

Book of Amos
(NASB)

Chapter 9:1-15

¹ *I saw the Lord standing beside the altar, and He said, “Strike the pillar capitals so that the thresholds will shake and break them on the heads of them all! Then I will put to death the rest of them with the sword; they will not have a fugitive who will flee, nor a survivor who will escape.*

Wiersbe > A. W. Tozer correctly says, “The essence of idolatry is the entertainment of thoughts about God that are unworthy of Him.”

Strike the pillar capitals so that the thresholds will shake > Barnes > "And He said, smite the lintel," literally, "the chapter," or "capital," probably so called from "crowning" the pillar with a globular form, like a pomegranate. This, the spurious outward imitation of the true sanctuary, God commands to be stricken, "that the posts," or probably "the thresholds, may shake." The building was struck from above and reeled to its base.

Utley > The term "capital" refers to the carved (decorated) top of the support columns.

Break them on the heads of them all > Utley > This is referring to the destruction of the worshipers by supernatural means, similar to Samson destroying the Philistine temple in Jdg. 16:23-30. Here the mechanism seems to have been a divinely timed and targeted earthquake.

Prophetic literature is characterized by judgment passages being placed beside salvation passages. This chapter is a good example.

1. Amos 9:1-10, judgment
2. Amos 9:11-15, salvation

Both are true, but there are conditions/options based on God's mercy and human faith/repentance. A remnant of Jews will survive to accomplish God's redemptive plan!

² *Though they dig into Sheol, from there My hand will take them; and though they ascend to heaven, from there I will bring them down.*

Though they dig into Sheol, from there My hand will take them > Bartlett > Even death offers no hiding place for impenitent rebels. At the final judgment, death and the grave will give up the dead who are in it and all shall stand, resurrected in their bodies, to be judged by God for the things they had done during their lives. (Revelation 20:11 - 15).

Barnes > The grave is not so awful as God.

Utley > The language of these verses (i.e., Amos 9:1-4) is reminiscent of **Ps. 139:8**. There is nowhere to hide from God!

Ps. 139:7-12 > ⁷Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? ⁸If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there. ⁹If I take up the wings of the dawn, If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, ¹⁰Even there Your hand will lead me, And Your right hand will take hold of me. ¹¹If I say, "Surely the darkness will overwhelm me, and the light around me will be night," ¹²Even darkness is not dark to You, and the night is as bright as the day. Darkness and light are alike to You.

³**And though they hide on the summit of Carmel, I will track them down and take them from there; and though they hide themselves from My sight on the bottom of the sea, I will command the serpent from there, and it will bite them.**

And though they hide on the summit of Carmel > J Vernon McGee > "Mount Carmel is wooded and rises to a height of about eighteen hundred feet. I have been there several times and have noted the caves which are along the sides of that mountain. It is said that there are over a thousand caves there, especially on the side toward the sea. But even there God said He would search them out. And although they should try to hide in the bottom of the sea, they would find God there. They could not escape Him."

⁴**And though they go into captivity before their enemies, from there I will command the sword and it will kill them, and I will set My eyes against them for harm and not for good."**

And though they go into captivity before their enemies > Remember Barnes' earlier statement? (*The grave is not so awful as God.*) Even captivity by the Assyrians ... as ruthless as they were ... was preferred over facing an angry Lord.

Barnes > So God had forewarned them by Moses, that captivity should be an occasion, not an end, of slaughter. "*I will scatter you among the pagan, and will draw out a sword after you*" **Leviticus 26:33**.

I will set My eyes against them for harm and not for good > Barnes > This is exactly opposite to the covenant promises!

⁵**The Lord GOD of armies, the One who touches the land so that it quakes, and all those who live in it mourn, and all of it rises up like the Nile and subsides like the Nile of Egypt;**

Who touches the land so that it quakes > Barnes > "That toucheth the land" or "earth, and it shall melt," rather, "hath melted." His will and its fulfillment are one. "*He spake, and it was; He commanded and it stood fast*" **Psalm 33:9**. His Will is first, as the cause of what is done; in time they co-exist. He hath no need to put forth His strength; a touch, the slightest indication of His Will, sufficeth.

⁶*The One who builds His **upper chambers** in the heavens and has founded His vaulted dome over the earth, He who calls for the waters of the sea and pours them out on the face of the earth, **the LORD is His name.***

Upper chambers > Strong's > a step, stair

Uteley > it can mean:

1. Steps
2. Stories
3. Ascent

The LORD is His name > Sunukjian > Interestingly the two verses in Amos that include the exclamation "*The LORD is His name*" speak of His sovereignty over the universe (5:8; 9:6).

⁷*"Are you not as the sons of Ethiopia to Me, you sons of Israel?" declares the LORD. "Have I not brought up Israel from the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor and the Arameans from Kir?"*

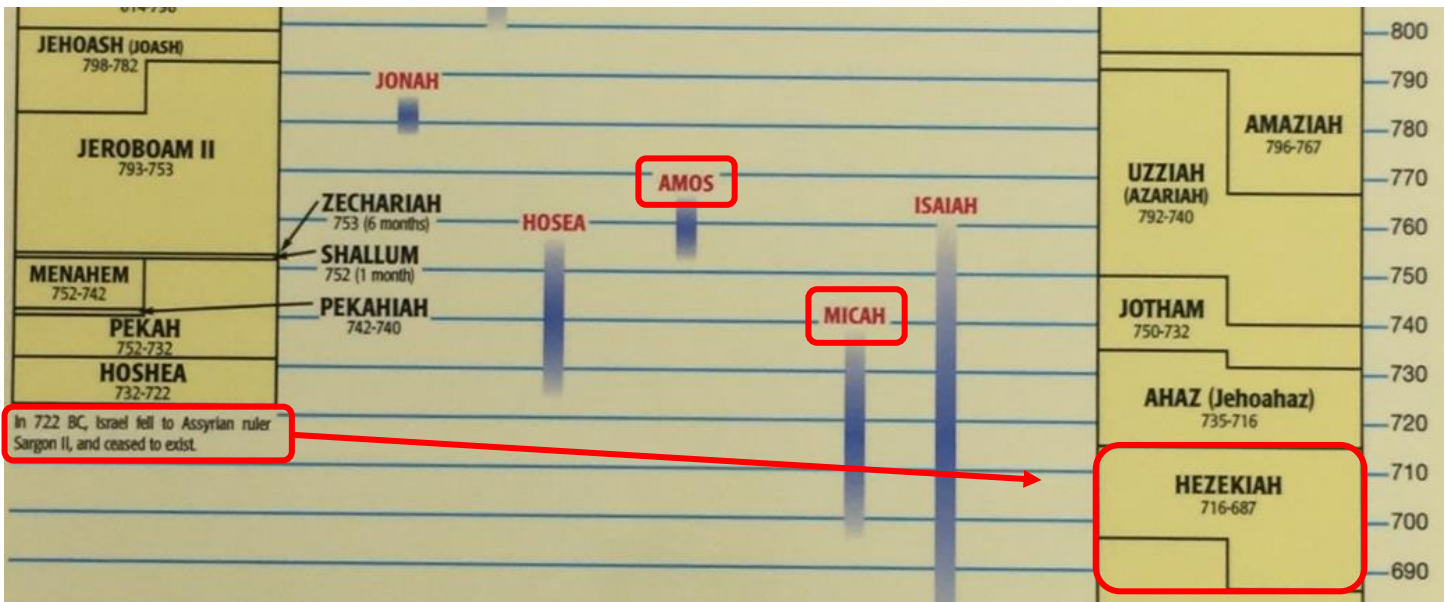
Uteley > *A Translator's Handbook on the Book of Amos*, makes an interesting observation on the relationship between Amos 9:7 and 8. Verse 7 states very emphatically that Israel is not special, unique, or privileged, yet Amos 9:8 shows God's special covenant care for her (cf. p. 181).

Both the questions of Amos 9:7 expect a "yes" answer. Basically God is depreciating the covenantal uniqueness of Israel. The one and only God has led all nations to and from their current geographical locations (cf. Deut. 32:8; and possibly implied in Amos 29:26). It must have been painful for Israel to be compared to Ethiopia, Philistia, and Syria. This is in sharp contrast to the election theology of Amos 3:2! Israel, like all nations, will answer for their sins!

(Whole separate subject next)

I was thinking about something early this morning ... the Assyrians came south to within 10 miles of Jerusalem ... and then went west to the coast and came down into the area of the Philistines. Why didn't they just keep continuing south from Bethel and take Jerusalem instead of turning west? Or ... why after taking Philistia ... didn't they come north and take Jerusalem?

Micah 1:8-15 is a series of word plays utilizing the meanings of the city names to describe their falling before the armies of Assyria. The prophet predicted that the enemy would continue to take cities all the way until “it has reached the *gate* of my people, even to *Jerusalem*” (Micah 1:9) ... “because a disaster has come down from the LORD to the *gate* of *Jerusalem*” (Micah 1:12). There ... it stopped! At the gate of Jerusalem we are given the story of Sennacherib



⁸ *Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are on the sinful kingdom, and I will eliminate it from the face of the earth; nevertheless, I will not totally eliminate the house of Jacob,” declares the LORD.*

How many, many, times have we seen this! Warning of an impending judgment against sin ... while giving the hope of a remnant being saved

Utley > A righteous remnant of the house of Jacob will be spared! This theme is often repeated in Jeremiah.

1. Judah will survive, Jer. 4:27; 5:10,18; 33:16
2. Israel will survive, Jer. 30:11; 31:35-36

⁹ *“For behold, I am commanding, and I will shake the house of Israel among all nations as grain is shaken in a sieve, but not a pebble will fall to the ground.*

For behold, I am commanding > Barnes > Literally, "lo! see, I am commanding." He draws their attention to it, as something which shall shortly be; and inculcates that He is the secret disposer of all which shall befall them. "And I will sift the house of Israel among all nations."

Sunukjian > As a fine-meshed sieve lets the chaff and dust go through, but catches the good grain, so God would screen out and save any righteous among His people

Gaebeliën > In His own time He will assemble the outcasts of Israel with dispersed Judah and lead them back to their land. In the meantime they will be sifted among all nations, as wheat is sifted in a sieve, but not the least grain shall fall on the ground.

¹⁰ *All the sinners of My people will die by the sword, those who say, 'The catastrophe will not **overtake** or **confront** us.'*

Overtake > Strong's > to draw near, approach

Confront > Strong's > to come or be in front, meet

Barnes relays some similar comments heard in his day (1798-1870). Still prevalent today > "I will repent hereafter." "I will make my peace with God before I die." "There is time enough yet." "Youth is for pleasure, age for repentance." "God will forgive the errors of youth, and the heat of our passions." "Any time will do for repentance; health and strength promise long life;" "I cannot do without this or that now." "I will turn to God, only not yet." "God is merciful and full of compassion."

Sunukjian > Though these three statements seal the nation's doom, they also look forward to the final section of the book (vv. 11-15) where God speaks of a restoration after judgment. The first two statements (see verses 8-9) each conclude with a brief allusion to a spared remnant. The third statement (see verse 10) is followed by God's full promise of renewal and covenant blessing (see verses 11-15).

¹¹ *"On that day I will raise up the fallen shelter of David, and wall up its gaps; I will also raise up its ruins and rebuild it as in the days of old;*

Bartlett > Here is one of the great Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament. God is speaking of a day when the kingdom would be restored to the house of David. Remember that Israel was split into two parts at this time, Israel and Judah, and David's descendants ruled only Judah. Later still, Judah would be captured and the kingly line lose all its power and influence. In this prophecy God refers to a day when the whole kingdom of Israel and Judah would be reunited under the leadership of a new king, whose kingdom would be exalted and blessed, just as David's had been, so that all the people would rally to him.

¹² *So that they may **possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations who are called by My name,**" declares the LORD who does this.*

Possess > Strong's > to take possession of, inherit, dispossess (cast out, consume, destroy, disinherit, dispossess, driving out, enjoy, expel)

The remnant of Edom and all the nations who are called by my name > Barnes > James quoted these words in the Council of Jerusalem, to show how the words of the prophet were in harmony with what Peter had related, how "God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His Name" Acts 15:14. He quotes the words as they stood in the version which was understood by the Gentiles (ie – the Septuagint) who came from Antioch.

Amos 9:12 LXX > ¹² *that the remnant of men, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called, may earnestly seek me, saith the Lord who does all these things.*

Utley > This eschatological promise takes on universal implications in Acts 15:16-17, where "Edom" is changed to "Adam" (i.e., mankind) in the Septuagint, which is quoted by James

Sunukjian > When God restores the kingdom (the Millennium) under David's Son, both Jews and Gentiles will bear the name of the Lord. At the Jerusalem Council, James cited Amos 9:11-12 as proof that the Gentiles of his day need not be circumcised and live as Jews in order to be saved (Acts. 15:1-20).

¹³ *"Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "When the plowman will overtake the reaper, and the one who treads grapes will overtake him who sows the seed; **when the mountains will drip grape juice, and all the hills will come apart.**"*

Will come apart (KJV > "dissolved") > Strong's > to melt

When the mountains will drip grape juice, and all the hills will come apart > Sunukjian > The grapes will hang so heavy in the mountain vineyards that the hills will drip and flow (lit., "melt") with new wine (cf. Joel 3:18). So much juice will drip from the vines or overflow from the vats that the mountains will appear from a distance to be "dissolving" as softened mud will ooze down the slopes.

Barnes > Amos takes the words of Joel, in order to identify their prophecies, yet strengthens the image.

Constable > Since the same expression occurs in Joel 3:18, some expositors believe that Amos borrowed it from Joel, and that Joel wrote before Amos.¹

¹⁴ *I will also **restore the fortunes** of My people Israel, and they will rebuild the desolated cities and live in them; they will also plant vineyards and drink their wine, And make gardens and eat their fruit.*

Restore the fortunes > KJV has "bring again the captivity". Strong's has > "to turn back, return" so "bring back" is not wrong ... just misunderstood. "Captivity" is correct. But the understanding is to bring them back from captivity.

Utley > This restoration is a reversal of Deut. 28:38-40; Amos 5:11; Micah 6:15; Zeph. 1:13. God's people will plant vineyards in His land and enjoy their fruit (i.e., imagery for security and longevity in the land, e.g., Jer. 31:5; Ezek. 28:26).

Remember the comments made when we studied the Minor Prophets in the past > "sitting under his fig tree"? An illustration would be Micah 4:4 > ⁴*Instead, each of them will sit under his vine and under his fig tree, with no one to make them afraid, because the mouth of the LORD of armies has spoken.*

¹⁵ I will also plant them on their land, and they will not be uprooted again from their land which I have given them," Says the LORD your God.

Constable quotes the New Scofield here > Amos' single prophecy of future blessing details:

- (1) the restoration of the Davidic dynasty (v. 11)
- (2) the conversion of the nations (v. 12)
- (3) the fruitfulness of the land (v. 13)
- (4) Israel's return from captivity (v. 14)
- (5) the rebuilding of the waste cities (v. 14)
- (6) Israel's permanent settlement in the holy land (v. 15).