

Amos 9:1 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.

This chapter begins with yet another vision. Amos sees the Lord standing by the altar of the sanctuary. He is calling for it to be destroyed and those who worship there to be killed. Because Amos is declaring his message to the Northern Kingdom, I tend to think the specific reference is to the idolatrous sanctuary that had been established in Bethel. I cannot discount, however, that it has future application to the temple in Judah at the hand of the Babylonians and again at the hand of Titus and his Roman legions. It should be noted that at the time of their destruction both of those temples could no longer be rightly identified as places of worship that brought honor to God. The context of the message in this chapter seems to embrace the whole of Israel and the dispersion the people experienced at the hands of the Assyrians and even later from the Romans. What supports this thought process? The fact that the chapter ends with reference to the establishment of the Messiah's Kingdom

Amos 9:2 Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down:

Amos 9:3 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:

Amos 9:4 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.

The prophet gives a very vivid word picture of the truth that no one will be able to escape God's judgment. There is no place you can hide where God cannot see you. Even those that are taken captives into heathen lands and think they have at least escaped with their lives face certain death according to God's word.

Amos 9:5 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.

Amos 9:6 *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.**

Verse 5 is very similar to verse 8 in the previous chapter. Again, it sounds like a reference to a great earthquake that affects most of the nation and would qualify as so significant that it became a valid reference point to the audiences of Amos and Zechariah.

Amos gives emphasis to the truth that these things will happen as a result of the decree and authority of Almighty God, the Creator. As I thought about this, it hit me that we humans would rather attribute the judgment of God to just another act of nature or as attributable to the pride and zeal of evil men toward achieving their own agendas. We don't like to think that we are deserving of judgment from Almighty God. On the other hand, we want to hold Him accountable for allowing such things to happen without being held accountable

to Him in any way. How it must grieve the heart of God when it is His own people against whom He must act.

It's an interesting side note to recognize the mention of the cycle of evaporation from the seas and condensation from the heavens to produce the rains—a cycle established and controlled by the sovereign power of YHWH.

Amos 9:7 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?

This is a very interesting verse. It seems that the Lord is basically saying to the Israelites that although you have a special place in my heart, I care just as much about the people of heathen lands such as Ethiopia. For example, just as I delivered you from the bondage of Egypt, I delivered the Philistines from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir. Caphtor is considered by many to be a reference to the island of Cyprus, but others connect it to the northern portion of Egypt. Kir is identified as the land to which the people of Damascus were taken when conquered by the Assyrians. The point being made is that the Lord's hand was at work on behalf of these heathen nations, just as surely as He was involved in the affairs of Israel. I know that whether we can connect all the dots or not at this time, when we get to look back in retrospect, our understanding will be clear and God's word verified.

The scripture is full of the truth that God loves all men and desires all to be saved. Israel was given a privileged position among the nations, and the church was later included as part of the true Israel, those that follow God in faith and obedience. This in no way, however, indicates that God did / does not care about every human being that is born on the face of the earth. There are just too many verses that declare otherwise.

Gen. 18:17-18 And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and **all the nations of the earth** shall be blessed in him?

1John 2:1-2 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and **not for ours only, but also for *the sins of the whole world.***

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that **whosoever** believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Rom. 10:13 For **whosoever** shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Amos 9:8 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.

In this verse we see God pronouncing judgment on a kingdom or nation. It is the kingdom/nation that is going to be destroyed. The LORD is careful to note, however, that He is going to preserve a remnant from the house of Jacob. The phrase “I will not utterly destroy” declares the truth that though the nation of Israel will be destroyed, some of the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will be allowed to live.

The warning—If God is willing to judge the nation of His own people with such severity, should not other nations expect judgment that is no less severe if they continue to reject Him.

Amos 9:9 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.

Amos 9:10 All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword, which say, The evil shall not overtake nor prevent us.

These verses declare that God is deliberate and specific in whose lives He will preserve. The prophet pictures the Lord using a sifter to separate the good seed from the bad. Those who have rejected His message are identified as sinners and marked for destruction. The few who have believed His word and are looking to Him in faith will be preserved.

It seems that there is a distinct transition in time with these two verses. Surely the application to those hearing the message declared by Amos was specific, but their message also jumps forward in time to apply to the future people of Israel living during the 70th week of Daniel, the time we call the tribulation.

Amos 9:11 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:

Amos 9:12 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.

It is in connection with that end time judgment of the day of the Lord that Israel will finally be restored to inherit the covenant blessings promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Israel will be positioned in a place of authority among the nations. Point is made that only those who are “called by my name” will get to be part of that kingdom.

Amos 9:13 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.

Amos 9:14 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.

The Kingdom will usher in an age of prosperity like never before in Israel. The crops are pictured as being so abundant that men will be ready to prepare the ground for planting before they are able to complete the harvest from the previous planting. They will be ready to plant more vines before they have

finished processing the vintage from the previous planting. The people of Israel will all come home to Israel from the nations to which they were dispersed. Land that had been destroyed and unproductive will be turned into productive land. They will enjoy the fruit of their labors without threat from enemy nations.

Amos 9:15 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. God is going to plant or firmly establish the people of Israel in the Promised Land according to His covenant with their fathers. Never again will they be scattered among the nations or lose sovereignty over their land.