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The Call of Amos

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Amos 7:10-17

Introduction: In this and the two following chapters are the **VISIONS of Amos**, in number five; three of which are contained in this chapter, and with which it begins. The **first** is of the grasshoppers or **LOCUSTS** eating up the later grass of the land, which are stopped at the **intercession** (solicitation [earnest request] to one party in favor of another) of the prophet, Amos 7:1; the **second** is of **FIRE** the Lord called for to contend by, whose devouring flames are made to cease by the same interposition (coming between), Amos 7:4; and **the other** is of the **PLUMBLINE**, signifying the utter destruction of the people of Israel, according to the righteous **judgment** of God, Amos 7:7; **upon the delivery** of which **prophecies** and **visions**, the priest of Bethel forms a charge against the prophet to the king; and advises Amos to flee into Judea, and prophesy there, and NOT at Bethel, being willing to be rid of him at any rate, Amos 7:10; next follows the **prophet's vindication** (defense; justification against denial or censure) of himself showing his **DIVINE CALL** to the **prophetic office**, and his mission and express order he had from the Lord to prophesy unto Israel, Amos 7:14; and concludes with a **denunciation** (announcement) of **divine judgments** on the priest's family, and upon the whole land of Israel, Amos 7:16. (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/amos-7.html>)

Amos 7:1-2, Thus **hath** the Lord **GOD shewed** unto me; and, behold, he formed **grasshoppers (locusts)** in the beginning of the shooting up of the latter growth; and, lo, it was the latter growth **AFTER** the king's **mowings**. 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.

NOTE: The king's mowings - must have been some regalia, to meet the state-expenses. The like custom still lingers on, here and there, among us, the "first mowth" or "first vesture," that with which the fields are first clad, belonging to one person; the pasturage afterward, or "after-grass," to others. The **hay-harvest** probably took place some time before the grain-harvest, and the "**latter grass**," "**after-grass**," probably began to spring up at the time of the "latter rain.") Striking emblem of a state, recovering after it had been mown down, and anew overrun by a numerous enemy!

Amos intercedes with God, in words of that **first intercession of Moses**, "**forgive now**" Numbers 14:19. "By whom," he adds, "shall Jacob arise?" literally, "Who shall Jacob arise?" that is, who is he that he should arise, **so weakened, so half-destroyed?** Plainly, the destruction is more than one invasion of locusts in one year. The **locusts are a symbol** (as in Joel) in like way as the following **visions** are **SYMBOLS**.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/amos-7.html>)

Amos 7:3, The **LORD (Yahweh)** **repented (be sorry, i.e. (in a favorable sense) to pity)** or this: It shall NOT be, saith the **LORD (Yahweh)**.

NOTE: The Lord repented for this - i.e., **OF this**. The Lord, after the awful visitation by locusts, and when **Israel's power** had **been reduced** to "**small**" dimensions, in consequence of Amos' intercession, repented of the further evil which otherwise he would have inflicted. The "this" is not particularly defined. The change was NOT in the mind of God (Numbers 23:19; James 1:17), but in the effect outwardly. God unchangeably **does what is JUST**; it is JUST that He should hear intercessory prayer (James 5:16-18), as it would have been just for Him to have let judgment take its course at once on the guilty nation, but for the prayer of one or two **righteous men** in it ...

It shall not be - Israel's utter overthrow now. Pul was influenced by God to accept money from Menahem (2 Kings 15:19-20), and WITHDRAW from Israel.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/jfu/amos-7.html>)

Amos 7:4-10, 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. Then said I, O Lord GOD, cease, I beseech thee: by whom shall Jacob arise? for **he is small**. **The LORD** (Yahweh) **repented for this**: This also shall NOT be, saith the Lord GOD (Yahweh). Thus he shewed me: and, behold, the Lord stood upon a wall made by a **plumbline**, with a **plumbline** in his hand. 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: I will NOT again pass by them any more: And the high places of Isaac shall be desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste; and **I will rise against the house** of **Jeroboam** with the **sword**. Then **Amaziah** the **priest** of **Bethel** sent to **Jeroboam** king of Israel, saying, **Amos** hath conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel: the **land** is NOT able to bear all **HIS words**.

NOTE: Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel,.... The Targum calls him the **prince** or **president** of Bethel; and the word used signifies both a PRINCE and a PRIEST; and very probably this man had the care of the **civil** as well as **religious matters** in Bethel. Aben Ezra styles him the priest of Baal; he was one that succeeded the priests that **Jeroboam** the son of **Nebat** placed here, to offer sacrifices to the calf he set up in this place, 1 Kings 12:32; who hearing the above **THREE visions** of **Amos** delivered, and fearing that he would alienate the people from the idolatrous worship he was at the head of, and frighten them from an attendance on it, which would lessen his esteem with the people, and also his worldly gain and profit; and observing that Amos did NOT make any intercession for the averting (turning away) of the **judgment threatened** in the **last vision**, as in the other TWO, and which particularly concerned the king's family: he

sent to Jeroboam king of Israel; either letters or messengers, or BOTH; who, it seems, was NOT at this time at Bethel, but at some other place; perhaps Samaria, which was NOT a great way from hence:

saying, Amos hath conspired against thee in the midst of the land of Israel; he speaks of Amos as if he was well known to the king, and perhaps he might be, having long prophesied in the land of Israel, and near the court; and represents him as a seditious (disposed to excite violent or irregular OPPOSITION to LAW or lawful authority) person, NOT as affecting the crown and kingdom himself, but as **stirring up** a **spirit** (frame of MIND), of **rebellion** among the people...

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/amos-7.html>)

NOTE: The land is NOT able to bear all his words] His **burdensome prophecies**, [Mal. 1:1] {See Trapp on "Malachi 1:1"} much less can I endure them, or any faithful servant of thine, true to his trust. Such a **lying accusation** we read of, Esther 3:8, made by haughty Haman against the innocent Jews, that they kept NOT the king's laws, and that therefore it were good policy to weed them out, as NOT to be longer endured.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/jtc/amos-7.html>)

Amos 7:11, For thus **Amos saith**, **Jeroboam shall die** by the **sword**, and **Israel** shall surely be led away **captive** out of their **OWN** land.

NOTE: ...thus Amos saith, Jeroboam shall die by the sword,.... Which was NOT saying truth; for Amos said NOT that Jeroboam should die by the sword, but that God would raise up the sword against his house or family; nor did Jeroboam die by the sword, but his son Zachariah did:

2 Kings 15:8-10, In the thirty and eighth year of Azariah king of Judah did **Zachariah** the son of **Jeroboam** reign over Israel in Samaria **six months**. And he did that which was EVIL in the sight of the LORD, as his fathers had done: he departed NOT from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin. And Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him, and **smote (strike severely) him** before the people, and **SLEW him**, and reigned in his stead.

...Israel shall surely be led away captive out of their own land; this was TRUE; Amos did say this, and he afterwards confirms it. This is the amount of the charge brought against the prophet, which has **some truth** and **some falsehood** mixed together; and by which method the priest hoped to gain his point, and get the prophet either banished or put to death. (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/amos-7.html>)

Amos 7:12-13, Also **Amaziah** said unto **Amos**, **O thou SEER**, go, flee thee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and **prophecy** there: But **prophecy NOT** again any more at **Bethel**: for it is the **king's chapel**, and it is the **king's court**.

NOTE: Besides informing the king against Amos, lest that course should fail, as it did, Amaziah urges the troublesome prophet himself to GO BACK to his own land, Judah, pretending to advise him in friendliness.

O thou seer - said contemptuously (with scorn [mockery]) in reference to Amos' visions, which precede.

Flee thee away into the land of Judah. **Amaziah tauntingly tells him** his words against Israel and Bethel will be acceptable in Judah; implying that the prophet had no sympathies with the people among whom he prophesied, but was a traitor at heart to them, and favoured their enemy. **THERE eat bread**, and **prophecy** there - you can earn a livelihood there, whereas remaining here you will be ruined. He judges of Amos by HIS OWN selfishness, as if regard to one's own safety and livelihood are the paramount (primary) considerations. (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/jfu/amos-7.html>)

NOTE: 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**." The **sanctuary** at **Bethel** had **no other sanction** (authorization, validation), than what it had from the king. Jeroboam I consecrated it and its priests 1 Kings 12:31-33; and from him it and they had their authority. Amaziah wished to use a popular plea to rid himself of Amos. Bethel was "the king's sanctuary and the house," NOT of God, but "of the kingdom," that is, "the house," which had the whole royal sanction, which with its Worship was the creature of **royal authority**, bound up in one with the kingdom, and belonging to it. Or it may be, "a royal house," (not a palace, or court, for the **king's palace** was at **Samaria**, but) "a royal temple," the state-Church.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/amos-7.html>)

Amos 7:14-15, Then **answered Amos**, and said to **Amaziah**, **I was NO prophet**, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was an herdsman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit: And the LORD took me as I followed the flock, and the LORD said unto me, **Go, prophecy** unto my people Israel.

NOTE: The order of the words is emphatic. "**No prophet I**, and **no prophet's son I**, for a herdsman I, and dresser of sycamores." It may be, Amos would meet, for the people's sake, **Amaziah's taunt**. He had a living, simple indeed, yet that of the prophets was as simple. But chiefly he tells them of the unusual character of his mission. He did NOT belong to the order of the prophets, nor had he been **educated** in the **schools** of the

prophets, NOR had he any human training. He was thinking of nothing less; he was doing the works of his calling, until “God TOOK HIM from following the flock,” and **gave him his commission.** Rup.: “He promises humbly what he had been, what he had been made, NOT by merits, but by grace, that he had NOT assumed the **prophetic office** by hereditary right, NOR had he begun to prophesy out of his own mind, but, being under the **necessity of OBEYING**, he had fulfilled the grace and the command of God who **INSPIRED** and **SENT** Him.” Twice he repeats, “The Lord took me; the Lord said unto me;” Inculcating (enforcing by repeated instruction) that, what **Amaziah forbade, God bade.** All was of (FROM) God. **“He” had but obeyed.** 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.”**

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/amos-7.html>)

Amos 7:16, Now therefore **HEAR thou** the **WORD of** (from) **the LORD** (Yahweh): Thou sayest, *Prophecy NOT against Israel, and drop NOT thy word against the house of Isaac.*

NOTE: ...hear thou the word of the Lord,.... Which I have from him concerning thee, and which he has pronounced upon thee and thy family: **thou sayest, prophecy not against Israel;** when God has bid (command) me **prophecy: and drop not thy word against the house of Isaac;** SAY NOTHING against it, though in ever so **SOFT** and **GENTLE** a manner: it designs the same thing as before, only in different words; and is a prohibition of the prophet to prophesy against the ten tribes that descended from Isaac, in the line of Jacob. So the Targum paraphrases it, **"thou shalt NOT teach against the house of Isaac;"** OR deliver out any prophecy OR **doctrine** that is against them, OR threatens them with any calamity. Jarchi says the phrase is expressive of prophecy; see Deuteronomy 32:2.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/amos-7.html>)

Deuteronomy 32:2, My **doctrine shall drop** as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass...

Amos 7:17, Therefore thus saith the **LORD** (Yahweh); Thy **wife** shall be an **harlot** in the city, 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 **Israel** shall surely **go into captivity** forth of (FROM) his land.

NOTE: thy wife shall be an harlot in the city: either of Bethel or Samaria; either through force, being ravished by the soldiers upon taking and plundering the city; so Theodoret and others: OR rather of choice; either, through poverty, to get bread, OR through a vicious inclination, and that in a public manner: the meaning is, that **SHE** should be a **common strumpet** (prostitute); which must be a great affliction to him, and a just punishment for his idolatry, or spiritual adultery; this must be before the siege and taking of Samaria, since by that time the priest's wife would be too old to be used as a harlot: **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;** NOT in his own land, reckoned holy, but in a **Heathen land**, which was accounted defiled, because the inhabitants of it were **uncircumcised** and **idolaters**, and he was no better; perhaps the land of Assyria, whither he might with others be carried captive; or some other land he was forced to flee into: **and Israel shall surely go into captivity forth of his land;** as he had before prophesied, and here confirms it; and which was fulfilled in the times of Hoshea king of Israel, by Shalmaneser king of Assyria, 2 Kings 17:6.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/amos-7.html>)