) stupefy (both usually in a passive sense)

**I will rise up against the house of Jeroboam** > Clarke > The Lord had promised to Jehu, the ancestor of Jeroboam, that his family should sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation.

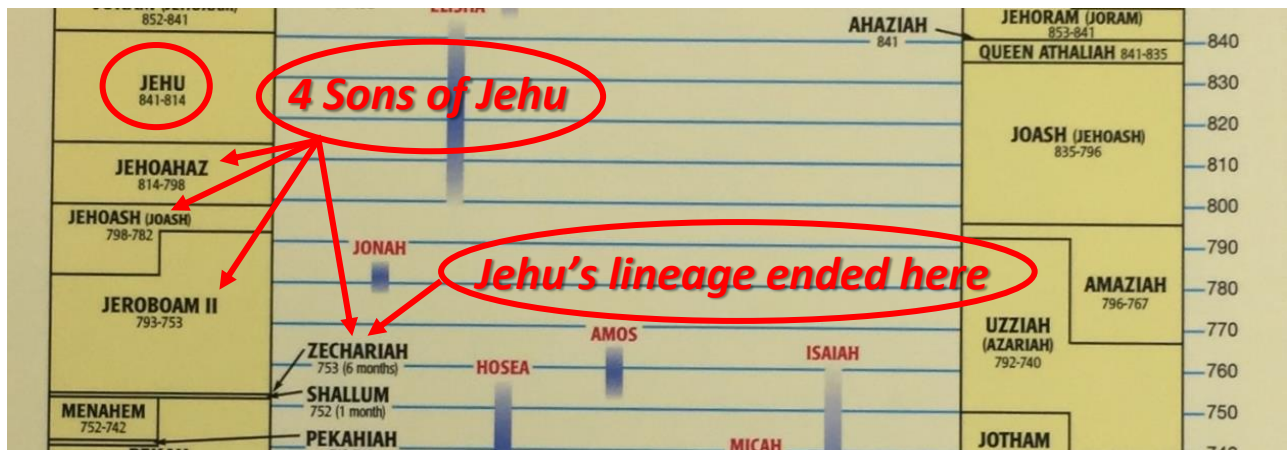
**II Kings 10:30** > <sup>30</sup> The LORD said to Jehu, "Because you have done well in executing what is right in My eyes, and have done to the house of Ahab according to all that was in My heart, your sons of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel."

**II Kings 10:12** > <sup>12</sup> Then he set out and went to Samaria. On the way while he was at Beth-eked of the shepherds, <sup>13</sup> Jehu encountered the relatives of Ahaziah king of Judah, and he said, "Who are you?" And they answered, "We are the relatives of Ahaziah; and we have come down to greet the sons of the king and the sons of the queen mother." <sup>14</sup> Then he said, "Take them alive." So, they took them alive and slaughtered them at the pit of Beth-eked, forty-two men; and he left none of them.

**Hosea 1:4** > <sup>4</sup> And the Lord said to him, "Name him Jezreel; for in just a little while I will punish the house of Jehu for the bloodshed of Jezreel, and I will put an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel.

**Zechariah**, the son of **Jeroboam**, was the fourth in order after **Jehu**; and on him the threatening in this verse fell; for he was murdered by Shallum after he had reigned six months, and in him the family became extinct. See II Kings 10:30; II Kings 15:8-10.

(See the timeline below)



<sup>10</sup> Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, *sent* word to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, "*Amos has conspired against you in the midst of the house of Israel; the land is unable to endure all his words.*" <sup>11</sup> For thus Amos says, 'Jeroboam will die by the sword and Israel will certainly go from its land into exile.'"

**Sent** > Strong's > to send away, for, or out

**Amos has conspired ...** > The Septuagint has an interesting phrase in its translation of verse 10 > *Amos is forming conspiracies against thee in the midst of the house of Israel*

**For thus Amos said ...** > WHO was the real source of the comment?

**Jeroboam will die by the sword** > Was that what Amos said? The same reasoning was used by the those approaching Pilate.

Barnes > **John 19:12** > *If thou let this Man go, thou art not Caesar's friend. Whosoever maketh himself a king, is an enemy to Caesar.* The real reason why they wanted Jesus to be crucified would not have swayed Pilate.

<sup>12</sup> Then Amaziah said to Amos, "Go, you *seer, flee away* to the land of Judah and there eat bread and there do your prophesying! <sup>13</sup> But *no longer* prophesy at Bethel, for it is *a sanctuary of the king* and a royal residence."

**Seer** > Strong's > a beholder in vision

**Flee away** > Strong's > A primitive root; to bolt, i.e. Figuratively, to flee suddenly -- chase (away); drive away, faint, flee (away), put to flight, make haste, reach, run away, shoot.

**No longer** > Strong's > to add or augment (often adverbial, to continue to do a thing)

Constable > "no longer prophesy"; emphatic in the Hebrew text



**A sanctuary of the king** > (Barnes) A high priest at Jerusalem could not have said this. He knew that "the temple" was the "sanctuary" of God, and could not have called it the "king's sanctuary."

<sup>14</sup> Then Amos replied to Amaziah, **"I am not a prophet, nor am I the son of a prophet; for I am a herdsman and a grower of sycamore figs.** <sup>15</sup> But **the LORD took me from following the flock and the LORD said to me, 'Go prophesy to My people Israel.'**

**I am not a prophet ...** > Barnes > The order of the words is emphatic. "No prophet I, and no prophet's son I, for a herdsman I, and dresser of sycamores

Jerome > As then the Apostles, when the Scribes and Pharisees forbade them to teach in the Name of Jesus, answered, 'We must obey God rather than man' (Acts 5:29), so Amos, when forbidden by the idol-priests to prophesy, not only prophesies, shewing that he feared God bidding, more than their forbidding, but he boldly and freely denounces the punishment of him who endeavored to forbid and hinder the word of God."

**Herdsman** > Strong's > a cattle-tender

Constable > The term "herdsman" (nqd) refers to someone who bred livestock, not just a shepherd who looked after animals. "... the Ugaritic evidence indicates that the nqdm were men of some position and influence.

**Grower** > (Strong's) a primitive root; to pinch sycamore figs (a process necessary to ripen them)

<sup>16</sup> Now hear **the word of the LORD: you are saying,** 'You shall not prophesy against Israel nor shall you speak against the house of Isaac.' <sup>17</sup> Therefore, **thus says the LORD,** **'Your wife will become a harlot in the city, your sons and your daughters will fall by the sword, your land will be parceled up by a measuring line and you yourself will die upon unclean soil. Moreover, Israel will certainly go from its land into exile.'**"

**Your wife will become a harlot in the city** > Constable > She would have to stoop to this in order to earn a living—because she would have no husband or sons to support her. Her children would die by the sword.

**Moreover, Israel will certainly go from its land into exile** > Barnes > Amos closes by repeating emphatically the exact words, which Amaziah had alleged in his message to Jeroboam

Constable (quoting another author) > Amaziah's loyalty was to Jeroboam, who probably appointed him as priest at Bethel. Amos's loyalty was to God, who sent him to prophesy against Israel. Conflict between Amaziah and Amos was inevitable since their loyalties were in conflict. Primary loyalty to God in their service to Israel would have eliminated conflict between the king, the priest, and the prophet. The answer to conflict among God's people is always to place loyalty to God above all else.