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God Will Not Delay Justice

Definitions in **bold** letters are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance
Other definitions are from **Webster's** Dictionary, 1828 Edition
or Roget's Thesaurus – **June 28, 2015**

Amos 8:1-6, 9-10

Introduction: Amos, having effectively disposed of the interruption by Amaziah, proceeded to deliver his sermon. The first **four visions** actually occur in **pairs**, the **two** first being of disasters averted through prayer, and the **next two** announcing the summary and forthcoming **end of Israel**, the first of these (the third) having already been delivered. This fourth one, therefore (Amos 8:1-3) is not a recapitulation (repetition) of the third, nor the introduction of any startling new element. Amos' denunciation continued as if nothing had occurred. "Notwithstanding the interference of Amaziah, the prophet finishes the recital of his visions." Deane outlined the chapter thus: **(1)** the vision of the basket of the summer fruit (Amos 8:1-3); **(2)** The denunciation of the dealers (Amos 8:4-10); and **(3)** the warning of a famine of hearing God's Word and a wandering all over the earth by Israel (Amos 8:11-14). (Source: Coffman Commentaries, <http://classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/>)

Amos 8:1, *Thus hath the Lord GOD shewed unto me: and behold a **basket** of summer fruit.*

NOTE: ... **the Lord God showed unto me** Another vision, which is the fourth, and after the following manner: **a basket of summer fruit**; not of the **first ripe fruit**, but of such as were gathered at the close of the summer, when autumn began. So the Targum, "the last of the summer fruit;" such as were **fully ripe**, and would not keep till winter; or, if kept, would rot; but must be eaten directly, as some sort of apples, grapes, &c. denoting the people of Israel being **ripe for destruction**, and would be quickly devoured by their enemies; and that, as they had had a summer of prosperity, they would now have a sharp winter of adversity.

(Source: biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/)

Amos 8:2, *And he said, Amos, what **SEEST** thou? And I said, A **basket** of **summer fruit**. Then said the LORD unto me, **The END** is **come upon** my people of Israel; I will not again pass by them any more.*

NOTE: **The end is come upon my people Israel...** The harvest is past and the summer is ended; and we are not saved (Jeremiah 8:20), was the plaintive cry of Jeremiah; and the same sad extremity is in view here. **I will not again pass by them any more...** As repeatedly in Amos, there is an indirect allusion to the PASSOVER experience of the children of Israel in Egypt when God passed over them and spared them from disaster; but this can no longer be expected. The people are ripe for **judgment** and **destruction**. (See under Amos 7:8, above.)

(Source: Coffman Commentaries, <http://classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/>)

Thought 1. Here we see clearly that the Lord has been longsuffering with his people.

As scripture points out, since they broke the Covenant that contained the curses, which are about to come upon them, this degree of destruction only occurred after they persisted in sin, and God could no longer hold off judgment. It is about to occur, but it was not HIS WILL that any perish, so it is even under this New Covenant in force.

2 Peter 3:8-9, But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that **one day** is with the Lord as a **thousand years**, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is **not slack** concerning his **promise**, as some men count **slackness**; but is **LONGSUFFERING** to us-ward, NOT WILLING that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Longsuffering defined 3114, be long-spirited (long tenderness), **forbearing** (withholding from action; exercising patience [sufferance { toleration }] and indulgence.).

Amos 8:3, *And the songs of the **temple** shall be **howlings** in that day, saith the Lord GOD: there shall be many **dead bodies** in every place; they shall cast them forth with silence.*

NOTE: The songs of the temple shall be wailings... Here again the translation should be corrected, as in the New English Bible, to the **palace**, instead of the **temple**. The Jerusalem edifice is not in view here at all, as it is particularly the sins of the Northern Kingdom that are under consideration. The mistranslation is quite understandable, since the Hebrew text actually has a Great House, which might mean either the temple, or the palace of the king. The word came to the Hebrews from Babylonia, and literally signifies **'Great House.'** **The dead bodies. many, etc ... silence** This verse is rendered differently in several versions; and Fosbroke complained that, The phrasing is abrupt, disjointed, and with no discernible grammatical construction, but, in spite of this, went on to state that even as the text stands, it presents effectively the horrors of the aftermath of war, or possibly of **pestilence**. We appreciate what McKeating said; Amos seems to specialize in these fragmentary pictures, whose very lack of clarity makes them the more menacing. Hammershamb rendered the Hebrew text literally as, The dead bodies are many! in every place one throws out, silence!

The most pertinent of all comment upon these verses is that of the **Word of God** itself, thus: "But if thy heart turn away, and thou wilt not hear, but shall be **drawn away**, and **worship other gods**, and **serve them**; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish: ye shall not prolong your days in the land, whither thou passest over the Jordan to go in to possess it. I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that I have **set before thee** **life and death**, the **blessing** and the **curse**: therefore CHOOSE LIFE, that thou mayest live, and thy seed; to love Jehovah thy God, to **obey** his voice, and to cleave unto him; for he is thy life, and the length of thy days; that thou mayest dwell in the land which **Jehovah sware** unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to **give** them" (Deuteronomy 30:17-20).

Prominent in that **warning** was the prohibition against worshipping other gods; and this was preeminently (with distinction above others) the sin which Israel had committed. (Source: Coffman Commentaries, <http://classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/>)

Thought 1. When a person hears the Good News about Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection, LIFE and DEATH is set before them from which to CHOOSE.

John 3:14-18, And **AS** (just like) Moses lifted up the **serpent** in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever **believeth** IN him **should not perish**, but have **eternal LIFE**.

For God so LOVED the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever

believeth IN him should **not perish**, but have **everlasting life**. For God sent not his Son into the world to **condemn** the world; but that the world through him might **be saved**. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that **believeth not** is **condemned already**, Because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

1 **John 5:1**, Whosoever **BELIEVETH** that Jesus is the Christ **IS BORN** of God...

Thought 2. As we see, scripture says it's by FAITH we are saved. Works by us have nothing to do with our being saved. However, after we are saved, works are to be done to HELP people in need and SHOW we are saved.

James 2:14-17, What doth it **profit**, my brethren, though a man say he hath **faith**, and have not WORKS? can faith **SAVE (DO WELL)** him? If a brother or sister be **naked**, and **destitute** of daily food, And one of you SAY unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye **GIVE** them not those things which are **needful** to the body; what doth it **profit (benefit)?** Even so **faith**, if it hath not WORKS, is **DEAD**, being alone.

Dead defined 3498, (a **corpse** [something that is no longer ACTIVE or full of animation]); **dead (literally or fig.; also as noun): -- dead** (lacking in commercial activity: idle [inactive; doing nothing]).

Thought 3. The key to understanding these verses is found in the word "PROFIT," meaning "benefit." In Ephesians 2:10, God commands us to DO "good works." The Greek word for "Works" there is the same in verses 14 and 17. The goal is to help others in the body of Christ, as well as sinners, as the wisdom of God dictates. Furthermore, calling to memory certain scriptures, and seeing the definition of "dead", we KNOW that "faith" is NOT of death. It is spiritual, and from God and therefore, it pertains to LIFE. It's also a fruit of our spirit: a GIFT of God produced because of understanding God's word. (Romans 10:17)

Ephesians 2:8-10, For by **grace** are ye **saved** through **FAITH**; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: =**Not of WORKS**, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created IN Christ Jesus unto good WORKS, which God **hath before ordained** (decree [command, order]) that we should WALK in them.

Titus 3:8, This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have **BELIEVED** in God might be careful to **MAINTAIN GOOD WORKS**.

Titus 3:14, And let ours also learn to **maintain good works** for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.

Thought 4. As we saw, we're **SAVED** by FAITH. And scripture tells us as long as we "keep the Faith" we remain saved. However, if we allow our heart to go back into UNBELIEF, we forfeit our salvation and enter into death again.

Hebrews 3:12-14, Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an **evil** heart of UNBELIEF, in **departing from** the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you **be hardened** through the **deceitfulness** of **sin**. For we are made partakers of Christ, **IF** we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end...

Romans 11:18-22, Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were **broken off**, that I might be grafted in. Well; because of **UNBELIEF** they were broken off, and thou **standest** by **FAITH**. Be not highminded, but FEAR: For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the **goodness** and **SEVERITY** (harshness, strictness) of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, IF thou **CONTINUE** in his goodness: **otherwise** thou also shalt be **CUT OFF**.

Faith defined 4102, RELIANCE upon Christ for SALVATION; abstractly, **CONSTANCY in such profession.**

Amos 8:4-5, *Hear this, O ye that swallow up the **needy**, even to make the **poor** of the land to fail, Saying, When will the **new moon** be gone, that we may **sell** corn? and the **sabbath**, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and **falsifying** the **balances** by **deceit**?*

NOTE: Well, what has this to do with worshipping other gods? It was a condition brought about by the **rejection** on the part of Israel of the allocation of the land on the basis of inheritance, in order to prevent the very type of landed aristocracy with a heartless disregard of the poor, which had replaced the theocratic arrangement given by the Lord when Israel entered Canaan. Their rebellion against God by their rejection of the theocracy and the elevation of a monarch, "like the nations surrounding them," was the beginning of their sorrows. What is in view in this verse is the end result and ripened fruit of that original departure from the Word of God.

The **heartless traders** grudged even the Sabbaths and feast days as interruptions in their business, which was simply that of **cheating** in every way possible. There had already come to its fruition in the Northern Kingdom, the diabolical sin that eventually culminated in the Jerusalem temple, designated by Jesus as "**a den of thieves and robbers.**" (Source: Coffman Commentaries, <http://classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/>)

NOTE: The New Moon holiday involved certain sacrifices and the cessation of work. Although this holiday **was not explicitly** established through the Law of Moses, it had become a national monthly feast day (as seen in 1 Samuel 20:5-6, 2 Kings 4:23, and Ezekiel 46:3). (Source: *The Bible Expositor and Illuminator*, Union Press Publication-Christian Life Series)

1 Samuel 20:5, And David said unto Jonathan, Behold, to morrow is the **new moon**, and I should not fail to sit with the king **at meat (to eat)**...

Amos 8:6, *That we may buy the **poor** for silver, and the **needy** for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the **refuse** of the wheat?*

NOTE: They make the shekel great, so that the **money**, being found too light, must have more added to it; and so **they cheat** that way too, and this under colour and pretence of exactness in doing justice. By such wicked practices as these men show such a **greediness** of the world, such a love of themselves, such a contempt of mankind in general, of the particular persons they deal with, and of the sacred laws of justice, as prove them to have in their hearts neither the **fear** nor the **love** of that God who has so plainly said that false weights and balances are an abomination to him. Another instance of their fraudulent dealing is that they sell the **refuse** of the wheat, and, taking advantage of their neighbour's ignorance or necessity, make them take it at the same price at which they sell the finest of the wheat. (2.) They are barbarous and **unmerciful** to the **POOR**: They swallow up the **needy**, and make the poor of the land

to fail. [1.] They valued themselves so much on their wealth that they looked upon all that were poor with the highest contempt imaginable; they **hated them**, could not endure them, but abandoned them, and therefore did what they could to make them cease, not by relieving them to make them cease to be poor, but by banishing and destroying them to make them cease to be, or at least to be in their land. (Source: *The Matthew Henry Commentary on the whole Bible classic.studylight.org/com/mhc*)

Psalm 36:1, The transgression of the **WICKED** saith within my heart, that there is no **FEAR** (**dread** [reverential or respectful fear; awe]) of God before his eyes.

Proverbs 8:13, The **FEAR** of the Lord is to **HATE** evil: **PRIDE**, and **arrogancy**, And the **EVIL** way, and the **FROWARD** mouth, do I hate.

Fear defined 3374 yir'ah pronounced yir-aw', morally, REVERENCE.

Reverence, profound (deep) respect) and esteem (high regard) mingled with **FEAR** and affection (LOVE). (1913 Webs.).

The fear acceptable to God, is a filial [child in relation to his parents] fear, an awful reverence of the divine nature, proceeding from a just esteem [high value] of his **PERFECTIONS** [infinite power, holiness, justice, benevolence and wisdom], which produces in us an inclination (leaning of the mind or will) TO his service and an unwillingness to offend him.).

Proverbs 14:2, He that walketh in his uprightness (conformity to rectitude and justice in social dealings) **FEARETH** (**reverence**) the Lord: but he that is **perverse (to turn aside)** in his ways **DESPISES** him.

Despiseth defined 959, to disesteem (to slight [neglect: forbear { stop, pause, refuse} to treat with **RESPECT**])

Amos 8:7, The **LORD** hath **sworn** by the **excellency** of Jacob, Surely I will **never forget ANY** of their works.

NOTE: By the excellency of Jacob - that is, by Himself who was its Glory, as Samuel calls Him "the Strength" 1 Samuel 15:29 or the Glory of Israel. Amos had before said, "God swear by His Holiness" and "by Himself" or "His soul." Now, in like way, He pledges that Glory wherewith He was become the Glory of His people. He reminds them, who was the sole Source of their glory; not their calves, but Himself, their Creator; and that He would not forget their deeds. "I will not **forget any**," literally, "**all**;" as David and Paul say, "**all flesh**," all living men, "shall not be justified," that is, none, no one, neither the whole nor any of its parts. Amos brings before the mind all their actions, and then says of **all** and **each**, the Lord will not forget them. God must cease to be God, IF He did not do what He sware to do, **punish** the **oppressors** and **defrauders** of the poor. (Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentary/bnb>)

Thought 1. Let's look at what God has said about the Covenants that he makes. If we do our part, it's a source of joy to us. But, curses were appointed because they broke it.

Psalm 89:34, My **covenant** will **I not break**, nor **alter (change)** the thing that is gone out of my lips.

Psalm 111:5, He hath given meat unto them that **fear** him: he will ever be mindful of his **covenant**.

Amos 8:8, Shall not the land **tremble** for this, and every one **mourn** that dwelleth therein? and it shall rise up wholly as a flood; and it shall be cast out and drowned, as by the **flood** of Egypt.

NOTE: For this wickedness committed, in using the **poor** with so much **inhumanity**?

may not an earthquake be expected? and which happened **two years** after Amos began to prophesy, (Amos 1:1); or that the earth should gape and swallow up these men alive, guilty of such enormities? or shall not the inhabitants of the land tremble at such **judgments**, which the Lord hath sworn he will bring upon it? **and everyone mourn that dwelleth therein?** at the hearing of them, and especially when they shall come upon them: as the calamity would be general, the mourning should be universal: **and it shall rise up wholly as a flood;** that is, the calamity threatened shall rise up at once like a flood of waters, like Noah's flood, and cover the whole land, and wash off and utterly destroy man and beast: **and it shall be cast out and drowned, as [by] the flood of Egypt;** or the river of Egypt, the Nile, which overflows at certain times, and casts up its waters and its mud, and drowns all the country... (Source: biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/)

Amos 8:9, *And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord GOD, that I will cause the SUN to go down at noon, and I will **darken** the **earth** in the **clear day**...*

NOTE: When this deluge and desolation of the land shall be, now spoken of: **that I will cause the sun to go down at noon:** or to be so dark as if it was set; as at the time of our Lord's crucifixion, to which many of the ancient fathers refer this prophecy, though it has respect to other times and things. Jarchi interprets it of the kingdom of the house of David. It doubtless designs the kingdom of Israel, their whole policy, civil and ecclesiastic, and the **destruction** of it; particularly their king, princes, and nobles, that should be in great adversity, and that suddenly and unexpectedly; it being a fine sunshine morning with them, and they in great prosperity, and yet by noon their sun would be set, and they in the utmost darkness and distress; **and I will darken the earth in a clear day;** the land of Israel, the people of it, the common people, who should have their share, in this calamity and affliction; and though it had been a clear day with them, and they promised themselves much and long felicity (joy), yet on a sudden their light would be turned into darkness, and their joy into sadness and sorrow. (Source: biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/)

Amos 8:10, *And I will turn your **feasts** into **mourning**, and all your **songs** into lamentation; and I will bring up **sackcloth** upon all loins, and **baldness** upon every head; and I will make it as the mourning of an only son, and the **END** thereof as a **bitter day**.*

NOTE: He recurs to the sentence which he had pronounced Amos 8:3, before he described the avarice and oppression which brought it down. Hosea too had foretold, "I will cause all her **mirth** to **cease**, her feast-days, etc" Hosea 2:11. So Jeremiah describes, "the JOY of our heart is ceased; our dance is turned into mourning" Lamentations 5:15.

....The **mourning** of the Jews was no half-mourning, no painless change of one color of becoming dress for another. For the time, they were dead to the world or to enjoyment. As the clothing was coarse, uncomely, distressing, so they laid aside every ornament, the ornament of their hair also (as English widows used, on the same principle, to cover it). They **shore** it off; **each sex**, what was the pride of their sex; the men, their beards; the women, their long hair.

(Source: Barnes' Notes on the Whole Bible classic.studylight.org/com/bnn/)

Amos 8:11-14, *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will **send a famine** in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of **hearing the WORDS** of the LORD: And they shall **wander** from **sea to sea**, and from the **north** even to the **east**, they shall run to and fro to SEEK the word of the LORD, and shall not find it. In that day shall the **fair virgins** and **young men faint for thirst**. They that swear by the sin of Samaria, and say, Thy god, O Dan, liveth; and, The manner of Beersheba liveth; even they shall fall, and never rise up again.*