

Amos 9 - Final 3 Visions; Restoration of the Davidic Kingdom; Israel's Future Regathering

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Amos 9

(6) Altar (9:1-10)

(A) Vision (9:1a)

(B) Judgment (9:1b-10)

(a) Bethel as place of judgment (9:1b)

(b) Extent of judgment (9:1c-4)

(i) Temple destroyed (9:1c)

(ii) Worshipers killed in the Temple (9:1d)

1 I saw the Lord standing beside the **altar**, and He said, "Strike the pillar capitals so that the thresholds will shake, And break them on the heads of them all! Then I will put to death the rest of them with the sword; They will not have a fugitive who will flee, Nor a survivor who will escape.

1 I saw the Lord standing beside the altar, and He said, "Smite the capitals so that the thresholds will shake, And break them on the heads of them all! Then I will slay the rest of them with the sword; They will not have a fugitive who will flee, Or a refugee who will escape.

1 I saw the Lord standing beside the altar as he was saying, "Strike the doorposts so that the thresholds tremble, bringing them down on the heads of all of them. Those who survive I will kill with the sword. Those who flee will not escape. There will be no deliverance for the fugitives.

1 I saw the Lord standing upon the altar: and he said, Smite the lintel of the door, that the posts may shake: and cut them in the head, all of them; and I will slay the last of them with the sword: he that fleeth of them shall not flee away, and he that escapeth of them shall not be delivered.

- "...altar" - likely the altar in Bethel, since it's the worship site referred to most often in this book; also, Amos' encounter with Amaziah occurred there (Cf. 7:10-17)

- God gave a command to someone (an angel?) to strike the pillar capitals that supported the roof of the temple with such force that its foundation stones ("thresholds") would shake and the whole structure would collapse.

— The Lord would then kill the rest of the priests and worshippers who survived the collapse of the temple, so that no one would escape with their life

(iii) Refugees killed by God (9:2-4)

(a) In Sheol and heaven (9:2)

2 "Though they dig into Sheol, From there My hand will take them; And though they ascend to heaven, From there I will bring them down.

2 "Though they dig into Sheol, From there will My hand take them; And though they ascend to heaven, From there will I bring them down.

2 "Even if they burrow into Sheol, from there my hand will find them. Even if they ascend to the heavens, from there I will bring them down.

2 Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down:

(b) On Carmel and in the sea (9:3)

3 "And though they hide on the summit of Carmel, I will track them down and take them from there; And though they hide themselves from My sight on the bottom of the sea, I will command the serpent from there, and it will bite them.

3 "Though they hide on the summit of Carmel, I will search them out and take them from there; And though they conceal themselves from My sight on the floor of the sea, From there I will command the serpent and it will bite them.

3 Even if they hide at the top of Mount Carmel, from there I will search and seize them. Even if they hide from my sight in the depths of the sea, from there I will order the serpent to strike them.

3 And though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out thence; and though they be hid from my sight in the bottom of the sea, thence will I command the serpent, and he shall bite them:

- It would be impossible for those whom the Lord chose to kill, to escape, even if they dug into the earth (v2) or climbed into the sky (v3)

— The point is that whatever individual Israelites tried to do, there was no chance of escape from God's impending judgment

(c) In the captivity (9:4)

4 "And though they go into captivity before their enemies, From there I will command the sword and it will kill them, And I will set My eyes against them for harm and not for good."

4 "And though they go into captivity before their enemies, From there I will command the sword that it slay them, And I will set My eyes against them for evil and not for good."

4 Even if they go into exile among their enemies, from there I will order the sword to kill them. I will fix my gaze on them to inflict disaster, and not to do good.

4 And though they go into captivity before their enemies, thence will I command the sword, and it shall slay them: and I will set mine eyes upon them for evil, and not for good.

- Even those who escaped the land of Israel into enemy territory in exile, God would still track them down and issue judgment

— There was no escape from His all-seeing eyes and His punishing hand

— Normally, God watched over His people for their good, but here He promised to set His eyes on them "for evil"

(c) God as the source of judgment (9:5-6)

5 The Lord GOD of armies, The One who touches the land so that it quakes, And all those who live in it mourn, And all of it rises up like the Nile And subsides like the Nile of Egypt;

5 The Lord GOD of hosts, The One who touches the land so that it melts, And all those who dwell in it mourn, And all of it rises up like the Nile And subsides like the Nile of Egypt;

5 "The Lord GOD of the Heavenly Armies who is touching the earth so that it melts and all of its inhabitants mourn there— the land rises like the Nile River, but sinks like the river of Egypt—

5 And the Lord GOD of hosts is he that toucheth the land, and it shall melt, and all that dwell therein shall mourn: and it shall rise up wholly like a flood; and shall be drowned, as by the flood of Egypt.

6 The One who builds His upper chambers in the heavens And has founded His vaulted dome over the earth, He who calls for the waters of the sea And pours them out on the face of the earth, The LORD is His name.

6 The One who builds His upper chambers in the heavens And has founded His vaulted dome over the earth, He who calls for the waters of the sea And pours them out on the face of the earth, The LORD is His name.

6 who is building his stairway to heaven and setting its foundation on earth; who is calling for the waters of the sea and pouring them out over the surface of the land— the LORD is his name!

6 It is he that buildeth his stories in the heaven, and hath founded his troop in the earth; he that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth: The LORD is his name.

(d) How the judgment will impact Israel (9:7-10)

(i) Israel to be judged like other nations (9:7-8a)

7 "Are you not as the sons of Ethiopia to Me, You sons of Israel?" declares the LORD. "Have I not brought up Israel from the land of Egypt, And the Philistines from Caphtor and the Arameans from Kir?"

7 "Are you not as the sons of Ethiopia to Me, O sons of Israel?" declares the LORD. "Have I not brought up Israel from the land of Egypt, And the Philistines from Caphtor and the Arameans from Kir?"

7 "Aren't you people of Israel like the people of Cush to me?" declares the LORD. "I brought Israel up from the land of Egypt, did I not, as well as the Philistines from Caphtor and the Arameans from Kir?"

7 Are ye not as children of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel? saith the LORD. Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt? and the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir?

- The Ethiopians (Cushites) were a remote people in Amos' day, living on the edge of the earth, from an ancient Near Eastern perspective, yet God watched over them

- He had separated "the Philistines from Caphtor" (Crete; Cf. Deut 2:23) and the "Arameans (Syrians) from Kir" in Mesopotamia (Cf. 1:5), just as He had led Israel from Egypt to the Promised Land

— The "Philistines" and "Arameans" were Israel's enemies, but God had done for them what He had done for Israel

— Thus, He could justly send the Israelites into another part of the world, since He had sovereignly relocated these other nations as well

— The Israelites considered themselves superior because of their election (Cf. Ex 19:4-6), but really they were no better or less accountable than any other nation

(ii) Remnant to be spared (9:8b)

8 "Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are on the sinful kingdom, And I will eliminate it from the face of the earth; Nevertheless, I will not totally eliminate the house of Jacob," Declares the LORD.

8 "Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are on the sinful kingdom, And I will destroy it from the face of the earth; Nevertheless, I will not totally destroy the house of Jacob," Declares the LORD.

8 Look! The eyes of the Lord GOD are on the sinful kingdom. I will destroy it from the face of the earth; but I will not totally destroy the house of Jacob," declares the LORD.

8 Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth; saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the LORD.

- As the sovereign Lord looked over all the kingdoms of the earth, He noticed those of them that were sinful—and He determined to destroy them because of their wickedness. He would do to Israel what He would do to any other sinful nation (Cf. 3:1-2).

(iii) Diaspora predicted (9:9)

9 "For behold, I am commanding, And I will shake the house of Israel among all nations As *grain* is shaken in a sieve, But not a pebble will fall to the ground.

9 "For behold, I am commanding, And I will shake the house of Israel among all nations As *grain* is shaken in a sieve, But not a kernel will fall to the ground.

9 "Look! I'm giving the order: I will sift the house of Israel throughout all the nations, as one sifts with a sieve, yet not a single kernel will reach the ground!

9 For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth.

- God would sift all the Israelites, among the other nations, to separate the people deserving judgment from the righteous few

- He would allow the righteous person ("grain") to slip through, but would retain the unrighteous ("pebble") for judgment
- The point is that He would separate the righteous from the sinful as He sifted through the Israelites. God determines just how much sinfulness makes His punishment inevitable; He determines the mesh of the sifting screen.

(iv) Rebels to be purged (9:10)

10 "All the sinners of My people will die by the sword, Those who say, 'The catastrophe will not overtake or confront us.'

10 "All the sinners of My people will die by the sword, Those who say, 'The calamity will not overtake or confront us.'

10 All sinners among my people will die by the sword, especially all who are saying, 'Disaster will not come upon or conquer us!'"

10 All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword, which say, The evil shall not overtake nor prevent us.

- All of the guilty Israelites would die by the sword, the Lord promised

The Restoration of the Davidic Kingdom

Amongst the devastating judgments pronounced throughout the Book of Amos, this passage offers a glimmer of hope, not only for Israel but also for a select portion of Gentiles, those called by the name of the Lord.

In this passage, the Lord predicted a future hope for Israel, reflected specifically in the restoration of the tabernacle of David. It also includes the fruitfulness of the land (v13) and the establishment of the people of Israel both in the land, and in true worship of God (v14-15).

V. Five promises regarding Israel's future restoration (9:11-15)

(1) Restoration of the Davidic dynasty (9:11)

11 "On that day I will raise up the fallen shelter of David, And wall up its gaps; I will also raise up its ruins And rebuild it as in **the days of old;**

11 "In that day I will raise up the fallen booth of David, And wall up its breaches; I will also raise up its ruins And rebuild it as in the days of old;

11 "At that time I will restore David's fallen tent, restoring its torn places. I will restore its ruins, rebuilding it as it was long ago,

11 In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old:

- God promises that He will:

(1) Raise up David's fallen house (dynasty) and rule

(2) "Close up its breaches," the walls about Jerusalem

(3) "Raise up its ruins" restore the land physically and spiritually (Is 65:17-25; Jer 31:31-40; Ezek 37:1-14; Zech 12-14; Rom 9-11)

(4) Restore the nation to its grandeur and glory as in the days of David and Solomon (2 Sam 7:10-16; Zech 14:16-21)

- "On that day" - this refers to end-time restoration of the nation Israel, also known as the Day of the Lord. This was never fulfilled in the regatherings under Zerubbabel (536 BC), Ezra (458 BC), or Nehemiah (445 BC).

- "...raise up" - this restoration will be fulfilled in the inauguration of the millennial kingdom, and it will also fulfill the promise to David of an everlasting kingdom

- "...the fallen" - God would also restore the fallen shelter of David that had suffered some destruction (v1; Lev 23:33-42; 2 Sam 11:11; 1 Kings 20:12-16; Jonah 4:5)

- "...shelter of David" - a figurative reference to the dynasty of David

— Amos likely refers to David's dynasty as a "shelter" or "tent" rather than a "house" (Cf. 2 Sam 3:1) because the house of David had suffered major damage due to the division of the kingdom

— The Hebrew word for "shelter" or "tabernacle" [KJV] used here is not the same word used to describe Moses' tabernacle in the wilderness; it's the word used to describe the "booths" or "tabernacles" that Jews built to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles.

— Amillennialism, which must allegorize away clear statements and promises in Scripture concerning Israel's restoration, equates the tabernacle of David with the church on the earth

- At the Jerusalem Council, the Apostle James quoted v11-12 to support his view that the Gentiles of his day did not need to submit to circumcision and the Mosaic Law, in order to obtain salvation or to live acceptably as Christians (Acts 15:13-21)

— James knew that the judgments of Israel were not yet over (Cf. Matt 24:1-22; Luke 21:5-24; Acts 1:6-7). He also knew, from this passage and others (Is 42:6; 60:3; Mal 1:11), that when God restored the house of David, Gentiles would have a share in that rule as Gentiles

— Thus, James concluded that Gentiles did not need to become Jews to enter into these (millennial) blessings. He did not mean that the church fulfills God's promises to Israel, but that since Gentiles will experience millennial blessings as Gentiles, they do not need to live like Jews in the church.

Tabernacle of David

James quotes these verses in Acts 15:16-18. The issue at hand was what to do with Gentiles who were being saved, and what would become of Israel. After listening to the testimonies of Peter, Paul and Barnabas about what God was doing among the Gentiles through their ministries (v7-12), James rendered the Council's decision, supporting it by

reference to Amos' prophecy of the Tabernacle of David. James quoted Amos' prophecy to substantiate the fact that God was working among the Gentiles.

Covenant theologians believe that this prophecy was fulfilled when Gentiles became believers at the house of Cornelius under Peter's ministry, and in Galatia under Paul and Barnabas. But James did not say that these Gentile conversions "fulfilled" the prophecy of Amos, they merely "agreed" with the words of the prophets (Acts 15:15). It was the "words" of the prophets that "were written" and "were in conformity with the fact" just summarized. The conversion of Gentiles was part of God's plan since He promised Abraham "in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Gen 22:18). From the beginning God intended that His redemption be available to all people, so He made provision for it in the promise to Abraham. So when James acknowledged the conversion of the Gentiles, he merely declared that God was keeping His promise to Abraham and that the words of the prophets agreed.

Historically, the Tabernacle of David refers to the tent David constructed to house the ark of the covenant until Solomon could build the temple. Since Israel worshipped God at this tabernacle during the interim, some argue that the tabernacle symbolizes the church. However, the prophecy concerns the "rebuilding" of that which was fallen down. The "ruins" are to be rebuilt "as in the days of old." The nature of the blessings are earthly, territorial and national, and have nothing to do with a spiritual church to which none of these blessings have been promised. Isaiah 16:5 states that a King from the household of David will sit on a throne inside the tent of David, and will execute mercy, judgment and righteousness.

The context of Amos 9:11-15 deals with Israel's judgment. After the period of Gentile opportunity, God will raise up the tabernacle of David, giving Israel supremacy over Edom and the nations, bless their crops, regather Israel, restore their cities, and assure them that they will never again be dispersed. The entire passage confirms that the "tabernacle of David" is an expression referring to the whole nation of Israel in contrast to the Gentile nations. Acts 15:14-17, instead of identifying God's purpose for the church and Israel, established a specific time order...God will first conclude His work for the Gentiles in the period of Israel's dispersion. Then He will return to bring in the promised blessing for Israel.

(2) Israel to subdue her enemies (9:12)

12 So that they may possess the remnant of Edom And **all the nations** who are called by My name," Declares the LORD who does this.

12 That they may possess the remnant of Edom And all the nations who are called by My name," Declares the LORD who does this.

12 so my people may inherit the remnant of Edom and all of the nations that bear my name," declares the LORD who is bringing this about.

12 That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the LORD that doeth this.

- When the house of David is again intact, Israel will exercise authority over all the nations of the world and will then be a source of blessing to them

— This will even include a small number of "Edomites" alive then, namely, people who had formerly been implacable enemies of the Israelites (Cf. Obad 19)—not that literal descendants of the Edomites will be alive then

— Israel's blessing will extend even to them, namely, all of Israel's former enemies

- "...all the nations" - will become associated with the name of *Yahweh* then, and will enjoy His Lordship and protection (Cf. Gen 12:3; Is 9:1-7; 11:1-13; 42:1-7; 45:22-25; 49:5-7; 55:1-5)

(3) Millennial agriculture productivity (9:13)

13 "Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "When the plowman will overtake the reaper, And the one who treads grapes *will overtake* him who sows the seed; When the mountains will drip grape juice, And all the hills will come apart.

13 "Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "When the plowman will overtake the reaper And the treader of grapes him who sows seed; When the mountains will drip sweet wine And all the hills will be dissolved.

13 "Look! The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when the one who sows will overtake the harvester and the treader of grapes will overtake the planter. Fresh wine will drip down from the mountains, cascading down from the hills.

13 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt.

- In contrast to the images of judgment that Amos had painted throughout this book, days were coming when these terrible conditions would be reversed

— The topsoil would become so productive that farmers ("the plowman"), planting seed for the next harvest, would "overtake" the reapers of the same fields to finish their work—so they could plant the next crop

— Normally the Israelites plowed their fields in October and the reaping ended in May, but in the future, reaping would still be going on in October because of the huge harvests

- Wine-makers ("one who treads grapes") would similarly pressure the farmers to plant more vines

— The grape harvest took place in August, and farmers planted new vines in November

— Harvests would be so abundant that the gathering of one crop would not end before it was time to plant the new crop

- The mountains would be so full of fruitful grapevines that they could be described as dripping with "grape juice"
- "All the hills" would "come apart," in the sense of flowing down with produce, perhaps even washing the soil away with grape juice

(4) Millennial reconstruction (9:14)

(A) Captives return (9:14a)

(B) Cities built (9:14b)

(C) Prosperity (9:14c)

14 "I will also restore the fortunes of My people Israel, And they will rebuild the desolated cities and live *in them*; They will also plant vineyards and drink their wine, And make gardens and eat their fruit.

14 "Also I will restore the captivity of My people Israel, And they will rebuild the ruined cities and live *in them*; They will also plant vineyards and drink their wine, And make gardens and eat their fruit.

14 I will surely restore my people Israel; they will rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them. They will plant vineyards and drink the wine from them. They will plant gardens and eat the fruit from them.

14 And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them.

- *Yahweh* also promised to restore the Israelites to the Promised Land following their captivity and exile from it

— They would return to their land and re-establish life: characterized by security and joy, abundant food and drink, and beauty and blessing

— Such conditions could not occur during wartime (v1,10; 2:13-16; 3:11,15; 4:10-11; 5:2-3; 6:9-10; 7:17), but would be possible in peacetime, specifically, in the Millennium (Cf. Lev 26:6; Deut 28:6)

(5) Permanent settlement in the land (9:15)

15 "I will also plant them on their land, And they will not be uprooted again from their land Which I have given them," Says the LORD your God.

15 "I will also plant them on their land, And they will not again be rooted out from their land Which I have given them," Says the LORD your God.

15 I will plant the people of Israel in their own land, never again to be torn out of their land that I gave them," says the LORD your God."

15 And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the LORD thy God.

- Furthermore, the Israelites would put roots down in the Promised Land and never have to leave it again (Cf. Gen 13:14-15; 17:7-8; Deut 30:1-5; 2 Sam 7:10; Jer 30:10-11; Ezek 37:25; Joel 3:17-21; Micah 4:4-7; Zech 14:11)

— They would no longer fear exile (4:2-3; 5:5,27; 6:7; 7:11,17; 9:4) but would be secure from every foe (Cf. Lev 26:7-8; Deut 28:7,10). *Yahweh*, Israel's true God, promised this.