



Sunday School Lesson
Amos 8:1-14
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When Worship Becomes Sinful



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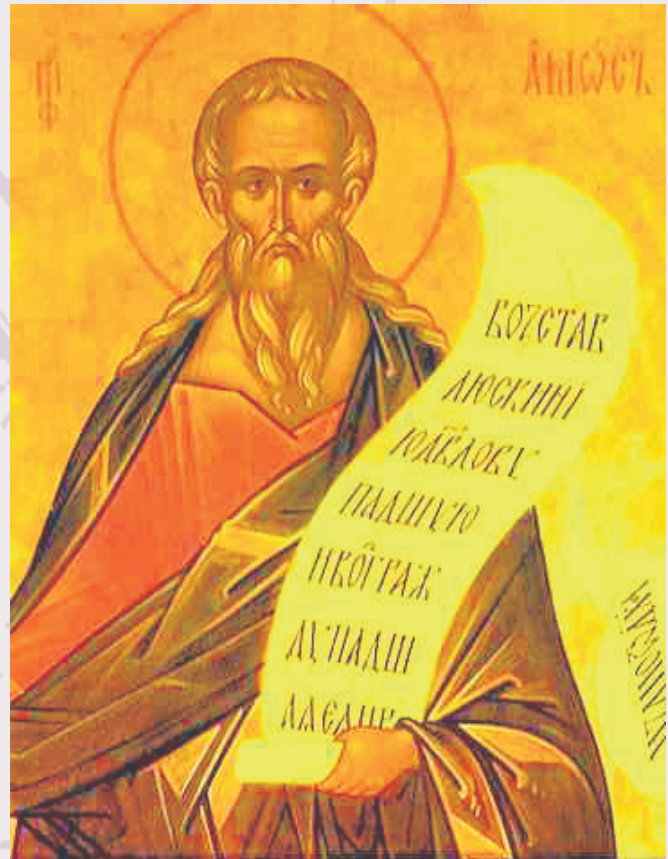
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The eight century prophet Amos began a new phase in the religious life of ancient Israel. Elijah and Elisha also had marked a transition period in the history of OT prophetic ministry. But the idea of prophet reaches back even further into Hebrew beginnings. Thus the OT reflects a certain fluidity in the understanding of the term "prophet." "Prophet" could designate a wide range of understandings. Sometimes these multiple understandings occur simultaneously, rather than progressively. The complex of Hebrew terms used for the idea of "prophet" occasionally reflects these different understandings, but on occasion, they reflect different understandings, as the exilic Hebrew editor's commentary insert in 1 Sam. 9:9 reflects regarding Samuel: "(Formerly in Israel, any one who went to inquire of God would say, "Come, let us go to the seer"; for the one who is now called a prophet was formerly called a seer.)" One is tempted to see in this a rather simple progression from "seer" (רֹאֵה) --early - - to "prophet" (נְבִיא) --late. It seems that the text is saying that the labels are what have changed over time, but the function has remained essentially the same. But a careful study of the OT reveals a much more complex situation than this. B.D. Napier (*Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, iPreach) highlights the broad strokes of the OT concept:



With some justification the person of the prophet and his function in the history of Israel have been accorded a role of unparalleled significance in the literature and tradition both of Judaism and of Christianity. Broadly but legitimately defined, prophetism begins with the historical Moses and continues without critical interruption to appear in the persons of a distinguished succession through both testaments of the Bible. For prophetism may legitimately be defined as that understanding of history which accepts meaning only in terms of divine concern, divine purpose, divine participation. Indeed, by this definition, the vast bulk of biblical record is produced by prophets or at least reflects an unmistakably prophetic understanding of history.

More narrowly defined, and also quite legitimately, prophetism is peculiarly the function of a concentrated succession of men--notably Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Second Isaiah--appearing in a brief span of about two centuries, preceded by a hundred years or more and even anticipated by the marvelously vigorous prophet Elijah, and followed and at once recalled by a fading succession of lesser lights.

The organizing structure of the Hebrew Bible into three sections -- Law, *Prophets*, and Writings -- reflects this twofold understanding. The "*Prophets*" section is subdivided into "*Former Prophets*," including Joshua, Judges, 1-2 Samuel and 1-2 Kings, and "*Latter Prophets*," including Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve prophets from Hosea to Malachi (the last twelve writings of the OT canon in the Protestant tradition). If the word "seer" only applied to the Former Prophets and the word "prophet" only applied to the Latter Prophets, the picture would be clear and obvious. But such is not the case in the Hebrew text of the OT.

Amos begins in the eighth century BCE the tradition of the writing prophet who delivers God's Word to God's people.

If any sort of developing understanding can be traced -- and this is vigorously debated -- likely the idea of "seer" -- one who 'sees' visions of God's revelation and then communicates them -- has its roots in the experience of Moses with whom God communicated and then Moses relayed that message to the Israelites. Some possible influence of the Canaanite prophetic tradition may surface among the Israelites after occupying the Land of Promise. If so, it incorporates the ecstatic element and is probably reflected in Samuel's instructions to Saul ([1 Sam. 10:5-6](#)): "5 After that you shall come to Gibeath-elohim, at the place where the Philistine garrison is; there, as you come to the town, you will meet a band of prophets coming down from the shrine with harp, tambourine, flute, and lyre playing in front of them; they will be in a prophetic frenzy. 6 Then the spirit of the Lord will possess you, and you will be in a prophetic frenzy along with them and be turned into a different person." Much of this same pattern of frenzied activity is noticed in the actions of the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel in their contest with Elijah ([1 Kings 18:26, 28-29](#)). But Elijah doesn't engage in such frenzied action when his turn comes to call upon God; a simple prayer is what is offered ([1 King. 18:36-38](#)). The principle governing prophesy at this point is reflected in the words of the prophet Micaiah in [1 King. 22:14](#): "As the Lord lives, whatever the Lord says to me, that I will speak." The prophet then describes a vision of God which he communicated to both Ahab of Israel and Jehoshaphat of Judah ([vv. 19-23](#)). This pattern of prophetic ministry typifies both Elijah (1 Kings 17- 2 Kings 2) and Elisha (2 Kings 3-13). What does distinguish both Elijah and Elisha from the prophetic ministry pattern that begins with Amos is the performing of miracles. The prophet as God's spokesman continues but the performing of miracles doesn't. Another shift takes place as well. Elijah and Elisha focused their messages to the various kings, of both Israelite kingdoms as well as some of the neighboring kings. Beginning with Amos the message to the kings will continue but increasingly it is a message for the entire nation as well. Thus the eighth century prophet becomes God's messenger to either the northern kingdom or the southern kingdom, and in isolated instances to neighboring kingdoms.

The impact of Amos on this later prophetic tradition cannot be over estimated, especially the book of Amos and the distinctive literary forms that emerge. J.S. Smart, ("Amos," *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, iPreach) notes

The book of Amos has a unique significance in the OT, being the first collection of prophetic oracles preserved in Israel as a separate book. There were prophets in Israel for centuries before the time of Amos, but the record of their activity is embodied in the general history of the nation, and we have only fragmentary specimens of their preaching. Men such as Moses and Elijah set their mark deeply upon the soul of Israel; and others such as Nathan and Micaiah, of whom we have only a glimpse, seem to have been of a stature comparable with any of the later prophets, yet no one took in hand the collection of their oracles. Amos' scornful words (7:14) in which he disassociates himself from the official guilds of the prophets have sometimes led to a wholesale depreciation of the significance of earlier prophets. The characteristics which they shared with other schools of diviners in the Near East, such as the use of music to induce a trance condition and the temptation to adjust their oracles at the pleasure of their customers, have made them seem to belong in a totally different category from the writing prophets. But when we find in their midst a Nathan and a Micaiah (see NATHAN 2; MICAIAH 1), we have to recognize that, in spite of all corruptions, a genuine prophetic tradition was kept alive in these guilds. Amos condemns, not the guilds, but their corruption; the order of prophets he recognized as a divine institution in Israel (2:11). He himself became a prophet only because those whose calling this was were failing to discharge their office. It is a mistake, therefore, to exaggerate the break between the earlier prophets and the succession of writing prophets that began with Amos, as though he were the inaugurator of a totally new tradition.

I Context

Some exploration of the historical and literary settings of chapter eight provide important pre-understandings to correct interpretation of the scripture text.

a. Historical

The **external history** of the book of Amos. The compositional history of the book of Amos is like most OT documents: we know very little about it. The book contains materials from the preaching ministry of the prophet Amos. This material actually covers a very brief period of time during the middle of the 700s BCE. Whether Amos himself wrote down what he had delivered at Bethel once he returned to Tekoa cannot be determined. As is noted in the *Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible* article on Amos, the biographical section in 7:10-17 is written from the third person, "Amos did this..." and not from the first person, "I did this..." This suggests the work of an editor using sources either oral and/or written. Or, perhaps from having traveled with Amos to Bethel and having heard first hand what Amos had said to Amaziah. Signals of later editorial work surface suggesting a southern kingdom perspective, as is noted in "Amos," *Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible*, iPreach:

The biographical passage in 7:10-17, which speaks of Amos in the third person, indicates an editor very early at work, one who was familiar with at least the closing period of Amos' mission. There is no reason why this should not be the same person who added the superscription in 1:1 and other editorial matter. The fact that the king of Judah is named before the king of Israel in 1:1 indicates that the editor was a Judean and that the work of editing was done in Judah. As might be expected after Amos' expulsion from Israel, the primary circulation of his oracles would be in Judah, and there are a number of editorial glosses which seem to have been intended to apply Amos' message more directly to Judah.

This perspective underscores the applicational direction of the material in its early existence. These oracles were intended to have a message beyond

those in the northern kingdom at Bethel.

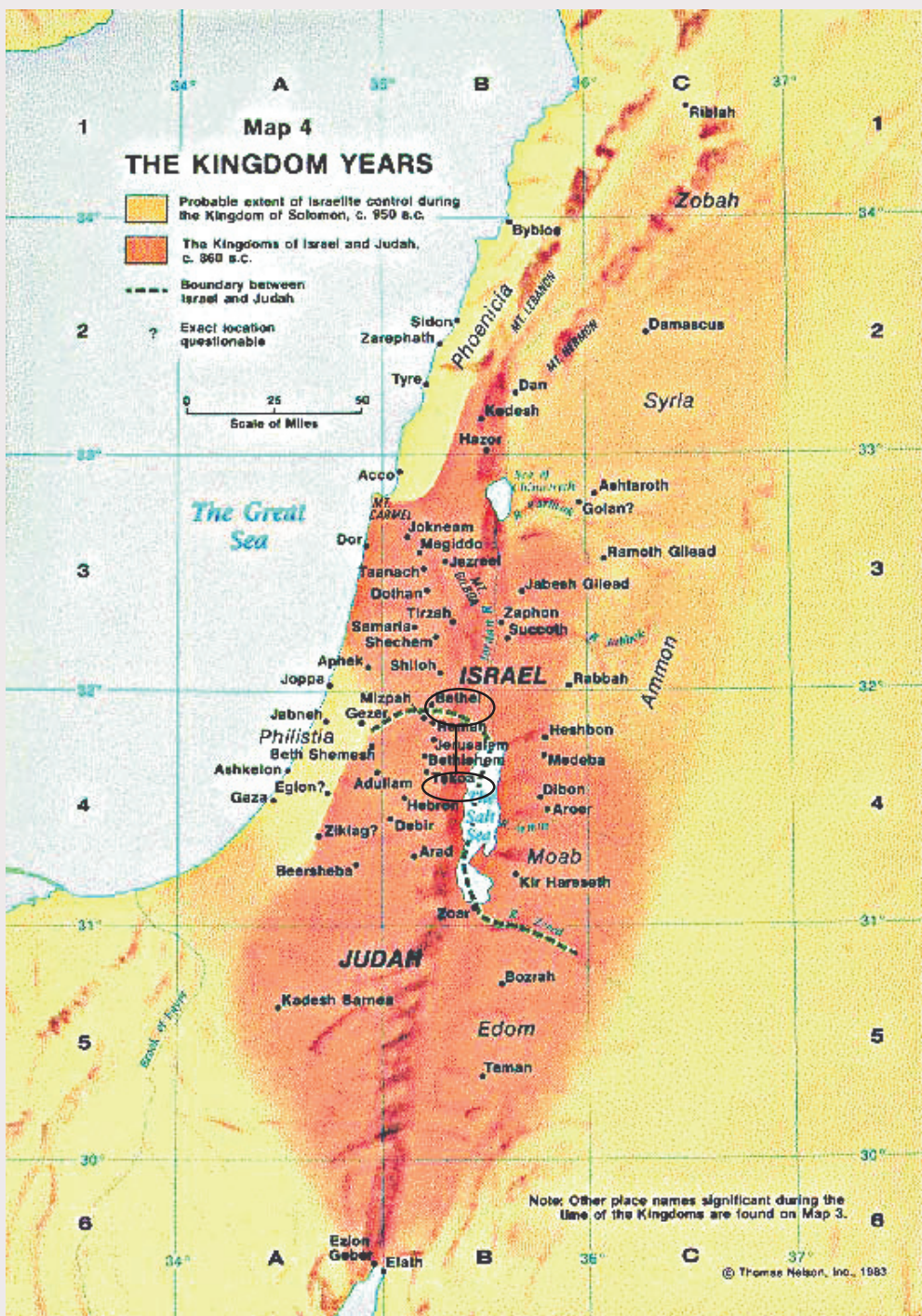
The **internal history** for the chapter eight is the same as for the remainder of the book since these oracles were delivered over a short period of time.

The historical time frame for the book is set in the first verse of chapter one with the introductory statement (NRSV): "The words of Amos, who was among the shepherds of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of King Uzziah of Judah and in the days of King Jeroboam son of Joash of Israel, two years before the earthquake." This was a rather common way in ancient writings for setting up a time reference. Since a system of time calculation using a calendar like we do didn't exist in the ancient world, time references would commonly be cast against significant rulers and other important events. Amos' ministry is set here as having taken place during the reigns of Uzziah in the southern kingdom of Judah (785-733 B.C.E.) and Jeroboam II in the northern kingdom of Israel (788-747 B.C.E.). The exact

dating of the earthquake, also mentioned in Zech. 14:5, is unknown, but it evidently took place sometime during the common times of these two kings. The year 760 B.C.E. has been suggested from archaeological indications of an ancient earthquake in this region. The mention of the earthquake provides a backdrop to a later discussion in 9:1-6 that seemingly builds off the imagery of an earthquake.

Thus we are dealing with a relatively short period of time in the middle 700s B.C.E. during which this prophet delivered his message in ancient Hebrew oracles to the people of the northern kingdom. Most of these messages were delivered at [Bethel](#), a center of religious activity in the northern kingdom





tween Bethel and Hai (Genesis 12:8); and on his return from Egypt he came back to it, and again “called upon the name of the Lord” (13:4). Here Jacob, on his way from Beersheba to Haran, had a vision of the angels of God ascending and descending on the ladder whose top reached unto heaven (28:10,19); and on his return he again visited this place, “where God talked with him” (35:1-15), and there he “built an altar, and called the place Elbeth-el” (q.v.). To this second occasion of God’s speaking with Jacob at Bethel, (Hosea 12:4,5) makes reference.

In troublous times the people went to Bethel to ask counsel of God (Judges 20:18,31; 21:2). Here the ark of the covenant was kept for a long time under the care of Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron (20:26-28). Here also Samuel held in rotation his court of justice (1 Samuel 7:16). It was included in Israel after the kingdom was divided, and it became one of the seats of the worship of the golden calf (1 Kings 12:28-33; 13:1). Hence the prophet Hosea (Hosea 4:15; 5:8; 10:5,8) calls it in contempt Beth-aven, i.e., “house of idols.” Bethel remained an abode of priests even after the kingdom of Israel was desolated by the king of

during this period. Bethel had a long history of religious activity reaching back to the patriarchs, as is summarized from the online [Easton’s Dictionary of the Bible](#) article:

A place in Central Palestine, about 10 miles north of Jerusalem, at the head of the pass of Michmah and Ai. It was originally the royal Canaanite city of Luz (Genesis 28:19). The name Bethel was at first apparently given to the sanctuary in the neighborhood of Luz, and was not given to the city itself till after its conquest by the tribe of Ephraim. When Abram entered Canaan he formed his second encampment be-

Assyria (2 Kings 17:28,29). At length all traces of the idolatries were extirpated by Josiah, king of Judah (2 Kings 23:15-18); and the place was still in existence after the Captivity (Ezra 2:28; Nehemiah 7:32). It has been identified with the ruins of Beitin, a small village amid extensive ruins some 9 miles south of Shiloh.

Amos himself resided in the small village of Tekoah in the southern kingdom, located about ten miles south of Jerusalem. Thus Amos was a ‘southerner’ who went north to preach to the ‘northerners’ his message of coming judgment. Also,

he identified himself as a being a shepherd, and not as a part of the priests as is dramatically stated in 7:14-15 (NRSV): “14 Then Amos answered Amaziah, ‘I am no prophet, nor a prophet’s son; but I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees, 15 and the Lord took me from following the flock, and the Lord said to me, ‘Go, prophesy to my people Israel.’” Although he disclaimed being a prophet, down through the subsequent centuries Amos has become known as the first of the great eight-century Hebrew prophets. He marked a new direction for the prophetic tradition among the Hebrew people. Elijah and Elisha who preceded him

addressed their messages to reigning monarchs, while Amos and those who would follow spoke directly to the people. Their messages took on a different thrust. Previous OT prophets focused on the personal failures of royalty and God’s judgment of the rulers, but Amos began a tradition of addressing social issues and God’s displeasure with injustices being done. Thirdly, for the first time in Hebrew history, the messages of Amos and later prophets were written down and eventually incorporated into complete documents. (See John Tullock, *The Old Testament Story*, p. 181, for details).

b. Literary

Literary context. The way the book is organized has been helpfully summarized by Rabbi Ehud ben Zvi in *The Jewish Study Bible* (pp. 1176f.):

“The basic structure of the book is unambiguous. It includes a superscription or title that serves as introduction (1.1), a clear motto that communicates one of the most significant messages of the book (1.2), and a series of prophetic readings of which the last two encapsulate much of the book. The Lord announces a severe, future punishment for the condemned nation, then an ideal and plentiful future to follow the deserved punishment (9.7-15). The series of prophetic readings begins with announcements of judgment against the nations, including Judah and Israel (1.3.-2.16) and continues with reports of prophetic speeches and visions of the fate of Israel, along with a biographical vignette in 7:10-17.”

This is supplemented by the perspective of Gregory Mobley (“Amos,” *New Oxford Annotated Bible*, 3rd ed., p. 1303 OT):

The book of Amos falls into three major parts: Chs 1-2 represent a single speech, an ethical tour of the region from the divine perspective, which climaxes in the indictment of Israel itself; chs 3-6 are the most variegated section and form a collection of short prophetic sayings indicting Israel for sin and injustice; chs 7-9 contain the visions of Amos, as well as the Amaziah narrative (7.10-17) and a final speech of comfort (9.11-15) addressed not to Israel but to Judah.”

Even more helpful is the summation found in the *Harper’s Bible Commentary*:

This unit is made up of five vision reports (7:1-3, 4-6, 7-9; 8:1-3; 9:1-4) plus two supplements (7:10-17; 8:4-14) inserted into this vision report sequence. The first two reports narrate visions of devastating judgments against Israel in which the prophet succeeds, through intercessory prayer, in persuading Yahweh to withdraw the punishment. In the third and fourth visions, however, Yahweh announces an irrevocable judgment against Israel: “I will not again pass him by” (7:8; 8:2). The fifth vision report elaborates the message of judgment. The vision reports develop the theme of death present in the second part of the main body (5:1-9:6). Like a wall tested by a plumbline and found to be unfit, so Israel fails the test and therefore must, like the wall, be torn down (7:7-8). The word play (Heb. *qayitz*, “summer fruit”, and *qetz*, “end”) introduces a

description of Israel’s end (8:1-3). The final vision (9:1-4) fills out the picture of death: none escape the sword. No matter how far they flee, they cannot escape Yahweh’s eyes; at his command they will die. A supplement to the third vision (7:10-17) reports conflict between Amos and Amaziah, priest of Bethel. The book’s concern over attempts to silence the prophetic word (cf. 2:11-12; 3:7-8) is at issue in this narrative. Amaziah cannot

rightfully order Amos to prophesy in Judah since his commission is from Yahweh and not from Amaziah (7:12-15). Moreover, Amos is not a lifelong prophet but rather a shepherd who was given a special calling—to prophesy to *Israel*.

A supplement (8:4-14) to the fourth vision elaborates the message of death and mourning found in 8:3. But the judgment is radicalized. It involves more than exile, starvation, and death; there will be a famine of hearing Yahweh’s creating and sustaining words.



Thus chapter eight stands in the section on visions. This is but one of the many **literary genres** found in the document, as Mobley (*NOAB*) highlights:

Some of Amos's sayings are presented as messenger speech ("thus says the Lord"), others as visions ("This is what the Lord showed me"), especially in chs 7-9. Amos, in legal style of indictment followed by punishment ("therefore..."), announced judgments (e.g., 1.3-2.16), delivered funeral orations (e.g., 5:1-2), and exhorted (e.g., 5.6). He rarely encouraged (see 9.11-15 and the notes there). In addition to the above types of prophetic sayings, the book contains three fragments from a hymn (4.13; 5.8-9; 9.5-6) and one narrative, about Amos's encounter with Amaziah, priest of the Northern Kingdom's royal sanctuary at Bethel (7.10-17)

Jenny M. Lowery ("Vision," *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*) provides a helpful summation of this literary form in ancient near eastern tradition:

A visual or auditory event which reveals something otherwise unknown. Visions and dreams are closely related in the ancient Near East in general, including the biblical tradition. They were an accepted means of communication and revelation throughout the history of Israel and in the early Christian Church. Visions occur throughout the OT, in the Torah, Prophets, and Writings. Though less frequent in the NT, they are important in Acts and Revelation. Visions are related to, yet distinct from, other revelatory phenomena such as theophanies, angelophanies, and heavenly journeys; in these, the emphasis is usually on the message conveyed or the secret revealed rather than on the image as in visions.

Visions may be classified into the following categories: visions of the deity or the divine council (Exod. 24:9-11; 1 Kgs. 22:19-23; Isa. 6; Ezek. 1:1-3, 15; Rev. 4:2-11); visions of other scenes or events which require no interpretation (1 Kgs. 22:17; Jer. 4:23-



26; Ezek. 8-11, 40-48; Amos 7:1-3, 4-6; Zech. 2:1-5 [MT 5-9]; 3:1-10; Acts 16:9-10); visions based on wordplays (Jer. 1:11-12; Amos 8:1-3); symbolic visions which require interpretation (Jer. 1:13-19; Ezek. 37:1-14; Dan. 7-8; Amos 7:7-9; Zech. 1:7-2:5 [9]; 5:1-11; Acts 10:9-16); allegorical visions found primarily in apocalypses (Rev. 12, 17). The first two categories are often further delineated by whether or not the seer participates in the scene.

Certain elements are common to all types of vision accounts. They are usually narrated in the 1st person by the seer. As in dream accounts, there is

often an introductory "frame" which provides the information on the date, time, and place where the vision occurred. This is followed by the narration of the contents of the vision and an interpretation, if necessary. The account often concludes by noting the reactions of the visionary.

In the OT visionary experiences are usually identified by nouns derived from the Hebrew roots *r' h* or *hzh*. Some visions simply provide an occasion for an accompanying oracle. In these cases, the oracle carries the primary message, with the vision being secondary. In other instances, particularly in symbolic visions, the vision itself is the primary means of communication, often revealing future events.

The NT commonly uses Gk. *hórama* and *optasia* as well as the more general term *eidos* found in the narration of vision experiences. Vision accounts in the NT are found primarily in the books of Acts and Revelation and tend to be of the symbolic type. The apocalyptic books (Daniel and Revelation), in particular, tend toward highly symbolic or allegorical visions with vivid and even bizarre imagery.

Chapter eight has a word play on the "basket of summer fruit" and interaction between God and the prophet. The symbolic meaning of the fruit becomes central to the meaning of the vision (8:1-3). It provides the basis for the judgment speech in verses 4-14.

II. Message

The internal **literary structure** of chapter eight revolves around the vision in verses 1-3 and the judgment speech in verses 4-14. This will serve as the basis for our study.

a Summer Fruit, vv. 1-3

LXX

Ἰούτως ἔδειξέν μοι κύριος καὶ ἰδοὺ ἄγγος ἰξευτοῦ ἔκαὶ εἶπεν τί σὺ βλέπεις Ἀμωσ καὶ εἶπα ἄγγος ἰξευτοῦ καὶ εἶπεν κύριος πρὸς με ἦκει τὸ πέρασ ἐπὶ τὸν λαόν μου Ἰσραηλ οὐκέτι μὴ προσθῶ τοῦ παρελθεῖν αὐτόν ἔκαὶ ὀλολύξει τὰ φατινώματα τοῦ ναοῦ ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ λέγει κύριος πολλὺς ὁ πεπτωκὼς ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ ἐπιρρίψω σιωπήν

NASB

1 Thus the Lord GOD showed me, and behold, *there was* a basket of summer fruit. 2 He said, "What do you see, Amos?" And said, "A basket of summer fruit." Then the LORD said to me, "The end has come for My people Israel. I will spare them no longer. 3 "The songs of the palace will turn to wailing in that day," declares the Lord GOD. "Many *will be* the corpses; in every place they will cast them forth in silence."

NRSV

1 This is what the Lord God showed me—a basket of summer fruit. 2 He said, "Amos, what do you see?" And I said, "A basket of summer fruit." Then the Lord said to me, "The end has come upon my people Israel; I will never again pass them by. 3 The songs of the temple shall become wailings in that day," says the Lord God; "the dead bodies shall be many, cast out in every place. Be silent!"

NLT

1 Then the Sovereign LORD showed me another vision. In it I saw a basket filled with ripe fruit. 2 "What do you see, Amos?" he asked. I replied, "A basket full of ripe fruit." Then the LORD said, "This fruit represents my people of Israel – ripe for punishment! I will not delay their punishment again. 3 In that day the riotous sounds of singing in the Temple will turn to wailing. Dead bodies will be scattered everywhere. They will be carried out of the city in silence. I, the Sovereign LORD, have spoken!"

Notes:

This first section is Amos's vision. It consists of a picture of a basket of summer fruit, followed by a divine question, "What do you see?" Amos then replies correctly that he sees the summer fruit. The God explains the symbolical meaning of the basket. Thus the interpretative issues center around the basket and its symbolical meaning.

A play on words in the Hebrew text dissolves in translation but plays an important role in the original meaning. Summer basket is *qayits* while end is *qets*. Thus the "summer basket" (*qayits*) is the "end" (*qets*) of Israel.

Interestingly, the LXX translators missed the meaning of the Hebrew text so that "summer basket" became "fowler's basket" (ἄγγος ἰξευτοῦ), which is the meaning of this Hebrew term in the one other place where it shows up (Jer. 5:27). Thus the Greek text identifies Israel's end with being caught in a bird cage for someone's meal after slaughter.

The picture of the Hebrew text underscores fruit at the very end of the harvest season. The fruit is ripe, if not over ripe. Thus, in graphic fashion the end of the northern kingdom is portrayed. This follows the pattern found in the other visions: a plumbline (7:7); locusts (7:1); shower of fire (7:4); altar (9:1). The communication strategy is to paint a visual picture that would be clearly understandable to the audience. Once that picture is planted in their minds, it is then linked to a religious principle.

The summer fruit gathered in harvest could be understood in positive terms. But the explanation in vv. 2-3 quickly link it to a devastating termination of the northern kingdom given in vivid terms. The interpretative link *qayits* / *qets* immediately turns the significance of the summer basket into something dreadful.

The explanation comes in poetic form:
"The end has come upon my people Israel;
I will never again pass them by.
The songs of the temple shall become wailings in that day," says the Lord God;
"the dead bodies shall be many,
cast out in every place. Be silent."
Possible meanings are summarized by W.R. Harper (ICC):

This vision is really a reassertion of the thought contained in the third vision, which had been interrupted. Three interpretations are suggested: (1) As summer fruit, when ripe, may not last long, so Israel, ripe in her sins, shall now come to an end.[‡] (2) As summer fruit is plucked when ripe, so that it may not rot, so shall Israel be removed from home and carried into captivity.[§] But it is better to adopt another, viz. (3) the summer fruit is late and poor, the best being gathered earlier; a receptacle containing summer fruit shows the last of the crop, the end of the year, and, by analogy, the approaching end of Israel's kingdom.

The more detailed explanation of the text details in the larger context is provided by D. Stuart (*Word Biblical Commentary*):

Amos 7:1–8:3 is the account of four prophetic visions and the story of the official opposition that was aroused particularly by the wording of the third vision. In the first two visions (7:1–3; 7:4–5), coming disasters revealed to Amos are canceled by the prophet's intercession. Yahweh shows himself merciful and compassionate, willing to change his mind about intended harm (cf. Exod 34:6; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2; etc.), unwilling utterly to destroy his covenant people (Deut 4:27–31).

The third and fourth visions (7:7–9; 8:1–3) revolve on the sound of spoken words that suggest punishments certain to be carried out: “moaning” and the “end” for Israel—not a total obliteration of the people, but a severe conquest, exile, and loss of life.

Even the biographical section in 7:10–17 is strongly oracular in nature, confirming and detailing Amos' revelations of Israel's coming exile. This brief story is particularly intriguing because it tells the story of an attempt by a religious official to stifle the preaching of a prophet whose message was unpleasant, embarrassing, and even threatening to the religious and governmental establishment. From a purely human point of view, the priest Amaziah's actions were reasonable. He wanted to silence Amos, a prophet not (officially at least) welcome in the region where he had been preaching, whose doomsaying was critical of persons not using their power to bring Israelite society back into conformity with the Sinai covenant.

But in trying to silence a prophet, one may actually be trying to silence God. Some in NT times, whose “fathers killed the prophets” (Luke 11:48), similarly thought that they could silence Jesus, John the Baptist, Paul, and many others, not having learned from the story of Amaziah and Amos. Indeed, religion may nearly always seek peacefulness and harmony above

the truth that God demands justice and faithfulness and has appointed a day when he will judge the world. Ignorance is not bliss. Refusal to consider the reality of God's wrath against evil amounts to willingness to condone evil.

Was Amos too hard on Amaziah? Not at all. The priest who wanted to protect his king and countrymen from hearing predictions of their doom would inevitably be unable to escape the effects of that doom himself. Amos' negative message was not just sentiment; it was God's word. Amaziah, along with his fellow Israelites, had to experience the penalty of ignoring or opposing it.

The progressive devastation is seen in the main strophes: the end has come; the songs of the temple will become wailings; dead bodies shall be many. God waited for Israel to repent. The worship turned nauseous in God's nostrils; the destruction would be complete with dead bodies everywhere.

The connection to our day? God may on occasion overlook the injustices and immorality of a society in the hope that repentance will come. But as Amos realized, there comes a time when God's patience is exhausted and His wrath is poured out upon such an immoral group of people. The expression of His wrath has awesome levels of destruction. When one studies the invasion tactics of the Assyrians, who became God's vehicle of wrath, the picture becomes dreadful. They stand even today as one of the most vicious invaders to ever exist in human history. These people, from the northern part of modern Iraq, sought to utterly destroy and plunder totally every group of people they captured. Ironically, even today, several thousand years later, their descendants are inflicting merciless cruelty on the American military.

b. God's Judgment, vv. 4-14

LXX

ἄκούσατε δὴ ταῦτα οἱ ἐκτρίβοντες εἰς τὸ πρῶν πένητα καὶ καταδυναστεύοντες πτωχοῦς ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς ὅτι λέγοντες πότε διελεύσεται ὁ μῆν καὶ ἐμπολήσομεν καὶ τὰ σάββατα καὶ ἀνοίξομεν θησαυροὺς τοῦ ποιῆσαι μικρὸν μέτρον καὶ τοῦ μεγαλῦναι στάθμια καὶ ποιῆσαι ζυγὸν ἄδικον ἑτοῦ

NASB

4 Hear this, you who trample the needy, to do away with the humble of the land, 5 saying, "When will the new moon be over, So that we may sell grain, And the sabbath, that we may open the wheat market, To make the bushel smaller and the shekel bigger, And to cheat with dishonest scales, 6 So as to buy the helpless for money

NRSV

4 Hear this, you that trample on the needy, and bring to ruin the poor of the land, 5 saying, "When will the new moon be over so that we may sell grain; and the sabbath, so that we may offer wheat for sale? We will make the ephah small and the shekel great, and practice deceit with false balances, 6

NLT

4 Listen to this, you who rob the poor and trample the needy! 5 You can't wait for the Sabbath day to be over and the religious festivals to end so you can get back to cheating the helpless. You measure out your grain in false measures and weigh it out on dishonest scales. 6 And you mix the wheat you sell with chaff swept from the

κτᾶσθαι ἐν ἀργυρίῳ
πτωχοὺς καὶ ταπεινὸν ἀντὶ
ὑποδημάτων καὶ ἀπὸ παντὸς
γενήματος ἐμπορευσόμεθα
ἡὸ μνύει κύριος καθ'
ὑπερηφανίας Ἰακωβ εἰ
ἐπιλησθήσεται εἰς νεῖκος
πάντα τὰ ἔργα ὑμῶν ἡκαὶ
ἐπὶ τούτοις οὐ
ταραχθήσεται ἡ γῆ καὶ
πειθήσεται πᾶς ὁ κατοικῶν
ἐν αὐτῇ καὶ ἀναβήσεται ὡς
ποταμὸς συντέλεια καὶ
καταβήσεται ὡς ποταμὸς
Αἰγύπτου ἡκαὶ ἔσται ἐν
ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ λέγει
κύριος ὁ θεὸς καὶ δύσεται
ὁ ἥλιος μεσημβρίας καὶ
συσκοτάσει ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἐν
ἡμέρᾳ τὸ φῶς ἡκαὶ
μεταστρέψω τὰς ἑορτὰς ὑμῶν
εἰς πένθος καὶ πάσας
τὰς ᾠδὰς ὑμῶν εἰς θρήνον
καὶ ἀναβιβῶ ἐπὶ πᾶσαν
ὄσφυν σάκκου καὶ ἐπὶ πᾶ
σαν κεφαλὴν φαλάκρωμα
καὶ θήσομαι αὐτὸν ὡς
πένθος ἀγαπητοῦ καὶ τοῦς
μετ' αὐτοῦ ὡς ἡμέραν
ὀδύνης ἡιδὸν ἡμέραι
ἔρχονται λέγει κύριος καὶ
ἐξαποστελῶ λιμὸν ἐπὶ τὴν
γῆν οὐ λιμὸν ἄρτου οὐδὲ
δίψαν ὕδατος ἀλλὰ λιμὸν
τοῦ ἀκοῦσαι λόγον κυρίου
ἡκαὶ σαλευθήσονται ὕδατα
ἕως θαλάσσης καὶ ἀπὸ
βορρᾶ ἕως ἀνατολῶν
περιδραμοῦνται ζητοῦντες
τὸν λόγον κυρίου καὶ οὐ
μὴ εὔρωσιν ἡἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ
ἐκείνῃ ἐκλείψουσιν αἱ
παρθέναι αἱ καλαὶ καὶ οἱ
νεανίσκοι ἐν δίψει ἡοἱ
ὀμνύοντες κατὰ τοῦ
ἰλασμοῦ Σαμαρείας καὶ οἱ
λέγοντες ζῆὸ θεὸς σου Δαν
καὶ ζῆὸ θεὸς σου Βηρσαβεε
καὶ πεσοῦνται καὶ οὐ μὴ
ἀναστῶσιν ἔτι

And the needy for a pair
of sandals, And *that* we
may sell the refuse of the
wheat?" 7 The LORD
has sworn by the pride of
Jacob, "Indeed, I will
never forget any of their
deeds. 8 Because of this
will not the land quake
And everyone who dwells
in it mourn? Indeed, all of
it will rise up like the Nile,
And it will be tossed
about And subside like
the Nile of Egypt. 9 It will
come about in that day,"
declares the Lord GOD,
"That I will make the sun
go down at noon And
make the earth dark in
broad daylight. 10 Then I
will turn your festivals into
mourning And all your
songs into lamentation;
And I will bring sackcloth
on everyone's loins And
baldness on every head.
And I will make it like a
time of mourning for an
only son, And the end of
it will be like a bitter day.

11 "Behold, days are
coming," declares the
Lord GOD, "When I will
send a famine on the
land, Not a famine for
bread or a thirst for wa-
ter, But rather for hearing
the words of the LORD.
12 People will stagger
from sea to sea and from
the north even to the
east; They will go to and
fro to seek the word of the
LORD, But they will not
find *it*. 13 In that day the
beautiful virgins And the
young men will faint from
thirst. 14 *As for* those
who swear by the guilt of
Samaria, Who say, 'As
your god lives, O Dan,'
And, 'As the way of Beer-
sheba lives,' They will fall
and not rise again."

buying the poor for silver
and the needy for a pair
of sandals, and selling
the sweepings of the
wheat." 7 The Lord has
sworn by the pride of Ja-
cob: Surely I will never
forget any of their deeds.
8 Shall not the land
tremble on this account,
and everyone mourn who
lives in it, and all of it rise
like the Nile, and be
tossed about and sink
again, like the Nile of
Egypt? 9 On that day,
says the Lord God, I will
make the sun go down at
noon, and darken the
earth in broad daylight. 10
I will turn your feasts into
mourning, and all your
songs into lamentation; I
will bring sackcloth on all
loins, and baldness on
every head; I will make it
like the mourning for an
only son, and the end of
it like a bitter day.

11 The time is surely
coming, says the Lord
God, when I will send a
famine on the land; not a
famine of bread, or a
thirst for water, but of
hearing the words of the
Lord. 12 They shall wan-
der from sea to sea, and
from north to east; they
shall run to and fro, seek-
ing the word of the Lord,
but they shall not find it.
13 In that day the beauti-
ful young women and the
young men shall faint for
thirst. 14 Those who
swear by Ashimah of
Samaria, and say, "As
your god lives, O Dan,"
and, "As the way of Beer-
sheba lives"— they shall
fall, and never rise again.

floor! Then you enslave
poor people for a debt of
one piece of silver or a
pair of sandals. 7 Now
the LORD has sworn this
oath by his own name,
the Pride of Israel F19: "I
will never forget the
wicked things you have
done! 8 The earth will
tremble for your deeds,
and everyone will mourn.
The land will rise up like
the Nile River at
floodtime, toss about,
and sink again. 9 At that
time," says the Sover-
eign LORD, "I will make
the sun go down at noon
and darken the earth
while it is still day. 10 I
will turn your celebrations
into times of mourning,
and your songs of joy will
be turned to weeping.
You will wear funeral
clothes and shave your
heads as signs of sor-
row, as if your only son
had died. How very bitter
that day will be!

11 "The time is
surely coming," says the
Sovereign LORD, "when
I will send a famine on the
land – not a famine of
bread or water but of
hearing the words of the
LORD. 12 People will
stagger everywhere from
sea to sea, searching for
the word of the LORD,
running here and going
there, but they will not find
it. 13 Beautiful girls and
fine young men will grow
faint and weary, thirsting
for the LORD's word. 14
And those who worship
and swear by the idols of
Samaria, Dan, and Beer-
sheba will fall down,
never to rise again."

Notes:

The judgment speech in vv. 4-14 provides the rationale for the prediction of destruction in the vision. It breaks down into several parts, as Donald Gowan (*New Interpreters Bible*, iP-reach) notes:

The rest of the chapter [vv. 4-14] may be read as a series of explanations of the “end” that is announced to Amos in the vision. An extended reason/announcement oracle follows the vision (vv. 4-8), and the passage beginning “On that day” (vv. 9-10), which may once have been an independent oracle may now be understood as a continuation of the announcement. The two oracles beginning “The time is surely coming” (vv. 11-12) and “In that day” (vv. 13-14) have also been brought together here because of relationships between them. The atmosphere of death that was so prominent in chap. 5 permeates this chapter also, since “end” leads to descriptions of mourning concluding the first two sections (vv. 3, 9-10) and to “they shall fall, and never rise again” at the end of the third.

The theme of indictment dominates vv. 4-8 and the Day of the Lord vv. 9-14.

The injustice of the rich against the poor is condemned in dramatic fashion in verses 4-6. The background is helpfully described by Donald Stuart (*Word Biblical Commentary*):

Sadly, Israel’s society had developed two economic tiers during the eighth century B.C. At the expense of an increasingly impoverished large lower class, and in violation of the Mosaic covenant (Exod 23:6; Lev 19:10, 13, 15; 25:25–53; Deut 15:7–11; 24:12–22), a monied upper class had emerged (cf. 4:1–3; 6:1–7). Its members included profiteers, business persons who felt free to take advantage of tacit government policy that favored the rich and paid no heed to the interests of the poor.

A generalized accusation begins in verse 4: “you that trample on the needy, and bring to ruin the poor of the land.” In synonymous parallelism the wealthy are condemned as trampling and bringing to ruin the poor. D. Stuart (*WBC*) describes these two verbs:

Such people were “trampling” (שִׁאֵרָה) i.e., exploiting, the poor, with the result (thus the hiphil infinitive לְשַׁבֵּת) that increasingly needy people were apparently dying



of starvation, selling themselves into slavery, suffering ill health and other maladies of malnourishment and lack of proper clothing and shelter, etc.

The religious angle is introduced in verse 5. These merchants couldn’t wait until the major festivals and sabbath observances were over, since all labor ceased during these celebrations. Their sales of wheat involved cheating the poor with false scales and selling them musty wheat hardly fit to eat. In the process they were able to make slaves out of the poor.

Verses seven and eight focus on God’s remembering what is taking place and His determination to address these injustices. He places Himself under oath to not let a single injustice go unpunished. And that punishment will be unbelievably severe: “Shall not the land tremble on this account, and everyone mourn who lives in it, and all of it rise like the Nile, and be tossed about and sink again, like the Nile of Egypt?” Just as the Egyptian Nile river would flood and cause great damage, so the northern kingdom would become as chaotic and under such devastation.

Verses 9-14 focus in on Amos’ concept of the Day of the Lord as the horrible day of the demise of the northern kingdom. Several aspects are stressed here. In mid-day the earth would become darkened in horrifying judgment (v. 9). Religious celebrations would be turned into funeral dirges (v. 10). Severe famine would take place (vv. 11-12), but not shortage of food; rather a shortage of hearing the word of God. The youth of the land looking to their idols for deliverance would perish (vv. 13-14). One must remember that this divine judgment came upon the

entire population of the northern kingdom -- rich and poor alike. Thus the injustices condemned here were not the monopoly of the rich alone. Poor abused poor when opportunity presented itself. A lifestyle of greed and raw materialism thought nothing of taking advantage of any possible victim. Religion was turned into a sugarcoating to provide some easing of conscience for the immoral living.

How does this relate to believers in our day? Allen Guenther (*Believer's Bible Commentary*, iPreach) zeroes in on one aspect of this text in its connection to our lives today: Greed.

Greed is a lusting after things which represent power to us. These may be in the form of money, resources, people, or circumstances (opportunities). One need not be rich to be greedy, since we all have a need for personal power, a need to feel we have some say in our own well-being or in the choice and direction of our lives. Most often greed consists of an insatiable desire to have more things. As such it is an expression of materialism as well as a hunger for security.

Greed sets its practitioners against other people, destroying community, and isolating those who grasp for it. Greed for power acts like an addictive drug, offering a false security while destroying the addict and separating those whom it touches. Israel's economic injustices represent an agreement between the ruling and the merchant classes in the legal exercise of greed. The unjust laws and practices of Israel's political leaders and economic class have shattered the unity of the nation. The subsequent judgment will shred the economic structures, exposing the vulnerable foundations on which they have been built. Neither economic nor legal institutions can ever substitute for the strength which comes from people living in community.

Avarice also represents distrust in divine providence. It places in doubt the willingness or the ability of God to provide for the material needs of his creatures. Is it not characteristic of deeper realities, that idols are made out of silver and gold (Ps. 135:15; Hos. 8:4), and that the Scriptures refer to the love of money (covetousness) as idolatry (Col. 3:5; Eph. 5:5)? Inevitably, those who worship this idol succumb to



immoral methods to feed their greed.

Preoccupation with security and material welfare starves the spirit. For such a person, God becomes a supporter of the status quo, One who responds to my needs at my bidding. But the Lord will not be bound by the timetable of those who name the Name. Continued resistance to the call for repentance induces spiritual hardening of the arteries. God treats the disease by withholding his word. Preoccupation with the blessings of God gnaws away at community.

The antidote to greed is generosity. It recognizes God as the Giver of all good gifts. It acknowledges the other persons with whom we occupy limited human and natural resources. It frees people from selfish addictions. It releases the work of the Spirit of God in binding people to one another. This results in a sense of security, acceptance, and worth.

Donald Gowan (*New Interpreters Bible*, iPreach) sees another angle of application:

Could Israel have been so bad for God to give up on them and start over? As Amos saw it, religion served only to reassure people that everything was all right, when in fact it was not. Religion said: "Be sure to observe the festival days, keep the sanctuaries in good order, and make the proper sacrifices, and that will provide a divine guarantee." Should we say today, "Get prayer back into the public schools, and that observance will make ours a different nation somehow"? Like contemporary society, the Israel Amos diagnosed had evidently lost the standards of public morality that had once been generally accepted and had provided an ethos that enabled people to live together in general harmony. In mid-eighth-century BCE Israel, as in contemporary society, that loss of standards led people to prey on one another—the true enemy was within. From whence, then, could healing come?

The frightening reality is that ancient Israel put into place a loss of moral fiber that tolerated injustice and abuse of one another. The gap between rich and poor was seen as normal. Religion served more as a salve to cover guilty consciences. Such ingredients proved to be self-destructive. When the Assyrians invaded the land within a few years after Amos' ministry, the Israelites were helpless to defend themselves with anything. [2 Kings 17:1-18](#) describes in brutal terms the downfall of the northern kingdom. At the time it was humanly speaking a wealthy and relatively powerful country. It had alliances with most all its neighboring countries. But all that was useless in the face of the massive power of the Assyrians. The paganism of the Israelites was the basis for their demise in 2 Kings. For Amos more was involved. A paganism that tolerated social injustice and an immoral life-style lay at the core of their downfall.

Things haven't changed over the centuries!

LXX

Ἰούτως ἔδειξέν μοι κύριος καὶ ἰδοὺ ἄγγος ἰξευτοῦ ²καὶ εἶπεν τί σὺ βλέπεις Ἀμωσ καὶ εἶπα ἄγγος ἰξευτοῦ καὶ εἶπεν κύριος πρὸς με ἦκει τὸ πέρασ ἐπὶ τὸν λαόν μου Ἰσραηλ οὐκέτι μὴ προσθῶ τοῦ παρελθεῖν αὐτόν ³καὶ ὀλολύξει τὰ φατινώματα τοῦ ναοῦ ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ λέγει κύριος πολλὸς ὁ πεπτωκὼς ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ ἐπιρρίψω σιωπὴν ⁴ἀκούσατε δὴ ταῦτα οἱ ἐκτρίβοντες εἰς τὸ πρῶν πένητα καὶ καταδυναστεύοντες πτωχοὺς ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς ⁵οἱ λέγοντες πότε διελεύσεται ὁ μῆν καὶ ἐμπολήσομεν καὶ τὰ σάββατα καὶ ἀνοιξομεν θησαυροὺς τοῦ ποιῆσαι μικρὸν μέτρον καὶ τοῦ μεγαλῦναι στάθμια καὶ ποιῆσαι ζυγὸν ἄδικον ⁶τοῦ κτᾶσθαι ἐν ἀργυρίῳ πτωχοὺς καὶ ταπεινὸν ἀντὶ ὑποδημάτων καὶ ἀπὸ παντὸς γενήματος ἐμπορευσόμεθα ⁷ὁμνύει κύριος καθ' ὑπερηφανίας Ἰακωβ εἰ ἐπιλησθήσεται εἰς νεῖκος πάντα τὰ ἔργα ὑμῶν ⁸καὶ ἐπὶ τούτοις οὐ παραχθήσεται ἡ γῆ καὶ πενήσει πᾶς ὁ κατοικῶν ἐν αὐτῇ καὶ ἀναθήσεται ὡς ποταμὸς συντέλεια καὶ καταβήσεται ὡς ποταμὸς Αἰγύπτου ⁹καὶ ἔσται ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ λέγει κύριος ὁ θεὸς καὶ δύσεται ὁ ἥλιος μεσημβρίας καὶ συσκοτάσει ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς

NASB

1 Thus the Lord GOD showed me, and behold, *there was* a basket of summer fruit. 2 He said, "What do you see, Amos?" And said, "A basket of summer fruit." Then the LORD said to me, "The end has come for My people Israel. I will spare them no longer. 3 "The songs of the palace will turn to wailing in that day," declares the Lord GOD. "Many *will be* the corpses; in every place they will cast them forth in silence."

4 Hear this, you who trample the needy, to do away with the humble of the land, 5 saying, "When will the new moon be over, So that we may sell grain, And the sabbath, that we may open the wheat *market*, To make the bushel smaller and the shekel bigger, And to cheat with dishonest scales, 6 So as to buy the helpless for money And the needy for a pair of sandals, And *that* we may sell the refuse of the wheat?" 7 The LORD has sworn by the pride of Jacob, "Indeed, I will never forget any of their deeds. 8 Because of this will not the land quake And everyone who dwells in it mourn? Indeed, all of it will rise up like the Nile, And it will be tossed about And subside like the Nile of Egypt. 9 It will come about in that day," declares the Lord GOD, "That I will make the sun go down at noon And

NRSV

1 This is what the Lord God showed me— a basket of summer fruit. 2 He said, "Amos, what do you see?" And I said, "A basket of summer fruit." Then the Lord said to me, "The end has come upon my people Israel; I will never again pass them by. 3 The songs of the temple shall become wailings in that day," says the Lord God; "the dead bodies shall be many, cast out in every place. Be silent!"

4 Hear this, you that trample on the needy, and bring to ruin the poor of the land, 5 saying, "When will the new moon be over so that we may sell grain; and the sabbath, so that we may offer wheat for sale? We will make the ephah small and the shekel great, and practice deceit with false balances, 6 buying the poor for silver and the needy for a pair of sandals, and selling the sweepings of the wheat." 7 The Lord has sworn by the pride of Jacob: Surely I will never forget any of their deeds. 8 Shall not the land tremble on this account, and everyone mourn who lives in it, and all of it rise like the Nile, and be tossed about and sink again, like the Nile of Egypt? 9 On that day, says the Lord God, I will make the sun go down at noon, and darken the earth in broad daylight. 10 I will turn your feasts into

NLT

1 Then the Sovereign LORD showed me another vision. In it I saw a basket filled with ripe fruit. 2 "What do you see, Amos?" he asked. I replied, "A basket full of ripe fruit." Then the LORD said, "This fruit represents my people of Israel – ripe for punishment! I will not delay their punishment again. 3 In that day the riotous sounds of singing in the Temple will turn to wailing. Dead bodies will be scattered everywhere. They will be carried out of the city in silence. I, the Sovereign LORD, have spoken!"

4 Listen to this, you who rob the poor and trample the needy! 5 You can't wait for the Sabbath day to be over and the religious festivals to end so you can get back to cheating the helpless. You measure out your grain in false measures and weigh it out on dishonest scales. 6 And you mix the wheat you sell with chaff swept from the floor! Then you enslave poor people for a debt of one piece of silver or a pair of sandals. 7 Now the LORD has sworn this oath by his own name, the Pride of Israel: "I will never forget the wicked things you have done! 8 The earth will tremble for your deeds, and everyone will mourn. The land will rise up like the Nile River at floodtime, toss about,

ἐν ἡμέρᾳ τὸ φῶς ¹⁰καὶ μεταστρέψω τὰς ἑορτὰς ὑμῶν εἰς πένθος καὶ πάσας τὰς ῥόδᾶς ὑμῶν εἰς θρήνον καὶ ἀναβιβῶ ἐπὶ πᾶσαν ὄσφυν σάκκων καὶ ἐπὶ πᾶσαν κεφαλὴν φαλάκρωμα καὶ θήσομαι αὐτὸν ὡς πένθος ἀγαπητοῦ καὶ τοὺς μετ' αὐτοῦ ὡς ἡμέραν ὀδύνης ¹¹ἰδοὺ ἡμέραι ἔρχονται λέγει κύριος καὶ ἐξαποστελῶ λιμὸν ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν οὐ λιμὸν ἄρτου οὐδὲ δίψαν ὕδατος ἀλλὰ λιμὸν τοῦ ἀκοῦσαι λόγον κυρίου ¹²καὶ σαλευθήσονται ὕδατα ἕως θαλάσσης καὶ ἀπὸ βορρᾶ ἕως ἀνατολῶν περιδραμοῦνται ζητοῦντες τὸν λόγον κυρίου καὶ οὐ μὴ εὔρωσιν ¹³ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκεῖνη ἐκλείψουσιν αἱ παρθέναι αἱ καλαὶ καὶ οἱ νεανίσκοι ἐν δίψει ¹⁴οἱ ὀμνύοντες κατὰ τοῦ ἰλασμοῦ Σαμαρείας καὶ οἱ λέγοντες ζῆ ὁ θεός σου Δαν καὶ ζῆ ὁ θεός σου Βηρσαβее καὶ πεσοῦνται καὶ οὐ μὴ ἀναστῶσιν ἔτι

make the earth dark in broad daylight. 10 Then I will turn your festivals into mourning And all your songs into lamentation; And I will bring sackcloth on everyone's loins And baldness on every head. And I will make it like a *time of mourning* for an only son, And the end of it will be like a bitter day.

11 "Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord GOD, "When I will send a famine on the land, Not a famine for bread or a thirst for water, But rather for hearing the words of the LORD. 12 People will stagger from sea to sea and from the north even to the east; They will go to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, But they will not find *it*. 13 In that day the beautiful virgins And the young men will faint from thirst. 14 *As for* those who swear by the guilt of Samaria, Who say, 'As your god lives, O Dan,' And, 'As the way of Beersheba lives,' They will fall and not rise again."

mourning, and all your songs into lamentation; I will bring sackcloth on all loins, and baldness on every head; I will make it like the mourning for an only son, and the end of it like a bitter day.

11 The time is surely coming, says the Lord God, when I will send a famine on the land; not a famine of bread, or a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. 12 They shall wander from sea to sea, and from north to east; they shall run to and fro, seeking the word of the Lord, but they shall not find it.

13 In that day the beautiful young women and the young men shall faint for thirst. 14 Those who swear by Ashimah of Samaria, and say, "As your god lives, O Dan," and, "As the way of Beersheba lives"— they shall fall, and never rise again.

and sink again. 9 At that time," says the Sovereign LORD, "I will make the sun go down at noon and darken the earth while it is still day. 10 I will turn your celebrations into times of mourning, and your songs of joy will be turned to weeping. You will wear funeral clothes and shave your heads as signs of sorrow, as if your only son had died. How very bitter that day will be!

11 "The time is surely coming," says the Sovereign LORD, "when I will send a famine on the land — not a famine of bread or water but of hearing the words of the LORD. 12 People will stagger everywhere from sea to sea, searching for the word of the LORD, running here and going there, but they will not find it. 13 Beautiful girls and fine young men will grow faint and weary, thirsting for the LORD's word. 14 And those who worship and swear by the idols of Samaria, Dan, and Beersheba will fall down, never to rise again."

Hebrew Text

כֹּה הִרְאֵנִי אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה וְהִנֵּה כְּלוֹב קִיץ וַיֹּאמֶר ^{WTT Amos 8:1}
מִה־אֵתָּה רֵאָה עֲמוֹס וְאָמַר כְּלוֹב קִיץ וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלַי
בָּא הֲקִין אֶל־עַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא־אֹסִיף עוֹד עֲבוֹר לוֹ
וְהִלִּילוּ שִׁירוֹת הַיְכָל בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא נֹאם אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה רֹב
הַפֶּגֶר בְּכָל־מְקוֹם הַשְּׁלִיף הֵס פ
שְׂמֹעוּ־זֹאת הַשָּׂפִימִים אֲבִיוֹן וְלִשְׁבִית (עֲנוּי־) וְעֲנִי־אֶרֶץ
לֹא־אִמַר מוֹתִי יַעֲבֹר הַחֹדֶשׁ וְנִשְׁבִּירָה שֹׁבֵר וְהִשְׁבַּת
וְנִפְתַּח־הַבַּר לְהַקְטִין אִיפֹה וְלִהְגִּדִיל שֶׁקֶל וְלַעֲוֹת מֵאֲזֵנִי
מִרְמָה
לְקַנּוֹת בַּכֶּסֶף דָּלִים וְאֲבִיוֹן בַּעֲבוֹר נַעֲלִים וּמִפֶּל בַּר
נִשְׁבִּיר
נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה בְּנֶאֱוֹן יַעֲקֹב אִם־אֲשַׁכַּח לִנְצַח כָּל־מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם
הָעַל זֹאת לֹא־תִרְגַּז הָאָרֶץ וְאֲבָל כָּל־יּוֹשֵׁב בָּהּ וְעִלְתָּה
כְּאֹר פֶּלֶה וְנִגְרָשָׁה (וְנִשְׁקָה) [וְנִשְׁקָעָה] כִּי־אֹר מִצִּרִים ס
וְהִיָּה בַיּוֹם הַהוּא נֹאם אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה וְהִבֵּאתִי הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ
בְּצַהָרִים וְהִחֲשַׁכְתִּי לָאָרֶץ בַּיּוֹם אֹר
וְהִפְכֵתִי חֲגִיכֶם לְאֲבָל וְכָל־שִׁירֵיכֶם לְקִינָה וְהִעֲלִיתִי
עַל־כָּל־מִתְנַיִם שֶׁק וְעַל־כָּל־רֹאשׁ קִרְחָה וְשִׁמְתִּיהָ כְּאֲבָל
יָחִיד וְאַחֲרִיתָהּ כְּיוֹם מוֹר
הִנֵּה יָמִים בָּאִים נֹאם אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה וְהִשְׁלַחְתִּי רֶעִב בָּאָרֶץ
לֹא־רֶעִב לֶלְחֵם וְלֹא־צִמָּא לַמַּיִם כִּי אִם־לִשְׁמֹעַ אֶת דְּבָרֵי
יְהוָה
וְנָעוּ מַיִם עַד־יָם וּמִצְפּוֹן וְעַד־מִזְרָח יִשׁוּשְׁטוּ לְבַקֵּשׁ
אֶת־דְּבַר־יְהוָה וְלֹא יִמְצְאוּ
בַיּוֹם הַהוּא תִתְעַלְּפֶנָּה הַבְּתוּלֹת הַיְפּוֹת וְהַבְּחוּרִים בְּצִמָּא
הַנִּשְׁבָּעִים בְּאֲשַׁמַּת שְׂמֹרוֹן וְאָמְרוּ חֵי אֱלֹהֶיךָ דָּן וְחֵי דָרְךָ
בְּאֶרֶץ־שֶׁבַע וְנִפְלוּ וְלֹא־יִקְוּמוּ עוֹד ס