

Israel punished in past for iniquity

Amos 4:1-3: Hear this word, you cows of Bashan who are on the mountain of Samaria, who oppress the poor, who crush the needy, who say to your husbands, "Bring now, that we may drink!" 2 The Lord GOD has sworn by His holiness, "Behold, the days are coming upon you when they will take you away with meat hooks, and the last of you with fish hooks. 3 "You will go out through breaches in the walls, each one straight before her, and you will be cast to Harmon," declares the LORD.

Amos now lays out again the charge and judgment against the northern kingdom. The nation had a consumer mentality - do whatever it takes to get me whatever I want. The animals that grazed on the pastures of Bashan, known for their very rich soil, were among the strongest and fattest. ***Deuteronomy 32:14-17, Psalms 22:12***

Deuteronomy 32:14-17: Curds of cows, and milk of the flock, with fat of lambs, and rams, the breed of Bashan, and goats, with the finest of the wheat – and of the blood of grapes you drank wine. 15 "But Jeshurun grew fat and kicked – you are grown fat, thick, and sleek – then he forsook God who made him, and scorned the Rock of his salvation. 16 "They made Him jealous with strange gods; with abominations they provoked Him to anger. 17 "They sacrificed to demons who were not God, to gods whom they have not known, new gods who came lately, whom your fathers did not dread.

Psalms 22:12: Many bulls have surrounded me; strong bulls of Bashan have encircled me.

Amos addresses the “cows” not the “bulls” – the men had become delicate and were not acting as men; the good life had dulled their minds and spirits. They had no purpose or principle in life – they were only pursuing further luxury and ease. The women of Samaria had given up the tenderness and feminineness for cruelty and masculinity. The indictment indicates there was weak male leadership – Israel had become a female dominated society and the men were responsible.

To supply their extravagances and sinful demands, the poor were habitually oppressed, extorted and crushed; the people sought only the gratification of their own desire for luxury and self-indulgence. They did not concern themselves with the “how,” only that they got what they wanted.

Their unbridled sin had profane God’s “Holy Name;” by God’s holiness, and His “Holy Name,” He swore, He would avenge His name on those who had profaned His name with their ungodliness. ***Psalms 89:30-35; Romans 2:1, 5-8; Galatians 6:7***

Psalms 89:30-35: "If his sons forsake My law and do not walk in My judgments, 31 if they violate My statutes and do not keep My commandments, 32 then I will punish their transgression with the rod and their iniquity with stripes. 33 "But I will not break off My lovingkindness from him, nor deal falsely in My faithfulness. 34 "My covenant I will not violate, nor will I alter the utterance of My lips. 35 "Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David.

Romans 2:1, 5-8: Therefore you have no excuse, everyone of you who passes judgment, for in that which you judge another, you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things. ... 5 But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, 6 who WILL RENDER TO EACH PERSON ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS: 7 to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; 8 but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation.

Galatians 6:7: Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.

The days are coming, is literally “the days are among you.” No matter what man may think or feel about God and His holiness and certainty of exonerating His holiness that Day and eternity WILL and ARE coming. With the passing of every day, the advance the Day of God’s judgment is ever closer upon the sinner. *1 Samuel 2:31; Isaiah 39:6; Jeremiah 9:25-26; 23:5; 31:27-31; 2 Peter 3:3-9*

1 Samuel 2:31: "Behold, the days are coming when I will break your strength and the strength of your father's house so that there will not be an old man in your house.

Isaiah 39:6: "Behold, the days are coming when all that is in your house and all that your fathers have laid up in store to this day will be carried to Babylon; nothing will be left,' says the LORD.

Jeremiah 9:25-26: "Behold, the days are coming," declares the LORD, "that I will punish all who are circumcised and yet uncircumcised - 26 Egypt and Judah, and Edom and the sons of Ammon, and Moab and all those inhabiting the desert who clip the hair on their temples; for all the nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised of heart."

Jeremiah 23:5: "Behold, the days are coming," declares the LORD, "When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; and He will reign as king and act wisely and do justice and righteousness in the land.

Jeremiah 31:27-31: "Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and with the seed of beast. 28 "As I have watched over them to pluck up, to break down, to overthrow, to destroy and to bring disaster, so I will watch over them to build and to plant," declares the LORD. 29 "In those days they will not say again, 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge.' 30 "But everyone will die for his own iniquity; each man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth will be set on edge. 31 "Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah

2 Peter 3:3-4: Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, 4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation."

Their destruction will come suddenly, while they are in the midst of their security; they will be taken away violently, in complete helplessness – drawn out with hooks. As a herd of cows goes out one after the other through a gap in a fence, they would go one by one through the very walls they thought would protect them – in utter shame. *2 Kings 19:28; Ezekiel 38:1-9, 39:1-5; Habakkuk 1:15*

2 Kings 19:28: 'Because of your raging against Me, and because your arrogance has come up to My ears, therefore I will put My hook in your nose, and My bridle in your lips, and I will turn you back by the way which you came.

Ezekiel 38:1-4: And the word of the LORD came to me saying, 2 "Son of man, set your face toward Gog of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him 3 and say, "Thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I am against you, O Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal. 4 "I will turn you about and put hooks into your jaws, and I will bring you out, and all your army, horses and horsemen, all of them splendidly attired, a great company with buckler and shield, all of them wielding swords

Ezekiel 39:1-5: "And you, son of man, prophesy against Gog and say, "Thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I am against you, O Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal; 2 and I will turn you around, drive you on, take you up from the remotest parts of the north and bring you against the mountains of Israel. 3 "I will strike your bow from your left hand and dash down your arrows from your right hand. 4 "You will fall on the mountains of Israel, you and all your troops and the peoples who are with you; I will give you as food to every kind of predatory bird and beast of the field. 5 "You will fall on the open field; for it is I who have spoken," declares the Lord GOD.

Habakkuk 1:15: The Chaldeans bring all of them up with a hook, drag them away with their net, and gather them together in their fishing net. Therefore they rejoice and are glad.

God was going to cast them to Harmon; reality, their sins had cast them to Harmon. They went from the penthouse of life to the outhouse of life; from the palace of their luxuries to the palace of their enemies, from a self-chosen life of sensuousness to the concubines in the harem. From a life of using sex to obtain what they wanted – they became the oppressed, crushed and extorted (for sex). The men, who abdicated their responsibilities for sensual pleasures, became eunuchs in the palaces of Assyrian and Babylonian. ***Isaiah 39:6-7***

Isaiah 39:6-7: "Behold, the days are coming when all that is in your house and all that your fathers have laid up in store to this day will be carried to Babylon; nothing will be left,' says the LORD. 7 "And some of your sons who will issue from you, whom you will beget, will be taken away, and they will become officials in the palace of the king of Babylon."

Amos 4:4-5: "Enter Bethel and transgress; in Gilgal multiply transgression! Bring your sacrifices every morning, your tithes every three days. 5 "Offer a thank offering also from that which is leavened, and proclaim freewill offerings, make them known. For so you love to do, you sons of Israel," declares the Lord GOD.

God called for them to multiply their transgressions by multiplying their false worship – because that is what they wanted to do. The more the Israelites participated in their false religion, the farther they drifted from God; they filled up the measure of their iniquity. Man is blind to God's provision whenever he rejects God's provision and attempts to supply his own justification; false worship does not improve oneself but like a cancer, continues to spread unabated until death. ***Genesis 15:13-16; Joshua 23:15-16; Matthew 23:31-33; 1 Thessalonians 2:14-16***

Genesis 15:13-16: God said to Abram, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years. 14 "But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve, and afterward they will come out with many possessions. 15 "As for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you will be buried at a good old age. 16 "Then in the fourth generation they will return here, for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete."

Joshua 23:15-16: "It shall come about that just as all the good words which the LORD your God spoke to you have come upon you, so the LORD will bring upon you all the threats, until He has destroyed you from off this good land which the LORD your God has given you. 16 "When you transgress the covenant of the LORD your God, which He commanded you, and go and serve other gods and bow down to them, then the anger of the LORD will burn against you, and you will perish quickly from off the good land which He has given you."

Matthew 23:31-33: "So you testify against yourselves, that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. 32 "Fill up, then, the measure of the guilt of your fathers. 33 "You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell?"

1 Thessalonians 2:14-16: For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, for you also endured the same sufferings at the hands of your own countrymen, even as they did from the Jews, 15 who both killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out. They are not pleasing to God, but hostile to all men, 16 hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved; with the result that they always fill up the measure of their sins. But wrath has come upon them to the utmost.

When man attempts to prove he is worthy, i.e., supply his own justifications, he can be very devout. The devoutness of idolaters in the service of their false gods often shames true believers – this can be an indictment against both believers and non-believers. *Revelation 2:4-5, 14-15, 20; 3:1-2, 15-16*

Revelation 2:4-5: "But I have this against you, that you have left your first love. 5 "Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place -- unless you repent.

Revelation 2:14-15: "But I have a few things against you, because you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit acts of immorality. 15 "So you also have some who in the same way hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans.

Revelation 2:20: "But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray so that they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.

Revelation 3:1-2: "To the angel of the church in Sardis write: He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars, says this: "I know your deeds, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. 2 "Wake up, and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die; for I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of My God.

Revelation 3:15-16: "I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. 16 "So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth.

False religion has the appearance of godliness but is not – it is just that, false. False religion takes the things of God and perverts the instructions and institutions of God (they allowed leaven in their offerings, which God had forbidden). The Israelites held daily sacrifices at the altar of Bethel and had free will offerings – it all appeared good but it was an abomination to God. Additionally, seemed laborious and monotonousness, when it came to worshipping the true and living God, the people did easily and gladly for their false religion. *Leviticus 2:4-5*

Leviticus 2:4-5: "Now when you bring an offering of a grain offering baked in an oven, it shall be unleavened cakes of fine flour mixed with oil, or unleavened wafers spread with oil. 5 "If your offering is a grain offering made on the griddle, it shall be of fine flour, unleavened, mixed with oil

Amos

*Amos 4:6-11: "But **I gave** you also cleanness of teeth in all your cities and lack of bread in all your places, yet you have **not returned** to Me," declares the LORD. 7 "Furthermore, **I withheld** the rain from you while there were still three months until harvest. Then **I would send** rain on one city and on another city, **I would not send** rain; one part would be rained on, while the part not rained on would dry up. 8 "So two or three cities would stagger to another city to drink water, but would not be satisfied; yet you have **not returned** to Me," declares the LORD. 9 "**I smote you** with scorching wind and mildew; and the caterpillar was devouring your many gardens and vineyards, fig trees and olive trees; yet you have **not returned** to Me," declares the LORD. 10 "**I sent** a plague among you after the manner of Egypt; **I slew** your young men by the sword along with your captured horses, and **I made** the stench of your camp rise up in your nostrils; yet you have **not returned** to Me," declares the LORD. 11 "**I overthrew** you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and you were like a firebrand snatched from a blaze; yet you have **not returned** to Me," declares the LORD. NASU*

The Lord makes it clear that He is holy and judge's sin; He is also, loving, merciful, gracious and slow to anger. In verses six through eleven, God states nine times the various ways He had moved trying to bring the Israelites to repentance. God has warned the people of His pending judgment, through the withholding of blessings and the releasing of judgments on the people of Israel. God had withheld the rains, which produced harvests and made life difficult; God had sent plagues of insects, pestilences, war, and destruction. Despite God's pleas for them to repent and return to Him, they would not. God's denunciation of the Israelites was, *yet you have not returned to Me – five times. 2 Kings 8:1; Isaiah 9:13; Jeremiah 5:3*

2 Kings 8:1: Now Elisha spoke to the woman whose son he had restored to life, saying, "Arise and go with your household, and sojourn wherever you can sojourn; for the LORD has called for a famine, and it will even come on the land for seven years."

Isaiah 9:13: Yet the people do not turn back to Him who struck them, nor do they seek the LORD of hosts.

Jeremiah 5:3: O LORD, do not Your eyes look for truth? You have smitten them, but they did not weaken; You have consumed them, but they refused to take correction. They have made their faces harder than rock; they have refused to repent.

Amos

Amos 4:12-13: "Therefore thus I will do to you, O Israel; because I will do this to you, prepare to meet your God, O Israel." 13 For behold, He who forms mountains and creates the wind and declares to man what are His thoughts, He who makes dawn into darkness and treads on the high places of the earth, The LORD God of hosts is His name.

God listed nine ways in which He had sent judgments to afflict the Israelites, yet they would not repent. God's patience was over; His anger was aroused – it was now time for God to release His judgment upon those who had rejected Him and His offer of grace. God is not to be trifled with; His anger, when aroused, is terrible and to be feared; make peace with God while His offer of mercy and grace is still available to you. *Ezekiel 22:31; Hosea 13:8; 1 Thessalonians 5:2-3; 2 Thessalonians 2:8-12; Hebrews 9:27, 10:26-31*

Ezekiel 22:31: "Thus I have poured out My indignation on them; I have consumed them with the fire of My wrath; their way I have brought upon their heads," declares the Lord GOD.

Hosea 13:8: I will encounter them like a bear robbed of her cubs, and I will tear open their chests; there I will also devour them like a lioness, as a wild beast would tear them.

Luke 12:58: "For while you are going with your opponent to appear before the magistrate, on your way there make an effort to settle with him, so that he may not drag you before the judge, and the judge turn you over to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison.

1 Thessalonians 5:2-3: For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. 3 While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape.

2 Thessalonians 2:8-12: Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; 9 that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, 10 and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. 11 For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, 12 in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.

Hebrews 9:27: And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment

Hebrews 10:26-27: For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a terrifying expectation of judgment and THE FURY OF A FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES.

In another example of God's mercy and grace, He reminds the Israelites that although it is Amos speaking, he does so on behalf of God, directed by God. God emphasizes to all who hear the prophecy of Amos that He is the one who formed the mountains, controls the weather (plagues and floods are not coincidences), gives revelation to man, and governs the rising and setting of the sun and the moon, as well as all terrestrial entities. Being more than able to judge and destroy, every prophecy of judgment by Amos is a call to repentance. ***Job 38:4-11; Jeremiah 10:12-13; John 1:3-4; Colossians 1:16-17***

Job 38:4-11: "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding, 5 who set its measurements? Since you know. Or who stretched the line on it? 6 "On what were its bases sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone, 7 when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy? 8 "Or who enclosed the sea with doors when, bursting forth, it went out from the womb; 9 when I made a cloud its garment and thick darkness its swaddling band, 10 and I placed boundaries on it and set a bolt and doors, 11 and I said, "Thus far you shall come, but no farther; and here shall your proud waves stop'?"

Jeremiah 10:12-13: It is He who made the earth by His power, Who established the world by His wisdom; and by His understanding He has stretched out the heavens. 13 When He utters His voice, there is a tumult of waters in the heavens, and He causes the clouds to ascend from the end of the earth; He makes lightning for the rain, and brings out the wind from His storehouses.

John 1:3-4: All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. 4 In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.

Colossians 1:16-17: For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities -- all things have been created through Him and for Him. 17 He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

Israel punished in the future for iniquity

Amos 5:1-4: Hear this word which I take up for you as a dirge, O house of Israel: 2 She has fallen, she will not rise again -- the virgin Israel. She lies neglected on her land; there is none to raise her up. 3 For thus says the Lord GOD, "The city which goes forth a thousand strong will have a hundred left, and the one which goes forth a hundred strong will have ten left to the house of Israel." 4 For thus says the LORD to the house of Israel, "Seek Me that you may live."

Amos calls on the people of Israel to listen to his words. Amos identifies some of the sins they are guilty of, again, and stresses and underscores the need of repentance. Four times in Chapter 5, God mercifully exhorts the people to turn from their wicked ways and to seek Him, that He might not destroy them, as He had spared Nineveh. ***Jonah 3:4-10; Psalms 28:4-5, 52:5; 145:20; Matthew 10:28***

Jonah 3:4-5, 10: Then Jonah began to go through the city one day's walk; and he cried out and said, "Yet forty days and Nineveh will be overthrown." 5 Then the people of Nineveh believed in God; and they called a fast and put on sackcloth from the greatest to the least of them. ... 10: When God saw their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them. And He did not do it.

Psalms 28:4-5: Requite them according to their work and according to the evil of their practices; requite them according to the deeds of their hands; repay them their recompense. 5 Because they do not regard the works of the LORD Nor the deeds of His hands, He will tear them down and not build them up.

Psalms 52:5: But God will break you down forever; He will snatch you up and tear you away from your tent, and uproot you from the land of the living.

Psalms 145:20: The LORD keeps all who love Him, but all the wicked He will destroy.

Matthew 10:28: "Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Though the Lord refers to Israel as a virgin (she had yet to be conquered), their persistent idolatry had set their pattern of life; punishment was going to come – it was inevitable. The decimation of war and conflict is near genocide – 90% of the people were to die. None of the great or mighty people survived – only the faithful survived who were predominantly the poor, the oppressed, and the ones who had no one to plead their cause. ***Deuteronomy 4:27; Isaiah 10:20-23; Romans 9:27-29***

Deuteronomy 4:27: "The LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the LORD drives you.

Deuteronomy 28:58-59: "If you are not careful to observe all the words of this law which are written in this book, to fear this honored and awesome name, the LORD your God, 59 then the LORD will bring extraordinary plagues on you and your descendants, even severe and lasting plagues, and miserable and chronic sicknesses.

Isaiah 10:20-23: Now in that day the remnant of Israel, and those of the house of Jacob who have escaped, will never again rely on the one who struck them, but will truly rely on the LORD, the Holy One of Israel. 21 A remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God. 22 For though your people, O Israel, may be like the sand of the sea, only a remnant within them will return; a destruction is determined, overflowing with righteousness. 23 For a complete destruction, one that is decreed, the Lord GOD of hosts will execute in the midst of the whole land.

Romans 9:27-29 Isaiah cries out concerning Israel, "THOUGH THE NUMBER OF THE SONS OF ISRAEL BE LIKE THE SAND OF THE SEA, IT IS THE REMNANT THAT WILL BE SAVED; 28 FOR THE LORD WILL EXECUTE HIS WORD ON THE EARTH, THOROUGHLY AND QUICKLY." 29 And just as Isaiah foretold, "UNLESS THE LORD OF SABAOth HAD LEFT TO US A POSTERITY, WE WOULD HAVE BECOME LIKE SODOM, AND WOULD HAVE RESEMBLED GOMORRAH."

Amos 5:5-9: "But do not resort to Bethel and do not come to Gilgal, nor cross over to Beersheba; for Gilgal will certainly go into captivity and Bethel will come to trouble. 6 "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, 7 for those who turn justice into wormwood and cast righteousness down to the earth." 8 He who made the Pleiades and Orion and changes deep darkness into morning, who also darkens day into night, who calls for the waters of the sea and pours them out on the surface of the earth, the LORD is His name. 9 It is He who flashes forth with destruction upon the strong, so that destruction comes upon the fortress.

God's judgment is coming and they will not be able to escape. They need to seek safety and deliverance from judgment by returning to God – not by making their own plans or following the ideas of the ungodly. They were not going to find deliverance because God had pronounced His judgment. *Ezekiel 33:11; 2 Chronicles 14:1; Isaiah 30:1-3, 31:1; Ephesians 5:11; 2 Peter 3:7; Jude 14,15*

Ezekiel 33:11: "Say to them, "As I live!" declares the Lord GOD, "I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil ways! Why then will you die, O house of Israel?"

2 Chronicles 14:11: Then Asa called to the LORD his God and said, "LORD, there is no one besides You to help in the battle between the powerful and those who have no strength; so help us, O LORD our God, for we trust in You, and in Your name have come against this multitude. O LORD, You are our God; let not man prevail against You."

Isaiah 30:1-3: "Woe to the rebellious children," declares the LORD, "Who execute a plan, but not Mine, and make an alliance, but not of My Spirit, in order to add sin to sin; 2 Who proceed down to Egypt without consulting Me, to take refuge in the safety of Pharaoh and to seek shelter in the shadow of Egypt! 3 "Therefore the safety of Pharaoh will be your shame and the shelter in the shadow of Egypt, your humiliation.

Isaiah 31:1: Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help and rely on horses, and trust in chariots because they are many and in horsemen because they are very strong, but they do not look to the Holy One of Israel, nor seek the LORD!

1 Corinthians 15:33-34: Do not be deceived: "Bad company corrupts good morals." 34 Become sober-minded as you ought, and stop sinning; for some have no knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame.

Ephesians 5:11 Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them

2 Peter 3:7: But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

Jude 14-15: It was also about these men that Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones, 15 to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."

Amos once again emphasizes that his message is from the Lord, not his own. The Almighty God, the creator of the heavens and earth, the omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent God, is speaking to them. They should listen attentively, take heart at what is being said, and earnestly repent.

Amos

Amos 5:10-15: They hate him who reproves in the gate, and they abhor him who speaks with integrity. 11 Therefore because you impose heavy rent on the poor and exact a tribute of grain from them, though you have built houses of well-hewn stone, yet you will not live in them; you have planted pleasant vineyards, yet you will not drink their wine. 12 For I know your transgressions are many and your sins are great, you who distress the righteous and accept bribes and turn aside the poor in the gate. 13 Therefore at such a time the prudent person keeps silent, for it is an evil time. 14 Seek good and not evil, that you may live; and thus may the LORD God of hosts be with you, just as you have said! 15 Hate evil, love good, and establish justice in the gate! Perhaps the LORD God of hosts may be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.

Amos again reviews more of the sins of the people of Israel. They pervert justice to obtain their goals and objectives – we have it today, the ends justify the means, situational ethics, bending the law if not breaking the law and excusing it away, at the expense of the poor and needful. God condemns greediness and taking advantage of the poor – and tells the wicked they will lose all that they have acquired illegitimately. *Isaiah 5:20-23; Micah 2:1-2, 3:1-4; James 2:9; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; 2 Peter 2:1-3*

Isaiah 5:20-23: Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter! 21 Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight! 22 Woe to those who are heroes in drinking wine and valiant men in mixing strong drink, 23 who justify the wicked for a bribe, and take away the rights of the ones who are in the right!

Micah 2:1-2: Woe to those who scheme iniquity, who work out evil on their beds! When morning comes, they do it, for it is in the power of their hands. 2 They covet fields and then seize them, and houses, and take them away. They rob a man and his house, a man and his inheritance.

Micah 3:1-4: And I said, "Hear now, heads of Jacob and rulers of the house of Israel. Is it not for you to know justice? 2 "You who hate good and love evil, who tear off their skin from them and their flesh from their bones, 3 Who eat the flesh of my people, strip off their skin from them, break their bones and chop them up as for the pot and as meat in a kettle." 4 Then they will cry out to the LORD, but He will not answer them. Instead, He will hide His face from them at that time because they have practiced evil deeds.

James 2:9: But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors.

2 Timothy 3:1-5: But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. 2 For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, 4 treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these.

2 Peter 2:1-3: But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. 2 Many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned; 3 and in their greed they will exploit you with false words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.

Justice and integrity were perverted; it was part of the system and way of life. One could not stand up against the wickedness because it was so ingrained into the life of people – they would not listen to the call for righteousness (*time the prudent person keeps silent, for it is an evil time*). *1 Kings 22:7-8; 2 Chronicles 24:20-21; Proverbs 9:7-10; John 8:44-45*

1 Kings 22:7-8: But Jehoshaphat said, "Is there not yet a prophet of the LORD here that we may inquire of him?" 8 The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "There is yet one man by whom we may inquire of the LORD, but I hate him, because he does not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. He is Micaiah son of Imlah." But Jehoshaphat said, "Let not the king say so."

2 Chronicles 24:20-21: Then the Spirit of God came on Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest; and he stood above the people and said to them, "Thus God has said, "Why do you transgress the commandments of the LORD and do not prosper? Because you have forsaken the LORD, He has also forsaken you." 21 So they conspired against him and at the command of the king they stoned him to death in the court of the house of the LORD.

Proverbs 9:7-10: He who corrects a scoffer gets dishonor for himself, and he who reproves a wicked man gets insults for himself. 8 Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you, reprove a wise man and he will love you. 9 Give instruction to a wise man and he will be still wiser, teach a righteous man and he will increase his learning. 10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

John 8:44-45: "You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies. 45 "But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me.

Amos 5:16-20: Therefore thus says the LORD God of hosts, the Lord, "There is wailing in all the plazas, and in all the streets they say, "Alas! Alas!" They also call the farmer to mourning and professional mourners to lamentation. 17 "And in all the vineyards there is wailing, because I will pass through the midst of you," says the LORD. 18 Alas, you who are longing for the day of the LORD, for what purpose will the day of the LORD be to you? It will be darkness and not light; 19 as when a man flees from a lion and a bear meets him, or goes home, leans his hand against the wall and a snake bites him. 20 Will not the day of the LORD be darkness instead of light, even gloom with no brightness in it?

God is warning that His judgment is coming and when God's judgment comes – none will escape; all will lament and suffer. Oddly enough, many look for the coming of the Lord as the day when God reveals Himself in mighty power and vindicate them against their enemies. However, Amos points out the Day of the Lord is a day of judgment first – God deals with sin first (as Christ had to pay for the sins of the world before being able to offer a perfect sacrifice). ***Malachi 3:2-4, 4:1; Luke 12:49-53; Matthew 3:10-12; John 11:9-10; Hebrews 2:9-10; 9:11-17, 27-28***

When judgment comes – it will come quickly, be unanticipated and from an unexpected place. People will try to escape but as they deliver themselves from one threat, another unanticipated and unexpected tragedy will consume them. ***1 Kings 13:20-25; 19:15-17, 20:29-30, 35-36; Isaiah 24:17-18; Jeremiah 15:1-3; Romans 1:18-25***