

## Amos

Dr. Charles "Buddy" Parrish

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Amos 5:1-9

Vss. 1-3

- Up to this point, Amos has been speaking of the destruction of Israel as something which was still yet to come. Here he speaks as if it had already happened. Here the prophet sings a funeral song, a dirge, over the death of Israel.
- As is common in Scripture, Israel, the people of God, here is portrayed as a woman. She is shown here as a young woman, still a virgin, but in great distress. Israel is a young nation here, barely 200 years old. It did not take her long to go astray. She is fallen, forsaken, due to her own poor choices. She is doomed to die as a result, for there is no one to help her.
- Vs. 3 is a second dirge. Whether 1000 soldiers go out to fight or only 100, the end result is the same: 90% will die, only 10% will survive. And Amos is not speaking of the common Jewish idea that a remnant will always be saved, but of the total destruction he shows in 3:12. God's punishment for Israel's sin will be complete.

Vss. 4-7

- There is a rhythm to all of the books of the prophets. God's people are called out for their sins, God lays out the punishment due them for their sin, but God always shows His people the way to restoration and life.
- The way to life was always there for Israel ("I gave your own sons as prophets and Nazarites" 2:11), but here again God offers hope.
- "Seek the Me that you may live!"
- What the people of Israel had been taught was that if they practiced all the rituals, made all the sacrifices, and attended all the festivals on the calendar then they would be in right relationship with God. What Amos is telling them is to NOT go to the

sanctuaries, to NOT seek the priests, but to seek God himself directly. Learn from God how to live lives of justice and righteousness. To God's mind, the priests of Israel and the rituals and practices within the sanctuaries were so corrupted they were all part of fatal infection of sin in Israel's life. As such, if Israel did not repent and seek after God directly, then the all-consuming fire of war would fall on the house of Joseph.

#### Vss. 8-9

- As in the end of Ch. 4 where Amos offers the omnipotence of God as justification for God's actions as judge and executioner, here too does Amos point to such divine grandeur as justification.
- The constellations Pleiades and Orion were the two most prominent constellations in the ancient world. They are mentioned in Job 9:9 and 38:31 as well as Isaiah 13:10. Amos' point here is that while some worshiped the stars and looked to them for direction, it is the God of Israel who created and rules the stars.
- Additionally, some pagans worshipped the sun, but God is also the creator and ruler of the sun. Further, God darkens the day. He is THE power in the deep darkness, the greatest power in the darkest of shadows. It is God we are to fear, not the darkness.
- Likewise, whereas the pagans had their gods of rain and storms, it is God who calls for the waters of the sea and pours them out on the dry land. A remarkable concept to grasp for so-called prescientific people.
- Vs. 9 may refer to fire or flood, but it is clear of the purpose: destruction, which appears twice in the verse for emphasis. This echoes back to vs. 6 where the fire of God will break out and nothing will quench it.