

## Amos

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April 6, 2022



Amos 6:8-14

Vs. 8

- "I loathe the arrogance...": How much does God's Word say about Pride? And He swears by Himself! What could be more certain! For both Judah and Israel, their pride in their wealth and military security has replaced God as First in their national lives and in the lives of each individual citizen. Who ever heard of a nation that makes wealth and military power an idol?
- The Lord detests the citadels because they represent the economic and military power of both Jewish nations. And as the citadels also served as storehouses they were doubly detested because of the violence and robbery that were used to fill those storehouses for the comfort of the ruling class. Thus that which has been made an idol will be the very thing that will fail and be used for our punishment in Judgement.

Vss. 9-11

- The scene here is one of the large opulent houses Amos has spoken of as symbols of Israel's misplaced priorities. Here is a house where ten men reside, the evidence of a great family, for surely many sons are a sign of God's blessing! But instead of blessing, judgment has come upon them and the judgement will be total. All ten will die in the judgement to come.
- When it is over a relative comes to the house and finds another survivor of the judgement. The Hebrew for "the one in the inner most part of the house" literally means "the burner." Scholars are divided as to whether this is one who is scouring the house for dead bodies to be burned or one who is lighting incense to help cover the odor. And there are no other survivors. Its also anyone's guess as to why the Lord's name isn't to be mentioned. I think it is perhaps that if we don't mention the Lord's name He will not notice us. Keep quiet. Don't attract the Lord's attention and we may yet survive.

- Vs. 11 is so reminiscent of Luke 19:43-44 where for judgement on Jerusalem not one stone will be left on another. And note that it is Lord who does this. He may well use the Assyrians, but like the Chaldeans in 400 years, they are simply the instrument of God's judgement.

#### Vss. 12-14

- What is right and what is wrong? Do horses run on rocks? No. Trying to make a horse run on rocks would be wrong and cruel. Just like the cruel way the poor are made to live in Israel. Or do you plow them with oxen? Yes. The hooves of the oxen can handle the rocks as they plod along. This is the right way, for the plow can turn a rocky field into one that is fertile. Israel has chosen the wrong way, turning the purity of justice into poison and the fruit of righteousness into the inedible. (It may be a play on words, but it is also possible to translate this as if to ask 'Do oxen plow the sea?' as so give another example of doing things wrong).
- It is difficult to know if Lodebar and Karnaim are proper names or common nouns. Both were in fact small towns east of the Jordan. Either way, the prophet is pointing out how pitiful is Israel's little victory celebration. So you defeated them and won victories. Big deal. You puff yourself up by bullying the Little Sisters of the Poor. Only more proof as to how morally corrupt you have become.
- "Pride goeth before a fall," say Proverbs 16:18 and here is the perfect example. While Israel celebrates its victories over the small and weak, God is raising up a nation against them and this nation will wound them from Hamath (the northern most limits of Solomon and Jeroboam's kingdoms) all the way down to the brook of Arabah (at the south end of the Dead Sea). From North to South the instrument of God's judgement will sweep clean.