

Amos

INTRODUCTION TO AMOS

This book in the Hebrew Bibles is called "Sepher Amos", the Book of Amos; and, in the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions, the Prophecy of Amos. This is not the same person with the father of Isaiah, as some have ignorantly confounded them; for their names are wrote with different letters; besides, the father of Isaiah is thought to have been of the royal family, and a courtier; whereas this man was a country farmer and herdsman. His name signifies "burdened": the Jews {a} say he was so called, because burdened in his tongue, or had an impediment in his speech, and stammered; but rather because his prophecies were burdens to the people, such as they could not bear, being full of reproofs and threatenings; however, his prophecy in this respect agrees with his name. What time he lived may be learned from **Am 1:1**; by which it appears that he was, contemporary with Isaiah and Hosea; but whether he lived and prophesied so long as they did is not certain. The author of Seder Olam Zuta {b} makes him to prophesy in the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. R. Abraham Zacut {c}, and R. David Ganz {d}, place him later than Hosea, and prior to Isaiah; they say that Amos received the law from Hosea, and Isaiah from Amos. Mr. Whiston {e} makes him to begin to prophesy in the year of the world 3231 A.M. or 773 B.C.; and Mr. Bedford {f} earlier, in 802 B.C.; and, from some passages in his prophecy, he appears to be of the land of Judah; see **Am 1:1**; though he prophesied in the land of Israel, and against the ten tribes chiefly; the occasion of which was, Jeroboam had been very successful and victorious, and the people under him enjoyed great plenty and prosperity, and upon this grew wanton, luxurious, and very sinful; wherefore this prophet was sent to reprove them for their sins, to exhort them to repentance, and threaten them with captivity, in case of impenitence; and to comfort the truly godly with promises of the Messiah's coming and kingdom. The authenticity of this book is not to be questioned, since many passages out of it were taken by following prophets, as the words in **Am 1:2**, by Joel, **Joe 3:16**, and by Jeremiah, **Jer 25:30**; **Am 4:9**, by Haggai, **Hag 2:17**; **Am 9:13**, by Joel, **Joe 3:18**; and others are quoted by the writers of the New Testament as divinely inspired, as **Am 5:25**, in **Ac 7:42**; nor is there any room to doubt of his being the writer of this book, as is manifest of his speaking of himself as the first person in it; though Hobbes {g} says it does not appear. Some have thought that his language is rustic, suitable to his former character and employment; but certain it is there are masterly strokes and great beauties of eloquence in it; and which shows that it is more than human. According to some writers, he was often beat and buffeted by Amaziah, the priest of Bethel; and at last the son of the priest drove a nail into his temples, upon which he was carried alive into his own country, and there died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his ancestors at Tekoa {h}.

{a} Vajikra Rabba, sect. 10. fol. 153. 3. Abarbinel Praefat. in Ezek. fol. 253. 3. {b} P. 104, 105. Ed. Meyer. {c} Juchasin, fol. 12. 1. {d} Tzemach David, fol. 13. 1. 2. {e} Chronological Table, cent. 8. {f} Scripture Chronology, B. 6. c. 2. p. 647. {g} Leviathan, c. 33. {h} Pseudo-Epiphanius de Prophet. Vit. c. 12. Isidor. de Vit. Sanct. c. 43. Jerom. de locis Hebr. in voce Elthei, fol. 91. B.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION TO AMOS 1

This chapter begins with the general title of the book, in which the author is described by name, and by his condition of life, and by his country, and the time of his prophecy fixed, **Am 1:1**. He first foretells a drought in the land of Israel, in the most fruitful places, which would cause mourning among the shepherds, **Am 1:2**; then the captivity of the Syrians, whose metropolis was Damascus, **Am 1:3**. Next the destruction of the Philistines, whose principal cities were Gaza, Ashdod, Askelon, and Ekron, **Am 1:6**. After that the ruin of Tyre, with the reason of it, **Am 1:9**; then the calamities that should come upon Edom, whose chief places were Teman and Bozrah, **Am 1:11**; and lastly the desolations of the Ammonites, whose metropolis, Rabbah, should be destroyed, and their king and princes go into captivity, **Am 1:13**; and all this for the sins of each of these nations.

[[@Amos 1:1]]Ver. [[1 >> Bible:Amos 1:1]]. *The words of Amos*,.... Not which he spoke of or for himself, but from the Lord; all the prophecies, visions, and revelations made unto him, are intended:

who was among the herdsmen of Tekoa; which was not in the tribe of Asher, as Kimchi; nor of Zebulun, as Pseudo-Epiphanius {i}; but in the tribe of Judah, 2Ch 11:5. It lay to the south, and was six miles from Bethlehem. Mr. Maundrell {k} says it is nine miles distant, to the south of it; and, according to Jerom {l}, it was twelve miles from Jerusalem; though he elsewhere {m} says, Thecua, or Tekoa, is a village at this day, nine miles from Aelia or Jerusalem, of which place was Amos the prophet, and where his sepulchre is seen: either there is a mistake of the number, or of Aelia for Bethlehem; the former rather seems to be the case; according to Josephus {n}, it was not far from the castle of Herodium. The Misnic doctors {o} speak of it as famous for oil, where the best was to be had; near to it was a wilderness, called the wilderness of Tekoa; and Jerom {p} says, that beyond it there was no village, nor so much as huts and cottages, but a large wilderness, which reached to the Red sea, and to the borders of the Persians, Ethiopians, and Indians, and was full of shepherds, among whom Amos was; whether he was a master herdsman, or a servant of one, is not said. The word is used of the king of Moab, who is said to be a "sheepmaster", **2Ki 3:4**; he traded in cattle, and got riches thereby; and so the Targum here renders it,

"who was lord or master of cattle;"

and Kimchi interprets it, he was a great man among the herdsmen; and so it was a piece of self-denial to leave his business, and go to prophesying; but rather he was a servant, and kept cattle for others, which best agrees with **Am 7:14**; and so is expressive of the grace of God in calling so mean a person to such a high office. The word used signifies to mark; and shepherds were so called from marking their sheep to distinguish them, which seems to be the work of servants; and, in the Arabic language, a kind of sheep deformed, and of short feet, are so called:

which he saw concerning Israel; or, against Israel {q}, the ten tribes, to whom he was sent, and against whom he prophesied chiefly; for he says very little of Judah. Words are more properly said to be spoken or heard; but here they are said to be seen; which shows that not bare words are meant, but things, which the prophet had revealed to him in a visionary way, and he delivered; see **Isa 2:1**;

in the days of Uzziah king of Judah; who was also called Azariah, 2Ki 15:1;

and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel; so he is called to distinguish him from Jeroboam the son of Nebat; this king was the grandson of Jehu; he was, as Jerom says, before Sardanapalus reigned over the Assyrians, and Procas Sylvius over the Latines:

two years before the earthquake; which was well known in those times, and fresh in memory. Zechariah speaks of it many years after, from whom we learn it was in the days of Uzziah, Zec 14:5. The Jewish writers generally say that it was when Uzziah was smote with leprosy for invading the priest's office; and was in the year in which he died, when Isaiah had a vision of the glory of the Lord, and the posts of the house moved, Isa 6:1; and with whom Josephus {r} agrees; who also relates, that the temple being rent by the earthquake, the bright light of the sun shone upon the king's face, and the leprosy immediately seized him; and, at a place before the city called Eroge, half part of a mountain towards the west was broken and rolled half a mile towards the eastern part, and there stood, and stopped up the ways, and the king's gardens; but this cannot be true, as Theodoret observes; since, according to this account, Amos must begin to prophesy in the fiftieth year of Uzziah; for he reigned fifty two years, and he began his reign in the twenty seventh year of Jeroboam, 2Ki 15:1; who reigned forty one years, 2Ki 14:23; so that Uzziah and he were contemporary fourteen years only, and Jeroboam must have been dead thirty six years when it was the fiftieth of Uzziah; whereas they are here represented as contemporary when Amos began to prophesy, which was but two years before the earthquake; so that this earthquake must be in the former and not the latter part of Uzziah's reign, and consequently not when he was stricken with the leprosy.

{i} **Deuteronomy** Vita Prophet. c. 12. {k} Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem, p. 88. {} Proem. in Amos & Comment. in Jer. vi. 1. {m} **Deuteronomy** locis Hebr. in voce Elthei, fol. 91. B. {n} **Deuteronomy** Bello Jud. l. 4. c. 9. sect. 5. {o} Misn. Menachot, c. 8. sect. 3. {p} Proem. in Amos. {q} larvy le "contra Israelem", so some in Drusius. {r} Antiqu. l. 9. c. 10. sect. 4.

[[@Amos 1:2]]Ver. [[2 >> Bible:Amos 1:2]]. *And he said*,.... That is, the Prophet Amos, before described; he, being under divine inspiration, said as follows:

the Lord will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; not from Samaria, nor from Dan and Bethel, but from Zion and Jerusalem, where the temple of the Lord stood; and out of the holy of holies in it, where was the seat of the divine Majesty; and his voice being compared to the roaring of a lion, denotes his wrath and vengeance; and is expressive of some terrible threatening prophecy he would send from hence, by one or other of his prophets; perhaps Amos may mean himself; and who, having been a shepherd or herdsman in the wilderness, had often heard the terrible roaring of the lion, to which he compares his prophecy concerning the judgments of God on nations. Some think reference is had to the earthquake, as Aben Ezra; and which might be attended with thunder and lightning, the voice of God:

and the habitations of the shepherds shall mourn; that is, the huts or cottages they dwell in, erected for the more convenient care of their flocks; these, by a figure, are said to mourn, because exposed to the violent heat of the sun in this time of drought; or because forsaken by the shepherds; or it may design the shepherds themselves that dwelled in them, that should mourn because there was no pasture for their flocks, the grass being dried up, and withered

away: and indeed it may be rendered, "the pastures of the shepherds shall mourn" {s}; being destroyed by the drought, as the cattle upon them are said to mourn and groan, **Joe 1:18**;

and the top of Carmel shall wither; a fruitful mountain in the land of Israel; there were two of this name, one in the tribe of Judah, near which Nabal dwelt, 1Sa 25:2; another in the tribe of Asher, near to Ptolemais or Aco; some think the former is meant, as being nearer Tekoa, and more known to Amos; others the latter, because Israel or the ten tribes are prophesied against; though Carmel may be taken for any and all fruitful places in the land; and the top or chief of it withering may signify the destruction of everything pleasant and useful. Some think Amos speaks figuratively in the language of a herdsman or shepherd, as artificers and mechanics do in their own way {t}; and so by "shepherds" he means kings and princes; and, by their "habitations", their kingdoms, cities, towns, and palaces; and, by "Carmel", their wealth, riches, and precious things, which should all be destroyed; and to this agrees the Targum,

"the habitations of kings shall become desolate, and the strength of their fortresses shall be made a desert."

{s} Myerh twan "pascua pastorum", Vatablus, Piscator, Grotius, Burkus. {t} "Navita de ventis, de tauris narrat arator, Enumerat miles vulnera, pastor oves". Propert. I. 2. Eleg. 1.

[[@Amos 1:3]]Ver. [[3 >> Bible:Amos 1:3]]. **Thus saith the Lord**,.... Lest it should be thought that the words that Amos spoke were his own, and he spake them of himself, this and the following prophecies are prefaced in this manner; and he begins with the nations near to the people of Israel and Judah, who had greatly afflicted them, and for that reason would be punished; which is foretold, to let Israel see that those judgments on them did not come by chance; and lest they should promise themselves impunity from the prosperity of these sinful nations; and to awaken them to a sense of their sin and danger, who might expect the visitation of God for their transgressions; as also to take off all offence at the prophet, who began not with them, but with their enemies:

for three transgressions of Damascus, and for four, I will not turn away [the punishment] thereof; Damascus was an ancient city; it was in the times of Abraham, **Genesis 15:2**. It was the "metropolis" of Syria, **Isa 7:8**; and so Pliny calls it, "Damascus of Syria" {u}. Of the situation of this place, and the delightfulness of it,

See Gill on "Jer 49:25"; and of its founder, and the signification of its name, See Gill on "Ac 9:2"; to which may be added, that though Justin {w} says it had its name from Damascus, a king of it before Abraham and Israel, whom he also makes kings of it; and Josephus {x} would have Uz the son of Aram the founder of it, to which Bochart {y} agrees; yet the Arabic writers ascribe the building of it to others; for the Arabs have a tradition, as Schultens {z} says, that there were Canaanites anciently in Syria; for they talk of Dimashe the son of Canaan, who built the famous city of Damascus, and so it should seem to be called after his name; and Abulpharagius {a} says, that Murkus or Murphus, as others call him, king of Palestine, built the city of Damascus twenty years before the birth of Abraham: from this place many things have their names, which continue with us to this day, as the "damask" rose, and the "damascene" plum, transplanted from the gardens that were about it, for which it was famous; and very probably the invention of the silk and linen called "damasks" owes its rise from hence. It is here put for the whole country of Syria, and the inhabitants of it, for whose numerous transgressions, signified by "three" and "four", the Lord would not turn away his

fury from them, justly raised by their sins; or the decree which he had passed in his own mind, and now made a declaration of, he would not revoke; or not inflict the punishment they had deserved, and he had threatened. The sense is, that he would not spare them, or have mercy on them, or defer the execution of punishment any longer; he would not forgive their transgressions. So the Targum,

"I will not pardon them."

Deuteronomy Dieu refers it to the earthquake before mentioned, that God would not turn away that, but cause it to come, as he had foretold, for the transgressions of these, and other nations after spoken of; but rather it refers to Damascus; and so some render it, "I will not turn", or "convert it" {b}; to repentance, and so to my mercy; but leave it in its sins, and to my just judgments. Kimchi thinks that this respects four particular seasons, in which Damascus, or the Syrians, evilly treated and distressed the people of Israel; first in the times of Baasha; then in the times of Ahab; a third time in the days of Jehoahaz the son of Jehu; and the fourth in the times of Ahaz; and then they were punished for them all:

because they have threshed Gilead with threshing instruments of iron; that is,

"the inhabitants of the land of Gilead,"

as the Targum; this country lay beyond Jordan, and was inhabited by the Reubenites and Gadites and the half tribe of Manasseh; who were used in a very cruel manner, by Hazael king of Syria, as was foretold by Elisha, **2Ki 7:12**; not literally, as in 2Sa 12:31; but by him they were beat, oppressed, and crushed, as the grain of the threshingfloor; which used to be threshed out by means of a wooden instrument stuck with iron teeth, the top of which was filled with stones to press it down, and so drawn to and fro over the sheaves of corn, by which means it was beaten out, to which the allusion is here; See Gill on "**1 Corinthians 9:9**". This was done by Hazael king of Syria, who is said to destroy the people, and make them "like the dust by threshing", **2Ki 10:32**.

{u} Nat. Hist. l. 36. c. 8. {w} E Trogo, l. 36. c. 2. {x} Antiqu. l. 1. c. 6. sect. 4. {y} Phaleg. l. 2. c. 8. {z} Apud Universal History, vol. 2. p. 280. {a} Hist. Dynast. p. 13. {b} wnbyva al "non convertam eam", Montanus, Vatablus, Drusius.

[[@Amos 1:4]]Ver. [[4 >> Bible:Amos 1:4]]. *But I will send a fire into the house of Hazael*,.... For so doing; into his family, his sons' sons, one of whom perhaps was Rezin, that Tiglathpileser king of Assyria slew, as Aben Ezra observes. This denotes the judgments of God upon his posterity for his cruel usage of the Israelites; and designs an enemy that should come into his country, and war made in the midst of it, by which it should be depopulated; and this being by the permission and providence of God, and according to his will, is said to be sent by him:

which shall devour the palaces of Benhadad; a name frequently given to the kings of Syria; there was one of this name the immediate predecessor of Hazael, whose servant he was; and he left a son of the same name that succeeded him, **2Ki 7:7**; these may denote the royal palaces of the kings of Syria, which should not be spared in this time of desolation; though rather by them may be intended the temples, which he and Hazael are said by Josephus {c} to build in the city of Damascus, whereby they greatly adorned it; and for these and other acts of beneficence they were deified by the Syrians, and worshipped as gods; and even to the times of Josephus, he says, their statues were carried in pomp every day in honour of them; and so,

the house of Hazael, in the preceding clause, may signify a temple that was either built by him, or for the worship of him, since he was deified as well as Benhadad; and it may be observed, that as Adad was a common name of the kings of Syria; for, according to Nicholas of Damascus {d}, ten kings that reigned in Damascus were all called Adad; so this is a name of the god they worshipped. Pliny speaks of a god worshipped by the Syrians, whose name must be Adad; since, according to him; the gem "adadunephros" had its name from him {e}; and Macrobius {f} is express for it, that the chief god of the Assyrians was called Adad, which signifies one; See Gill on "Isa 66:17".

{c} Antiqu. l. 9. c. 4. sect. 6. {d} Apud Joseph. Antiqu. l. 7. c. 5. sect. 8. {e} Nat. Hist. l. 27. c. 11. {f} Saturnal. l. 1. c. 23.

[[@Amos 1:5]]Ver. [[5 >> Bible:Amos 1:5]]. ***I will break also the bar of Damascus***,.... Or bars, the singular for the plural, by which the gates of the city were barred; and, being broken, the gates would be easily opened, and way made for the enemy to pass into the city and spoil it; or it may signify the whole strength and all the fortifications of it. So the Targum,

"I will break the strength of Damascus:"

and cut off the inhabitant from the plain of Aven; or, "of an idol", as the Vulgate Latin version. It is thought to be some place where idols were worshipped by the Syrians; their gods were the gods of the valleys, which they denied the God of Israel to be, 1Ki 20:23. Mr. Maundrell {g} says, that near Damascus there is a plain still called the valley of Bocat, and which he thinks is the same with this Bicataven, as it is in the Hebrew text; and which lies between Libanus and Antilibanus, near to the city, of Heliopolis and the Septuagint and Arabic versions here call this valley the plain of On, which Theodoret interprets of an idol called On. Father Calmet {h} takes it to be the same with Heliopolis, now called Balbec, or Baalbeck, the valley of Baal; where was a famous temple dedicated to the sun, the magnificent remains whereof are still at this day visible. Balbec is mentioned by the Arabians as the wonder of Syria; and one of their lexicographers says it is three days' journey from Damascus, where are wonderful foundations, and magnificent vestiges of antiquity, and palaces with marble columns, such as in the whole world are nowhere else to be seen; and such of our European travellers as have visited it are so charmed with what they beheld there, that they are at a loss how to express their admiration. On the southwest of the town, which stands in a "delightful plain" on the west foot of Antilibanus, is a Heathen temple, with the remains of some other edifices, and, among the rest, of a magnificent palace {i}: Some late travellers {k} into these parts tell us, that

"upon a rising ground near the northeast extremity of this "plain", and immediately under Antilibanus, is pleasantly situated the city of Balbec, between Tripoli of Syria, and Damascus, and about sixteen hours distant from each.----This plain of Bocat (they say) might by a little care be made one of the richest and most fertile spots in Syria; for it is more fertile than the celebrated vale of Damascus, and better watered than the rich plains of Esdraelon and Rama. In its present neglected state it produces grain, some good grapes, but very little wood.--It extends in length from Balbec almost to the sea; its direction is from northeast by north, to southwest by south; and its breadth from Libanus to Antilibanus is guessed to be in few places more than twelve miles, or less than six."

It seems to be the same with Bicatlebanon, or the valley of Lebanon, Jos 11:17; and with that which Strabo {l} calls the hollow plain; the breadth of which to the sea (he says) is twenty five miles, and the length from the sea to the midland is double that:

and him that holdeth the sceptre from the house of Eden; that is, the king from his pleasure house; or it may be understood of the name of some place in Syria, where the kings of it used sometimes to be, and had their palace there, called Betheden; and it seems there is still a place near Damascus, on Mount Libanus, called Eden, as the above traveller says; and Calmet {m} takes it to be the same that is here spoken of:

and the people of Syria shall go into captivity unto Kir, saith the Lord; which last clause is added for the certainty of it, and accordingly it was punctually fulfilled; for in the times of Rezin, which was about fifty years after this prophecy of Amos, though Kimchi says but twenty five, Tiglathpileser king of Assyria came up against Damascus, took it, and carried the people captive to Kir, 2Ki 16:9. The Targum and Vulgate Latin version call it Cyrene, which some understand of Cyrene in Egypt; see Ac 2:10; but this cannot be, since it was in the hands of the king of Assyria; but rather Kir in Media is meant; see Isa 22:6; which was under his dominion; and so Josephus says {n}, that he carried captive the inhabitants of Damascus into Upper Media.

{g} Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem, p. 119, 120. Ed. 7. {h} Dictionary, in the word "Heliopolis". {i} Universal History, vol. 2. p. 266. {k} Authors of "The Ruins of Balbec". {l} Geograph. l. 16. p. 519. {m} Dictionary, in the word "Eden". {n} Antiqu. l. 9. c. 12. sect. 3.

[[@Amos 1:6]]Ver. [[6 >> Bible:Amos 1:6]]. **Thus saith the Lord, for three transgressions of Gaza,....** The chief city of the Philistines, and put for the whole country, and designs the inhabitants of it:

and for four, I will not turn away [the punishment] thereof;

See Gill on "Am 1:3";

because they carried away captive the whole captivity; which cannot be understood of the captivity of the whole nation, either of Israel or Judah, who were never carried captive by the Philistines; but of their carrying away all the substance of the house of Jehoram king of Judah, and of all his sons and his wives, and left him not one son but the youngest, 2Ch 21:17;

to deliver [them] up to Edom: or, "to shut them up in Edom" {o}; which country also revolted from Jehoram, when he and the captains of his chariots going out against them, were corn passed in by them, Am 1:8. Some think this refers to the time when Sennacherib invaded Judea, and many of the Jews fled to Palestine for help, but instead of being sheltered were delivered up to the Edomites; but this was in the times of Hezekiah, after Amos had prophesied, and therefore cannot be referred to; and for the same reason this cannot be applied to the Edomites and Philistines invading and smiting Judah, and carrying them captive, 2Ch 28:17.

{o} Mwdal rygohl tou sugkleisai eiv thn idoumaian, Sept. "ut concluderent eam in Idumea", V. L. "ad concludeadum in Edom", Montanus.

[[@Amos 1:7]]Ver. [[7 >> Bible:Amos 1:7]]. *But I will send a fire on the wall of Gaza,....* An enemy that shall pull down and destroy the walls of it: this was fulfilled in the times of Uzziah, under whom Amos prophesied; and very likely in a very short time after this prophecy, who went out and warred against the Philistines, and broke down the wall of Gaza, 2Ch 26:6; or else in the times of Hezekiah, who smote the Philistines unto Gaza, and the borders thereof, 2Ki 18:8; or however in the times of Nebuchadnezzar, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah, Jer 25:20; as also in the times of Alexander the great, who, after he had taken Tyre, besieged Gaza, and after two months' siege took it, as Diodorus Siculus relates {p}; the wall being undermined and thrown down, he entered in at the ruins of it, as Curtius {q} says; in the times of the Maccabees the suburbs of it were burnt by Jonathan, and the place taken:

"61 From whence he went to Gaza, but they of Gaza shut him out; wherefore he laid siege unto it, and burned the suburbs thereof with fire, and spoiled them. 62 Afterward, when they of Gaza made supplication unto Jonathan, he made peace with them, and took the sons of their chief men for hostages, and sent them to Jerusalem, and passed through the country unto Damascus." (1 Maccabees 11)

which shall devour the palaces thereof; the palaces of the governor, and of other great men in it; (the governor of it, when Alexander took it, was Batis;) and the stately towers of it, of which there were many. This city was about fifteen miles south of Askelon, and about four or five north of the river Bezor, and at a small distance from the Mediterranean. It was situated on an eminence, surrounded with the most beautiful and fertile valleys, watered by the above mentioned river, and a number of other springs; and at a further distance encompassed on the inland side with hills, all planted with variety of fine fruit trees. The city itself was strong, both by its situation, and by the stout "walls" and stately "bowers" that surrounded it, and built after the Philistine manner {r} Arrian also says {s}, it was a great city built on high ground, and encompassed with a strong wall, and was distant from the sea at least two and a half miles; See Gill on "Ac 8:26".

{p} Bibliothec. tom. 2. l. 17. p. 526. {q} Hist. l. 4. c. 5, 6. {r} Universal History, vol. 2. p. 490. {s} **Deuteronomy** Expeditione Alex. l. 2. p. 150.

[[@Amos 1:8]]Ver. [[8 >> Bible:Amos 1:8]]. *I will cut off the inhabitants from Ashdod,....* The same with Azotus, **Ac 8:40**; another principal city of the Philistines: this perhaps was fulfilled when Tartan was sent against it by Sargon king of Assyria, and took it, Isa 20:1; or however in the times of the Maccabees, when Jonathan took it, and burnt it, and the cities round about it; and took their spoils, and burnt the temple of Dagon, and those that fled to it; and what with those that were burnt, and those that fell by the sword, there perished about eight thousand,

"84 But Jonathan set fire on Azotus, and the cities round about it, and took their spoils; and the temple of Dagon, with them that were fled into it, he burned with fire. 85 Thus there were burned and slain with the sword well nigh eight thousand men." (1 Maccabees 10)

this was so strong a place, that, according to Herodotus {t}, it held out a siege of twenty nine years, under Psammitichus king of Egypt. It was, according to Diodorus Siculus {u}, thirty four miles, from Gaza before mentioned; and it was about eight or nine from Ashkelon, and fourteen or fifteen from Ekron after mentioned:

and him that holdeth the sceptre from Ashkelon; another of the five lordships of the Philistines, whose king or governor should be cut off, with the inhabitants of it; this was done by Nebuchadnezzar, Jer 47:5. This place was about fifteen miles from Gaza, Mr. Sandys {w} says ten, but it was eight or nine miles from Ashdod; and, as Josephus {x} says, was sixty five miles from Jerusalem. It was the birth place of Herod the great, who from thence is called an Ashkelonite; but the king or governor of it was cut off before his time. It was governed by kings formerly. Justin {y} makes mention of a king of Ashkelon; according to the Samaritan interpreter, **Genesis 20:1**; it is the same with Gerar, which had a king in the times of Abraham; hence a sceptre is here ascribed to it:

and I will turn mine hand against Ekron: to destroy that; another of the chief cities of the Philistines. It was about ten miles from Gath; four of the five lordships are here mentioned, but not Gath, which was the fifth; see **1Sa 6:17**; because, as Kimchi says, it was in the hands of Judah. All these places were inhabited by Heathens, and guilty of gross idolatry, which must be one of the transgressions for which they were punished. Gaza was a place much given to idolatry, as it was even in later times; when other neighbouring cities embraced the Christian religion, the inhabitants of it were violent persecutors; hence that saying of Gregory Nazianzen {z},

"who knows not the madness of the inhabitants of Gaza?"

here stood the temple of the god Marnas {a}, which with the Syrians signified the lord of men: at Ashdod or Azotus stood the temple of Dagon, where he was worshipped, **1Sa 5:2**;

"But Jonathan set fire on Azotus, and the cities round about it, and took their spoils; and the temple of Dagon, with them that were fled into it, he burned with fire." (1 Maccabees 10:84)

Near Ashkelon, as Diodorus Siculus {b} relates, was a large and deep lake, full of fishes; and by it was a temple of a famous goddess, called by the Syrians Derceto, who had a woman's face, but the rest of her body in the form of a fish; being, as the fable goes, changed into one upon her casting herself into the above lake on a certain occasion; hence the Syrians abstained from fishes, and worshipped them as gods. Herodotus {c} calls this city a city of Syria, and speaks of a temple dedicated to Urania Venus; and in the Talmud {d} mention is made of the temple of Zeripha, or of a molten image at Ashkelon; and, besides idolatry, this place seems to have been famous for witchcraft; for it is said {e} that Simeon ben Shetach hung on one day at Ashkelon fourscore women for being witches; and, at Ekron, Baalzebub or the god of the fly was worshipped:

and the remnant of the Philistines shall perish, saith the Lord God; all the other towns and cities belonging to them, besides those mentioned; which very likely had its accomplishment in the times of the Maccabees, when they fell into the hands of the Jews.

{t} Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 157. {u} Bibliothec. l. 19. p. 723. {w} Travels, p. 151. {x} **Deuteronomy** Bello Jud. l. 3. c. 2. sect. 1. {y} E Trogo, l. 19. c. 3. {z} Orat. 3. adv. Julian. p. 87. {a} Hieronymul in Isa. xvii. fol. 39. K. {b} Bibliothec. l. 2. p. 92. {c} Clio, sive l. 1. c. 105. {d} T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 11. 2. {e} T. Hieros. Sanhedrin, fol. 23. 3.

[[@Amos 1:9]]Ver. [[9 >> Bible:Amos 1:9]]. **Thus saith the Lord, for three transgressions of Tyrus**,.... Or Tyre, a very ancient city in Palestine; of which

See Gill on "Isa 23:1";

and for four, I will not turn away [the punishment] thereof;

See Gill on "Am 1:3";

because they delivered up the whole captivity to Edom: such of the Israelites that fell into their hands, or fled to them for shelter, they delivered up to the Edomites, their implacable adversaries, or sold them to them, as they did to the Grecians, **Joe 3:6**;

and remembered not the brotherly covenant; either the covenant and agreement that should be among brethren, as the Jews and Edomites were which the Tyrians should have remembered, and persuaded them to live peaceably; and not have delivered the one into the hands of the other, to be used in a cruel manner as slaves: or else the covenant made between Hiram king of Tyre, and David king of Israel, and which was renewed between Hiram and Solomon, on account of which they called each other brethren, **2Sa 5:11**. The Phoenicians, of whom, the Tyrians were the principal, are noted for being faithless and treacherous {f}. "Punica fides" {g} was the same as "French faith" now; the perfidy of Hannibal is well known {h}. Cicero {i} says the Carthaginians, which were a colony of the Tyrians, were a deceitful and lying people; and Virgil {k} calls the Tyrians themselves "Tyrios bilingues", "double tongued Tyrians", which, Servius interprets deceitful, as referring more to the mind than to the tongue; and observes from Livy the perfidy of the Phoenicians in general, that they have nothing true nor sacred among them; no fear of God, no regard to an oath, nor any religion; and which are the three or four transgressions for which they are said here they should be punished; for, besides their ill usage of the Jews, their idolatry no doubt came into the account: the god that was worshipped at Tyre was Hercules, by whom was meant the sun, as Macrobius {l} observes; and as there were several Heathen gods of this name, he whom the Tyrians worshipped is the fourth of the name with Cicero {m}; the same is the Melicartus of Sanchoniatho {n}, which signifies the king of the city, by which Bochart {o} thinks Tyre is intended. To be a priest of Hercules was the second honour to that of king, as Justin {p} observes; and so careful were the Tyrians of this deity, that they used to chain him, that he might not depart from them; see Jer 10:4; and a most magnificent temple they had in honour of him, and which, they pretended, was exceeding ancient, as old as the city itself, the antiquity of which they speak extravagantly of Herodotus {q} says he saw this temple, and which was greatly ornamented, and particularly had two pillars, one of gold, and another of emerald; and inquiring of the priests, they told; him it was built when their city was, ten thousand three hundred years before that time; but according to their own historians {r}, Hiram, who lived in the days of Solomon, built the temple of Hercules, as well as that of Astarte; for though she is called the goddess of the Sidonians, she was also worshipped by the Tyrians; as he also ornamented the temple of Jupiter Olympius, and annexed it to the city, which deity also it seems had worship paid it in this place.

{f} Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 5. c. 10. {g} Vid. Reinesius de Ling. Punic. c. 2. sect. 12. {h} Vid. Valer. Maxim. l. 9. c. 6. {i} Contra Rullum, Orat. 16. {k} Aeneid. l. 1. {l} Saturnal. l. 1. c. 20. {m} **Deuteronomy** Natur. Deorum, l. 3. {n} Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 2. p. 38. {o} Canaan, l. 2. col. 709. {p} E. Trogo, l. 18. c. 4. {q} Euterp, sive l. 2. c. 44. {r} Meander & Dios apud Joseph. Antiqu. l. 8. c. 5. sect. 3.

[[@Amos 1:10]]Ver. [[10 >> Bible:Amos 1:10]]. *But I will send a fire on the wall of Tyrus*,.... An enemy to destroy the walls of it: this was done either by Shalmaneser king of the Assyrians, in the times of Eulaeus king of the Tyrians, of whose expedition against it Josephus {s} makes mention: or by Nebuchadnezzar, who took it after thirteen years' siege of

it, in the time of Ithobalus {t}; or by Alexander, by whom it was taken, as Curtius {u} relates, after it had been besieged seven months:

which shall devour the palaces thereof; of the governor, the great men and merchants in it. Alexander ordered all to be slain but those that fled to the temples, and fire to be put to the houses; which made it a most desolate place, as the above historian has recorded.

{s} Antiqu. l. 9. c. 14. sect. 2. {t} Hist. Phoenic. apud Joseph. contr. Apion. l. 1. c. 21. {u} Hist. l. 4. c. 4.

[[@Amos 1:11]]Ver. [[11 >> Bible:Amos 1:11]]. *Thus saith the Lord for three transgressions of Edom*,.... Or the Edomites, the posterity of Esau, whose name was Edom, so called from the red pottage he sold his birthright for to his brother Jacob:

and for four, I will not turn away [the punishment] thereof;

See Gill on "Am 1:3". Among these three or four transgressions, not only what follows is included, but their idolatry; for that the Edomites had their idols is certain, though what they were cannot be said; see 2Ch 25:14;

because he did pursue his brother with the sword: not Esau his brother Jacob; for though he purposed in his heart to slay him, which obliged him to flee; and frightened him, upon his return, by meeting him with four hundred men; yet he never pursued him with the sword; but his posterity, the Edomites, not only would not suffer the Israelites their brethren to pass by their borders, but came out against them with a large army, Nu 20:18; and in the times of Ahaz they came against Judah with the sword, and smote them, and carried away captives, 2Ch 28:17; and were at the taking and destruction of Jerusalem, and assisted and encouraged in it, Psalm 137:7; though to these latter instances the prophet could have no respect, because they were after his time:

and did cast off all pity; bowels of compassion, natural affection, such as ought to be between brethren, even all humanity: or "corrupted", or "destroyed all pity" {w}; showed none, but extinguished all sparks of it, as their behaviour to the Israelites showed, when upon their borders in the wilderness:

and his anger did tear perpetually; it was deeply rooted in them; it began in their first father Esau, on account of the blessing and birthright Jacob got from him; and it descended from father to son in all generations, and was vented in a most cruel manner, like the ravaging of a lion, or any other beast of prey:

and kept his wrath for ever; reserved it in their breasts till they had an opportunity of showing it, as Esau their father proposed to do, Genesis 27:41.

{w} wymxr txv "corrupt misericordias suas", Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus; "corrumpens miserationes suas", Junius & Tremellius; "corruptit", Piscator, Cocceius.

[[@Amos 1:12]]Ver. [[12 >> Bible:Amos 1:12]]. *But I will send a fire upon Teman*,.... A principal city of Edom or Idumea, so called from Teman a grandson of Esau, Genesis 36:11. Jerom {x} says there was in his time a village called Theman, five miles distant from the city

Petra, and had a Roman garrison; and so says Eusebius {y}; who places it in Arabia Petraea; it is put for the whole country; it signifies the south. So the Targum renders it,

"a fire in the south."

The "fire" signifies an enemy that should be sent into it, and destroy it: this was Nebuchadnezzar, who, as Josephus {z} says, five years after the destruction of Jerusalem led his army into Coelesyria, and took it; and fought against the Ammonites and Moabites, and very probably at the same time against the Edomites:

which shall devour the palaces of Bozrah; another famous city of the Edomites; there was one of this name in Moab; either there were two cities so called, one in Edom, and another in Moab; or rather this city lay, as Jarchi says, between Edom and Moab; and so sometimes is placed to one, and sometimes to another, its it might belong to the one and to the other, according to the event of war. It is the same with Bezer in the wilderness, appointed a Levitical city, and a city of refuge, by Joshua, Jos 20:8; and belonged to the tribe of Reuben; but being on the borders of that tribe, and of Moab and Edom, it is ascribed to each, as they at different times made themselves masters of it. It is the same with Bostra, which Ptolemy {a} places in Arabia Petraea; and being on the confines of Arabia Deserts, and surrounded on all sides with wild deserts, it is commonly spoken of as situated in a wilderness, Jerom {b} speaks of it as a city of Arabia in the desert, to the south, looking to Damascus; and, according to the Persian {c} geographer, it is four days' journey southward from Damascus; and Eusebius places it at the distance of twenty four miles from Adraa or Edrei. The destruction of this place is prophesied of by Jeremiah, Jer 48:24; and perhaps these prophecies were accomplished when Nebuchadnezzar made war with the Ammonites and Edomites, as before observed; or however in the times of the Maccabees, when Judas Maccabeus took this city, put all the males to the sword, plundered it, and then set fire to it, which literally fulfilled this prophecy,

"Hereupon Judas and his host turned suddenly by the way of the wilderness unto Bosora; and when he had won the city, he slew all the males with the edge of the sword, and took all their spoils, and burned the city with fire," (1 Maccabees 5:28)

It was afterwards rebuilt, and became a considerable city; in the time of the above Persian geographer {d}, it had a very strong castle belonging to it, a gate twenty cubits high, and one of the largest basins or pools of water in all the east. In the fourth century there were bishops of this place, which assisted in the councils of Nice, Antioch, Ephesus, and Chalcedon, as Reland {e} observes; though he thinks that Bostra is not to be confounded with the Bezer of Reuben, or with the Bozra of Moab and Edom; though they seem to be all one and the same place.

{x} **Deuteronomy** locis Hebr. fol. 95. B. {y} Onomast. ad vocem yaiman. {z} Antiqu. l. 10. c. 9. sect. 7. {a} Geograph. l. 5. c. 17. {b} **Deuteronomy** locis Hebr. in voce "Trachonitis", fol. 95. B. {c} Apud Calmet, Dictionary, on the word "Bosor". {d} Apud Calmet, ut supra. {e} Palestina Illustrata, tom. 2. l. 3. p. 666.

[[@Amos 1:13]]Ver. [[13 >> Bible:Amos 1:13]]. *Thus saith the Lord, for three transgressions of the children of Ammon,....* These are the descendants of Benammi, a son of Lots, by one of his daughters, **Genesis 19:38**; are distinguished from the Ammonites, 2Ch 20:1; were near neighbours of the Jews, but great enemies to them, though akin:

and for four, I will not turn away [the punishment] thereof;

See Gill on "Am 1:3". Among these transgressions, for which God would punish these people, are to be reckoned, not only their ill treatment of the Gileadites after mentioned, but other sins, which are all included in this number, and particularly their idolatry; for idolaters they were, though the children of Lot; and originally might have had better instruction, from which they departed. Moloch or Milcom, which signifies a king, was the abomination or idol of the Ammonites, 1Ki 11:5. The image of this idol, according to the Jews, had seven chapels, and he was within them; and his face was the face of a calf or ox; and his hands were stretched out as a man stretches out his hands to receive anything of his friend; and they set it on fire within, for it was hollow; and everyone according to his offering went into these chapels; he that offered a fowl went into the first chapel; he that offered a sheep, into the second chapel; if a lamb, into the third; a calf, into the fourth; a bullock, into the fifth; an ox, into the sixth; but he that offered his son, they brought him into the seventh; and they put, the child before Moloch, and kindled a fire in the inside of him, until his hands were like fire; and then they took the child, and put him within its arms; and beat upon tabrets or drums, that the cry of the child might not be heard by the father {f}. Benjamin of Tudela {g} reports, that in his time, at Gibal, the border of the children of Ammon, a day's journey from Tripoli, was found the remains of a temple of the children of Ammon; and an idol of theirs sitting upon a throne; and it was made of stone, and covered with gold; and there were two women sitting, one on its right hand, and the other on its left; and before it an altar, on which they used to sacrifice and burn incense to it, as in the times of the children of Ammon. Chemosh also was worshipped by the Ammonites, Jud 11:24; which was also the god of the Moabites; of which See Gill on "Jer 48:7";

because they have ripped up the women with child of Gilead, that they might enlarge their border; this Hazael king of Syria did, according to Elisha's prophecy; and very likely the children of Ammon might join with him, inasmuch as they bordered on the countries which he smote, 2Ki 8:12. This was an instance of shocking cruelty and inhumanity, to destroy at once the innocent and the impotent, though frequently done by enemies, 2Ki 15:16. The reason of it was not only that they might possess their land, but keep it when they had got it; there being no heir to claim it, or molest them in the possession of it; see Jer 49:1; though some read the words, "because they divided, or cleaved the mountain of Gilead" {h}; so Aben Ezra and Kimchi, though they mention the other sense: this they did to get into the land of Gilead, as Hannibal cut through the Alps; or rather to remove the borders of it, and lay it even with their own, and so enlarge theirs; which, as Kimchi says, was a very great iniquity, being one of the curses written in the law, **Deuteronomy 27:17**; thus one sin leads on to another. Some by "mountains" understand towers or fortified cities as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe; such as were built on mountains, which sense is approved by Gussetius {i}.

{f} Yelammedenu apud Yalkut Simeoni in Jer. vii. 31. fol. 61. 4. {g} Itinerarium, p. 33. {h} twrh Meqb "eo quod sciderint montes", Pagninus; so some in Drusius. {i} Ebr. Comment. p. 216.

[[@Amos 1:14]]Ver. [[14 >> Bible:Amos 1:14]]. *But I will kindle a fire in the wall of Rabbah*,.... Which was the metropolis of the children of Ammon, and their royal city, 2Sa 12:26. This is to be understood of an enemy that should destroy it, perhaps Nebuchadnezzar; or of war being kindled and raised in their country; this place being put for the whole; See Gill on "Jer 49:2";

and it shall devour the palaces thereof; the palaces of the king, and his nobles:

with shouting in the day of battle; with the noise of soldiers when they make their onset, or have gained the victory; see Jer 49:2;

with a tempest in the day of the whirlwind; denoting that this judgment should come suddenly, and at an unawares, with great force, irresistibly; and a tempest added to fire, if literally taken, must spread the desolation more abundantly, and make it more terrible.

[[@Amos 1:15]]Ver. [[15 >> Bible:Amos 1:15]]. *And their king shall go into captivity*,.... Not only the common people that are left of the sword shall be carried captive, but their king also. This was, Baalis their last king, who was accessory to the murder of Gedaliah, Jer 40:14; whom the king of Babylon had set over the remnant of the Jews left in Judea; which might provoke him to send Nebuzaradan his general against him, who put his country to fire and sword, destroyed his chief city Rabbah, and carried him and his nobles into captivity. Some understand this of Milchom, or Moloch, the god of the children of Ammon, who should be so far from saving them, that he himself should be taken and carried off; it being usual with the conquerors to carry away with them the gods of the nations they conquered; see Jer 48:7. So Ptolemy Euergetes king of Egypt, having conquered Callinicus king of Syria, carried captive into Egypt the gods he then took, Da 11:8; and it was usual with the Romans to carry the gods of the nations captive which they conquered, and to carry them in their triumphs as such; so Marcellus was blamed for rendering the city of Rome envied and hated by other nations, because not men only, but the gods also, were carried in pomp as captives: and of Paulus Aemylus it is said, that the first day of his triumph was scarce sufficient for the passing along of the captive statues, pictures, and colosses, which were drawn on two hundred and fifty chariots {k}:

he and his princes together, saith the Lord: which is repeated, and especially the last words added, for the confirmation of it. The Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read, "their priests and their princes", as in Jer 49:3. This was fulfilled five years after the destruction of Jerusalem, as Josephus {l} relates.

{k} Vid. Plutarch. in Vita Marcelli & Aemylii. {l} Antiqu. l. 10. c. 9. sect. 7. Vid. Judith i. 12.

[[@Amos 2]]

Chapter 2

INTRODUCTION TO AMOS 2

In this chapter the prophet foretells the calamities that should come upon the Moabites for their transgressions, **Am 2:1**; and the destruction of Judah and Jerusalem for their iniquities, **Am 2:4**; also the judgments of God that should come upon Israel the ten tribes for their sins, which sins are enumerated; their oppression of the poor, their lewdness and idolatry, **Am 2:6**; and which are aggravated by the blessings of goodness bestowed upon them, both temporal and spiritual, **Am 2:9**; wherefore they are threatened with ruin, which would be inevitable, notwithstanding their swiftness, strength, and courage, and their skill in shooting arrows, and riding horses, **Am 2:13**.

[[@Amos 2:1]]Ver. [[1 >> Bible:Amos 2:1]]. **Thus saith the Lord, for three transgressions of Moab**,.... Or the Moabites, who descended from the eldest son of Lot, by one of his daughters; and, though related, were great enemies to the Israelites; they sent for Balaam to curse them when on their borders, and greatly oppressed them in the times of the judges:

and for four, I will not turn away [the punishment] thereof;

See Gill on "Am 1:3". Idolatry, as well as the sin next charged, must be one of these four transgressions: the idols of Moab were Chemosh and Baalpeor; of the former See Gill on "Jer 48:7"; and of the latter

See Gill on "Ho 9:10";

because he burnt the bones of the king of Edom into lime; either like "to lime", or "for lime"; he burnt them thoroughly, till they came to powder as small and as white as lime, and used them instead of it to plaster the walls of his palace, by way of contempt, as the Targum; and so Jarchi and Kimchi: this is thought probable by Quinquarboreus {m}, for which he is blamed by Sanctius, who observes, there is no foundation for it in Scripture; and that the ashes of the bones of one man would not be sufficient to plaster a wall; and, besides, could never be brought to such a consistence as to be fit for such a purpose; yet, if it only means bare burning them, so as that they became like lime, as the colour of it, it could not be thought so very barbarous and inhuman, since it was the usage of some nations, especially the Romans, to burn their dead: no doubt something shocking is intended, and which usage to the dead is resented by the Lord. Sir Paul Rycart {n} relates a piece of barbarity similar to this, that the city of Philadelphia was built with the bones of the besieged, by the prince that took it by storm. Kimchi thinks, as other interpreters also do, that it refers to the history in **2Ki 3:27**; where the king of Moab is said to offer his eldest son that should have reigned in his stead for a burnt offering; which he understands, not of the king of Moab's son, but of the king of Edom's son, here called a king, because he was to have succeeded his father in the kingdom; but it seems rather to be the king of Moab's own son that he offered; nor is it likely that the king of Edom's son was in his lands; for he would have broke through into the king of Edom, but could not; and then did this rash action; not in wrath and fury, but in a religious way. The prophet here refers to some fact, notorious in those times, the truth of which is not to be questioned, though we have no other account of it in Scripture; very probably it was the same king of Moab that did it, and the same king of Edom that was so used, mentioned in the above history; the king of Moab being enraged at him for joining with the kings of Israel and Judah against him, who afterwards falling into his hands, he used him in this barbarous manner; or very likely being possessed of his country after his death, or however of his grave, he took him out of it, and burnt his bones to lime, in revenge of what he had done to him. This was a very cruel action thus to use a human body, and this not the body of a private person, but of a king; and was an act of impiety, as well as of inhumanity, to take the bones of the dead out of his grave, and burn them; and which though done to a Heathen prince. God, who is the Creator of all, and Governor of the whole world, and whose vicegerents princes are, resented; and therefore threatened the Moabites with utter destruction for it.

{m} Scholia in Targum in loc. {n} The Present State of the Greek Church, c. 2.

[[@Amos 2:2]]Ver. [[2 >> Bible:Amos 2:2]]. **But I will send a fire upon Moab**,.... Either on the whole country, or on some particular city so called, as in all the other prophecies; and there was a city called Moab, now Areopolis,

See Gill on "Jer 48:4"; though it may be put for the whole country, into which an enemy should be sent to destroy it, even Nebuchadnezzar:

and it shall devour the palaces of Kerioth; a principal city in the land of Moab; according to Kimchi, it was the royal city, and therefore mention is made of the palaces of it, here being the palace of the king and his princes; see Jer 48:24; though the word may be rendered cities, as it is by the Septuagint and Arabic versions; and so the Targum,

"and shall consume the palaces of the fortified place;"

and so may signify all the cities of Moab, and their palaces: or however may be put for them:

and Moab shall die with tumult, with shouting, [and] with the sound of the trumpet: that is, the Moabites shall die, not in their beds, and in peace, but in war, amidst the howlings of the wounded, the shouts of soldiers, the clashing of arms, and the sound of trumpets,

[[@Amos 2:3]]Ver. [[3 >> Bible:Amos 2:3]]. **And I will cut off the judge from the midst thereof**,.... Either from the midst of Moab, the country in general; or from Kerioth in particular, so Kimchi; meaning their principal governor, their king, as Aben Ezra; for kings sometimes have acted as judges, took the bench, and sat and administered justice to their subjects:

and I will stay all the princes thereof with him, saith the Lord; the king, and the princes of the blood, and his nobles; so that there should be none to succeed him, or to protect and defend the people; the destruction should be an entire one, and inevitable, for the mouth of the Lord had spoken it. This was fulfilled at the same time as the prophecy against the children of Ammon by Nebuchadnezzar, five years after the destruction of Jerusalem {o}, which is next threatened.

{o} Joseph. Antiqu. l. 10. c. 9. sect. 7. Vid. Judith i. 12.

[[@Amos 2:4]]Ver. [[4 >> Bible:Amos 2:4]]. **Thus saith the Lord, for three transgressions of Judah**,.... With whom Benjamin must be joined; for the two tribes are meant as distinct from the ten tribes, under the name of Israel, following. The prophet proceeds from the Heathens round about to the people of God themselves, for the ill usage of whom chiefly the above nations are threatened with ruin, lest they should promise themselves impunity in sin; though, if they rightly considered things, they could not expect it; since, if the Heathens, ignorant of the will of God, and his law, were punished for their sins, then much more those who knew it, and did it not, Lu 12:47; and he begins with Judah, partly because he was of that tribe, lest he should be charged with flattery and partiality, and partly because of the order of his prophecy, which being chiefly concerned with Israel, it was proper that what he had to say to Judah should be delivered first:

and for four, I will not turn away [the punishment] thereof; the prophet retains the same form as in his prophecies against the Heathen nations; his own people, and God's professing people, being guilty of numerous transgressions, as well as they, and more aggravated than theirs; See Gill on "Am 1:3";

because they have despised the law of the Lord; a law so holy, just, and good, and so righteous, as no other nation had; and yet was not only not observed, but contemned: other nations sinned against the light of nature, and are not charged with breaches of the law of God, which was not given them; but these people had it, yet lightly esteemed it; counted it as a strange thing; walked not according to it, but cast it away from them; which was a great affront to the sovereignty of God, and a trampling upon his legislative power and authority:

and have not kept his commandments; or "statutes" {p}; the ordinances of the ceremonial law, which he appointed them to observe for the honour of his name, as parts of his worship; and to lead them into the designs of his grace and salvation by the Messiah:

and their lies caused them to err; either, their idols, as the Vulgate Latin version renders it; which are lying vanities, and deceive, and by which they were made to err from the pure worship of the living and true God to superstition and idolatry; or the words of the false prophets, as Kimchi; the false doctrines they taught, contrary to the word of God, directing them to seek for life by their own works; and promising them peace, when destruction was at hand; and daubing with untempered mortar; and as no lie is of the truth, but against it, so one untruth leads on to another:

after the which their fathers have walked; after which lies, idols, and errors, as in Ur of the Chaldees, in Egypt, in the wilderness, and even in later times: this was no excuse to them that they followed the way of their ancestors, but rather an aggravation of their guilt, that they imitated them, took no warning by them; but filled up the measure of their iniquities, and showed themselves to be a seed of evildoers, a generation of wicked men, the sons of rebellious parents.

{p} wyqx "statuta ejus", Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, &c.

[[@Amos 2:5]]Ver. [[5 >> Bible:Amos 2:5]]. ***But I will send a fire upon Judah***,.... An enemy, Nebuchadnezzar, who should burn, waste, and destroy, all that were in his way:

and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem; the chief city of Judah, the royal city, where stood the temple, the palace of the most High, and the palaces of the king and his nobles; these were burnt with fire when it was taken by the Chaldean army, about two hundred years after this prophecy, Jer 52:13.

[[@Amos 2:6]]Ver. [[6 >> Bible:Amos 2:6]]. ***Thus saith the Lord, for three transgressions of Israel***,.... The ten tribes rent from the house of David in the times of Rehoboam, and who departed from the true worship of God, and set up calves at Dan and Bethel:

and for four, I will not turn away [the punishment] thereof; the following part of this prophecy is taken up in pointing at the sins and punishment of Israel; now the prophet is come to the main business he was sent to do:

because they sold the righteous for silver; meaning not any particular person, as Joseph sold by his brethren, for in that they were all concerned, Judah as well as the rest; nor Christ, as others {q}, sold for thirty pieces of silver; since the persons here charged with it, and the times in which it was done, will not agree with that case; but the sense is, that the judges of

Israel were so corrupt, that for a piece of money they would give a cause against a righteous man, and in favour of an unjust man that bribed them:

and the poor for a pair of shoes; that is, for a mere trifle they would pervert justice; if two men came before them with a cause, and both poor; yet if one could but give a pair of shoes, or anything he could part with, though he could not give money; so mean and sordid were they, they would take it, and give the cause for him, however unjust it was.

{q} Vid. Galatin. Cathol. Ver. Arcan. l. 4. c. 24.

[[@Amos 2:7]]Ver. [[7 >> Bible:Amos 2:7]]. *That pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor*,.... Either were greedy after money, the dust of the earth, and even that small portion of it the poor were possessed of; they could not be easy that they should enjoy that little of it they did, but were desirous to get it out of their hands by oppression and injustice: or they were eagerly desirous of throwing the poor upon the earth, and trampling upon them, and dragging them through the dust of it, thereby filling their heads and covering their faces with it; and caused them to put their mouths in the dust, and be humble suppliants to them. Some think there is an allusion to an ancient custom, which Joseph ben Gorion {r} speaks of, that a guilty person should stand before the judges, clad in black, and his head covered with dust; and this these judges desired here might be done by the rich, that the poor might be accused by them from whom they expected gifts:

and turn aside the way of the meek; decline doing them justice, pervert it, and hinder the course of it, denying it to those who are humble, meek, and modest; or else by one means or another turned them from the good ways in which they were walking, and by degrees at length brought them to such impudence and immodesty as is next expressed, so Aben Ezra:

and a man and his father will go in unto the [same] maid, to profane my holy name; that is, will be guilty of such uncleanness, as not only to have and enjoy the same harlot, but of such incest, as that the son would lie with his father's wife, and the father lie with his son's wife; a sin which was not named among the Gentiles, **1 Corinthians 5:1**; and whereby the name of God was blasphemed among them, as if their religion taught them and encouraged them in such filthy actions; see **Romans 2:24**.

{r} Hist. Heb. c. 44. apud Drusium in loc.

[[@Amos 2:8]]Ver. [[8 >> Bible:Amos 2:8]]. *And they laid [themselves] down upon clothes laid to pledge by every altar*,.... That is, the clothes they took in pledge of poor people, which they should have restored before sun setting, Ex 22:26; these they spread by every altar, of which they had many erected to their idols, and on these as on carpets they slept by them, as was usual with the Gentiles; who not only in common used to lie and sleep on garments, or carpets, or skins spread on the floor {s}, but upon such in the temples of their idols, in order to obtain good dreams; so in the temple of Amphiaras in Greece, after purgations and sacrifices to him, and to the gods whose names were engraven on the same altar, they slew a ram, and spread the skin, on which they laid themselves down, and had dreams, the signification and events of which they presently interpreted {t}; and Jerom says {u}, they used to spread the skins of the sacrifices, and lie upon them, that they might by dreams know things to come, which custom in the temple of Aesculapius continued to his times; and this

custom might be imitated by the Jews; and so they are described by such, "who sleep in the temples of idols", in the Vulgate Latin version of Isa 65:4;

See Gill on "Isa 65:4"; but very false it is what Strabo {w} says, that the Jews were taught this custom by Moses; telling them that such as lived soberly and righteously ought to sleep in the temple, where they might expect good dreams for themselves and others, as good gifts and signs from God, which others might not expect: or else the sense is, they laid themselves down on these clothes, and feasted on them; it being their custom at meals not to sit upright, but to recline on couches; or as the manner of the Turks and other eastern nations to sit on carpets; and it was also the custom of the Heathens to feast in their temples, and by their altars, in honour of their gods. So Herodotus relates {x}, that at a festival of June with the Argives, the mother of Cleobis and Biton prayed the goddess, whom they had drawn to the temple, oxen not being ready, that she would give to them what was best for men; after which prayer, it is said, they sacrificed and "feasted"; and the young men falling asleep in the temple, never rose more, but finished this life: the deity judging it better for a man to die than to live; and this custom of feasting in idols' temples obtained, in the times of the apostles, as appears from **1 Corinthians 8:10**; and which was now observed by the Israelites, with this aggravation of their sin, that they laid themselves on the garments of the poor they had taken for a pawn, when they were performing their idolatrous rites; which must be very provoking to God:

and they drink the wine of the condemned in the house of their god: either wine which used to be given to condemned malefactors to cheer and refresh them; which custom among the Jews was founded on

Proverbs 31:6;

See Gill on "**Proverbs 31:6**";

See Gill on "**Proverbs 31:7**"; The manner was to put a grain of frankincense into a cup of wine, which they gave to the malefactor just as he was going to be executed, that his mind might be disturbed and become insensible; and which was usually the free gift of honourable women, out of compassion to the sufferer; and if they did it not, it was provided at the expense of the public {y}; but this seems to be done rather to intoxicate and stupefy them, that they might not feel their pain and misery, than to cheer; and is thought to be the potion which was offered to Christ, and he refused, **Mark 15:23**; but whether such a custom obtained in the times of the prophet is a question; nor does it seem very likely that these men would choose such sort of wine; wherefore rather wine bought with the money they received by the fines and amercements of those they unjustly condemned is intended. The Targum renders it the wine of rapine; and this they were not content to drink only in their own houses, but drank it at their festivals in the temples of their idols, such as were built for the calves of Dan and Bethel, and other idols.

{s} Vid. Gloss in Aristophan. Plutum, p. 55. & Nubes, p. 125. {t} Pausanias, Attica, sive l. 1. p. 65. Vid. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 6. c. 2. {u} Comment. in Isa. lxxv. 4. {w} Geograph. l. 16. p. 523. {x} Clio, sive l. 1. c. 31. {y} T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 43. 1. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 10. fol. 198. 4. Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 13. sect. 2, 3.

[[@Amos 2:9]]Ver. [[9 >> Bible:Amos 2:9]]. *Yet destroyed I the Amorite before them*,.... Here the Lord by the prophet reckons up the many favours and blessings he had bestowed

upon Israel, which was an aggravation of their sins, and showed them to be guilty of great ingratitude, and a justification of him in his punishment of them he drove out the seven nations of Canaanites from before them, to make way for them, and destroyed them, of which the Amorite was a principal, and is here put for all the rest:

whose height [was] like the height of the cedars; being both tall of stature, and in great honour and dignity with the other nations, and in very opulent and flourishing circumstances:

and he was strong as the oaks: not only like the tall cedars of Lebanon for their height and largeness of stature, but like the sturdy oaks for the strength of their bodies, being of the race of the giants, Nu 13:28;

yet I destroyed his fruit from above, and his roots from beneath; that is, utterly destroyed him, root and branch, so that nothing of him remained; still persisting in the metaphor of a tree. Jarchi interprets it of their superior and inferior princes; but it seems best to understand it of children with their parents, the one being the fruit, the other the root; and, both being destroyed, there must be utter ruin.

[[@Amos 2:10]]Ver. [[10 >> Bible:Amos 2:10]]. ***Also I brought you up from the land of Egypt***,.... Where they were bond slaves, and in great affliction and distress, and unable to help themselves; but the Lord wrought deliverance for them, and brought them out of this house of bondage with a high hand and a mighty arm:

and led you forty years through the wilderness: going before them in a pillar of cloud by day, and in a pillar of fire by night; providing them with all things necessary, with food and raiment, and protecting them from all their enemies:

to possess the land of the Amorite; the whole land of Canaan, so called from a principal nation of it.

[[@Amos 2:11]]Ver. [[11 >> Bible:Amos 2:11]]. ***And I raised up of your sons for prophets***,.... Such as Moses, Joshua, and the seventy elders, and others; not only to foretell things to come, but to teach and instruct the people in the doctrines and duties of religion, and to warn them of their sins, and the danger of them:

and of your young men for Nazarites: as Samson, Samuel, and others; whose vow not only obliged them from shaving their hair, but to abstain from drinking wine, and eating grapes, which the youthful age is inclined unto; but such grace was given them, as enabled them to deny themselves sensual gratifications, and to be examples of piety and constant attendance on the service of God, and instructing the people. The Targum is,

"of your young men for teachers;"

these were the spiritual mercies, as the former were the temporal ones, the Lord bestowed on these people, for the truth of which he appeals to them:

[is it] not even thus, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord? can ye deny it? the thing was too notorious to be contradicted.

[[@Amos 2:12]]Ver. [[12 >> Bible:Amos 2:12]]. ***But ye gave the Nazarites wine to drink***,.... Contrary to their vow and calling, and in contempt of it, and to make them like themselves; they either persuaded them, or forced them to it:

and commanded the prophets, saying, prophesy not; hard and heavy things, judgments and denunciations of vengeance, only smooth things; by this authoritative language it appears that this is said of the rulers and governors of the people, as king, princes, and priests; see **Am 7:12**.

[[@Amos 2:13]]Ver. [[13 >> Bible:Amos 2:13]]. ***Behold, I are pressed under you***,.... With the weight of their sins, with which they had made him to serve, and had wearied him; his patience was quite wore out, he could bear them no longer:

as a cart is pressed [that is] full of sheaves; as a cart in harvest time, in which the sheaves of corn are carried home; when one sheaf is laid upon another, till they can lay no more, and the cart is loaded and overloaded with them, and ready to break, or be pressed into the earth with them: thus. Jehovah represents himself as loaded and burdened with the sins of these people, and therefore would visit for them, and inflict deserved punishment. Some render it actively, "behold, I press" {z}, or "am about to press your place, as a cart full of sheaves presseth" {a}; the horse or horses which draw it, especially the last; or the ground it goes upon; or as a cart stuck with iron spikes, and loaded with stones, being drawn over a corn floor, presses the full sheaves, and beats out the grain, which was their way of pressing it: so the Lord signifies he would afflict and distress this people, bring them into strait circumstances, by a close siege, and other judgments, which should ruin and destroy them; and which was first begun by Tiglathpileser king of Assyria, and finished by Shalmaneser, who carried away the ten tribes captive. So the Targum,

"behold, I bring distress upon you, and it shall straiten you in your place, as a cart is straitened which is loaded with sheaves."

{z} qyem "angustabo", Vatablus; "coarctans", Montanus; "arcto", Mercerus; "premo, coarctabo, angustis afficiam", Drusius; "pressurus sum", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Tarnovius; "arctaturus sum", Liveleus. {a} qyet "coarctares", Montanus; "premit", Junius & Tremellius; Piscator, Tarnovius.

[[@Amos 2:14]]Ver. [[14 >> Bible:Amos 2:14]]. ***Therefore the flight shall perish from the swift***,.... They should be so straitened and cooped up, and be so loaded with pressures, that those, as swift of foot as Asahel, should not be able to make their escape by fleeing:

and the strong shall not strengthen his force; should not increase it, or muster it up, and exert it to such a degree, as to be able to defend and secure himself from the enemy:

neither shall the mighty deliver himself; "his soul" or "life"; a soldier, a man of war, an expert and courageous officer at the head of his troop, or even the general of the army; see **Psalm 33:16**.

[[@Amos 2:15]]Ver. [[15 >> Bible:Amos 2:15]]. *Neither shall he stand that handleth the bow*,.... That is, at some distance, and can make use of his instruments of war afar off; yet will not think it safe to stand his ground, but will betake himself to his heels as fast as he can to save himself:

and [he that is] swift of foot shall not deliver [himself]; this is repeated, lest any should place confidence in their agility, and to show how complete and inevitable the affliction will be:

neither shall he that rideth the horse deliver himself; by fleeing on horseback, no more than he that is on foot; no ways that can be devised or thought on would preserve from this general calamity; see **Psalm 33:17**.

[[@Amos 2:16]]Ver. [[16 >> Bible:Amos 2:16]]. *And [he that is] courageous among the mighty*,.... Or "strong in his heart" {b}; one that is of a great heart, famous for courage and bravery, that excels in it among the mighty; the most valiant soldiers and officers:

shall flee away naked in that day: shall throw away his armour, nay, put off his clothes, as being both a hinderance to him in his flight; and that he may make the better speed:

saith the Lord: which is added to show the certainty of all this; it might be depended upon that so it would be, since the Lord God of truth had spoken it; and it was fulfilled about eighty years after this prophecy.

{b} wbl Uyma "fortis corde suo", Vatablus, Piscator; "fortis animo", Junius & Tremellius, Drusius; "validus corde suo", Mercerus; "qui corde firmo est", Cocceius.

[[@Amos 3]]

Chapter 3

INTRODUCTION TO AMOS 3

In this chapter the prophet goes on with his prophecy against Israel, whom God had highly favoured, and yet sinned against him, and therefore must expect to be punished by him; and the rather, since he and they were not agreed; and therefore there could be no communion between them, **Am 3:1**; and by various similes are set forth the cause of divine judgments, the certain design of them, and their continuance, till the end is answered; which should be attended to, since every thing of this kind is of God, who giving his prophets notice of it, they are under an absolute necessity of declaring it; nor should they be blamed for it, **Am 3:4**; and even the Heathen nations are appealed unto as witnesses of the sins of Israel, that caused such a denunciation of wrath; their tumults, oppression, injustice, violence, and robbery, **Am 3:9**; wherefore an adversary is threatened to be sent among them, that should utterly destroy them, so that few should escape, **Am 3:11**; particularly their idolatry and luxury seem to have been reigning sins, which had a great hand in bringing on their ruin, and for which the Lord would punish them, **Am 3:13**.

[[@Amos 3:1]]Ver. [[1 >> Bible:Amos 3:1]]. *Hear this word that the Lord hath spoken against you, O children of Israel*,.... The prophecy against Israel begins in the preceding

chapter, where notice is taken of their sins, at least some of them, and of their aggravated circumstances, and sure destruction; and here they are called upon to hearken and listen to what the Lord by his prophet had spoken, and was about to speak unto them; and to "receive" this word, as the Targum; to receive it as the word of God, and not men, and with all humility and reverence; and to take it, and apply it to themselves, to whom it justly belonged; and to make a proper use and improvement of it by humiliation and reformation. A word this was,

against the whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt; it was but a family that went down into Egypt, and, though it greatly increased there, it was no more when it was brought up from thence: a family under the peculiar care of Jehovah, as the bringing them out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, when greatly distressed there, abundantly shows; and which was a wonderful blessing and favour; and therefore often mentioned, and led on to many other blessings and mercies: a family which was the Lord's own, and therefore he had a right to chastise and correct them for their sins. It seems by this phrase, "the whole family", as if the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin were included: though the prophecy seems chiefly intended against the ten tribes, which went by the name of Israel, ever since the breach in Rehoboam's time, as distinct from Judah;

saying; as follows:

[[@Amos 3:2]]Ver. [[2 >> Bible:Amos 3:2]]. ***You only have I known of all the families of the earth***,.... All the families or nations of the earth, and all the inhabitants of it, are known by the Lord, as he is the omniscient God; but none had been known by him as a family, or a nation, with that love and affection as this family had been, or distinguished by his favours and blessings as they, not only temporal, but spiritual; besides the land of Canaan, and all the good things in it, they had the law of the Lord, his word, worship, and ordinances, among them; he chose them for himself above all people, and gave peculiar marks of his affection to them, and special instances of his goodness, and of his care over them, and concern for them; see **Deuteronomy 4:6**;

therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities; or "visit upon you" {c}; or "against you"; in a way of chastisement and correction; they were a family he had highly favoured, and yet departed from him; children he had brought up in a tender manner, and brought out of a most miserable condition, and yet rebelled against him; he had followed and loaded them with his benefits, and they had proved ungrateful to him; he had given them a revelation of his mind and will, and they had rejected it, and therefore knowing, and not doing it, were worthy of more stripes; their sins were more aggravated than others, being against goodness and mercy, light and knowledge; and therefore the Lord was determined to make an example of them; see **1 Peter 4:17**.

{c} Mkyale dqpā "visitabo super vos", V. L. Pagninus, Montanus; "visito", i.e. "visitare soleo", Mercerus; "super vobis", Cocceius; "contra vos", Piscator.

[[@Amos 3:3]]Ver. [[3 >> Bible:Amos 3:3]]. ***Can two walk together except they be agreed?*** Unless they meet together, and appoint time and place, when and where they shall set out, what road they will take, and whither they will go; without such consultation and agreement, it cannot be thought they should walk together; and not amicably, unless united in friendship, and are of the same affection to each other, and of the same sentiments one with another; or it

is much if they do not fall out by the way. The design of these words is to show, that without friendship there is no fellowship, and without concord no communion; as this is the case between man and man, so between God and man; and that Israel could not expect that God should walk with them, and show himself friendly to them, and continue his favours with them, when they walked contrary to him; when they were so disagreeable to him in their sentiments of religion, in their worship, and the rites of it, and in the whole of their conduct and behaviour. And to a spiritual walk with God, and communion with him, agreement is requisite. God and man were originally chief friends, but sin set them at variance; a reconciliation became necessary to their walking together again; which was set on foot, not by man, who had no inclination to it, nor knew how to go about it if he had, and much less able to effect it; but by the Lord, the offended party: it began in his thoughts, which were thoughts of peace; it was set on foot by him in the council of peace, and concluded in the covenant of peace; and his Son was sent to bring it about; and through his obedience, sufferings, and death, through his sacrifice and satisfaction, the agreement is made on the part of God, his justice is satisfied; but still it is necessary man should be agreed too; this is brought out by the Spirit of God, who shows the sinner the enmity of his mind, the sin and danger of it, slays this enmity, and puts in new principles of light, life, and love; when the soul is reconciled to God's way of salvation, and loves the Lord, and delights in him; and both being thus agreed, the one by the satisfaction of Christ, and the other by the Spirit of Christ, see **Romans 5:10**; they walk comfortably together: the saint walks with God, not only as in his sight and presence, but by faith, and in his fear, in the ways and ordinances of the Lord; and particularly is frequent in prayer and meditation, in which much of his walk with God lies: and God walks with him; he grants his gracious presence; manifests his love and favour to him; talks with him by the way; discloses the secrets of his heart; and indulges him with nearness and communion with him; but all is founded on mutual agreement. And so it must be between men and men, that walk in a religious way; regenerate and unregenerate persons cannot walk together, there being no concord, **2 Corinthians 6:14**; nor can all sorts of professors; they must agree in the way Christ, and in the fundamental principles of religion; and in worship, and the manner of it; and in all the ordinances of the Gospel, and the manner of administering them.

[[@Amos 3:4]]Ver. [[4 >> Bible:Amos 3:4]]. *Will a lion roar in the forest when he hath no prey?*.... He will not, unless he has it in his sight, or in his paws; he roars when he first sees it, whereby he terrifies the creature, that it cannot move till he comes up to it; and when he has got it in his paws, he roars over it, to invite others to partake with him. Now prophecy from the Lord is compared to the roaring of a lion, **Am 1:2**; and this is never in a way of judgment without a cause; the sin of men, or of a nation, which makes them a prey to the wrath and fury of God;

will a young lion cry, or "give forth his voice";

out of his den, if he have taken nothing? that is, if the old lion has taken nothing, and brought nothing unto him; which signifies the same as before; unless by the young lion is meant the prophets of the Lord, who never prophesy but when they have a commission from him, and a people are pointed out to them as the just prey of his wrath and vengeance. All the images here used are very natural; the lion is for the most part in woods and forests, hence called the "lion out of the forest", **Jer 5:6**; as he is by Theocritus {d}; where his voice is heard, but not unless he is in sight of his prey, or has got it, even though ever so hungry; but when he has it in view, he roars so terribly, that, as Basil {e} observes, many animals that

could escape him through their swiftness, yet are so frightened at his roaring, that they have no power to move; and they have their dens either in caves or in thickets, where are the she lioness and the young lions, to whom the prey is brought; see **Na 2:11**.

{d} ek drumoio lewn, Theocrit. Idyll. 1. {e} In Hexaemeron, Homil. 9.

[[@Amos 3:5]]Ver. [[5 >> Bible:Amos 3:5]]. ***Can a bird fall in a snare upon the earth, where no gin [is] for him?***.... No, there must be a snare set, or a bird can never be taken in it; and that is done, not by chance, but with the design of the fowler; yea, with the knowledge and will of God himself, Mt 10:29; the design of this is to show, that no judgment or affliction comes upon a people, or they into one, by chance, or without the appointment of God; they are his nets and snares, which he on purpose spreads and sets for persons, to take them in; and unless he did do so, they would not fall into any; see **Job 5:6**;

shall [one] take up a snare from the earth; the Targum adds, out of its time:

and have taken nothing at all? when men set a snare to catch anything, do they take it up before anything is caught? they do not; they let it stand till something is ensnared in it, and so their end answered, and then they take it up, and not before. And thus when God denounces or brings a judgment, or an affliction, upon a people, does he remove it before the end is answered by it? he does not; if the end is to bring men to a sense of sin, and humiliation for it; or to bring near to God who have been wandering from him; or to try their graces, or take away their sin; when such an end is answered, then, and not till then, is the snare taken up, or the affliction removed; tilt such an end is brought about, the distress is continued, or the threatening of it; and of this Israel is hereby assured.

[[@Amos 3:6]]Ver. [[6 >> Bible:Amos 3:6]]. ***Shall a trumpet be blown in the city,***.... Meaning not any trumpet blown, as the silver trumpet for the gathering of the people to worship, or the jubilee trumpet, which proclaimed liberty to them, or any other, expressive of joy and gladness; but the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war, or what is blown by the watchmen on the walls, descreying an enemy, or some danger, near:

and the people not be afraid? they must, they usually are, lest their lives, and their children's, should be taken away, and their substance become a prey to the enemy: or, "and the people not run together" {f}; into some one place for shelter, or to consult together how to provide for their safety, and secure themselves from danger. So when the prophets of the Lord, by his order, lift up their voice like a trumpet, to show his people their transgressions; or when, as watchmen, they blow the trumpet, to give notice of approaching danger; can they hear such denunciations of his wrath for their sins, and not tremble at them, or not take some ways and methods to escape it?

shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done [it]? which is not to be understood of the evil of sin, of which God is not the author, it being contrary to his nature and will; and though he permits it to be done by others, yet he never does it himself, nor so much as tempts men to it, **Jas 1:13**; unless the words should be rendered, as they may be, "shall there be evil in a city, and shall not the Lord do" or "work" {g}? shall sin be committed in a city, all sorts of sin, in the most bold and extravagant manner, and will not the Lord do something to show his resentment of it? is it not time for him to arise and work for his name's sake? will he not visit for these things, and be avenged on such a city, and the inhabitants of it? but this may be

interpreted of the evil of affliction or judgment; which, wherever it comes, is by the order and appointment of God, and is inflicted by him; thus evil, as well as good, comes out of the mouth and hand of the most High; and he creates the evil of adversity, as well as makes peace and prosperity; see **Job 2:10**.

{f} wdrxy al "non accurrit", Drusius, Tarnovius. {g} hve al hwhyw "[and] shall not the Lord do [somewhat]?" margin of our Bibles.

[[@Amos 3:7]]Ver. [[7 >> Bible:Amos 3:7]]. ***Surely the Lord God will do nothing***,.... In the world, in a nation or city; no remarkable event has happened, or shall happen, to the sons of men:

but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets; what he willed and determined to do, which was a secret in his own breast, till revealed; and this generally, and for the most part, he makes known to those that fear and serve him; and especially to whom he employs in public service, as his prophets and ministers, previous to his accomplishment of it: thus he revealed to Noah the drowning of the old world by the flood; to Abraham the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah; and to the same servant and friend of his the affliction of his posterity four hundred years in a strange land, and then to be brought out with great substance; to Abijah the Shilonite the rending of ten tribes from the house of David; to Jeremiah the seventy years' captivity of the Jews in Babylon; to Isaiah their deliverance from thence, through Cyrus by name; to Daniel the four monarchies, the nature, rise, and fall of them; and to John, the disciple of Christ, all the material things that should come to pass, relating to the church and world, from the first times of the Gospel to the second coming of Christ; which that book is a revelation of that bears that name; see **Genesis 18:17**; and so that grand affair, which God has brought about in the world, the salvation of his people by his Son, which was a secret hid in his heart before the world began, this he revealed to his servants before it was effected; not only the scheme of it, but the author of it, whom he very early gave notice of; and who was spoken of by the mouth of all the prophets, from the beginning of the world; declaring who and what he was, the Son of God; that he should be incarnate, and born of a virgin; when he should appear, and where, and in what part of the world; also in what way and manner he should obtain salvation, by his obedience and sufferings; and all the circumstances relating thereunto are most minutely and exactly declared by him. Yea, God reveals unto his saints in common the secret of his purposes, respecting their election, redemption, and regeneration, which is made known in the effectual calling; and of the blessings of his grace in the covenant, and also of his providences; and of his love, grace, and mercy; and of his Gospel, and the mysteries of it; thus he deals with them as his friends, rather than as his servants; see

Psalm 25:14.

[[@Amos 3:8]]Ver. [[8 >> Bible:Amos 3:8]]. ***The lion hath roared, who will not fear?***.... Amos said this from his own experience, who, having been a herdsman in the wilderness of Tekoa, had often heard a lion roar, which had put him into a panic, both for himself, and the cattle he kept; the figure is explained in the next clause:

the Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy? whether it be to foretell future events, which the Lord has made known shall come to pass; or to preach the word, which is to

prophesy to edification, to exhortation, and comfort, **1 Corinthians 14:3**; or to perform the more private exercises of religion, as singing of psalms, praying, &c. **1Ch 25:1**; these things who can forbear doing, to whom the Lord has spoken either in a dream or vision, or in his word, and by his Spirit; and to whom he has given a call and commissions, and gifts and graces, qualifying them for such service? who that has the fear of God in his heart, and his glory in view, and the good of others, that can refrain from it? nay, it is of dangerous consequence to refuse it; for if the roaring of a lion is so terrible, and if the wrath of an earthly king is as the roaring of a lion, much more the wrath and displeasure of the King of kings. Jonah declined prophesying when the Lord spoke to him, but what was the consequence of it? the prophet by this seems to justify himself in prophesying, and that he ought not to be blamed for it, seeing the Lord had given him the word, and therefore he ought to publish it. This may be particularly applied to the ministers of the word, who have a call, a charge and gifts from Christ, and on whom there is a necessity laid to preach the Gospel; and who should not shut, to declare it on any account; nor can they, who have it in their hearts, and as fire in their bones; who have seen and heard, and handled of the word of life, let what will be the consequence of it; see **Psalms 68:11**.

[[@Amos 3:9]]Ver. [[9 >> Bible:Amos 3:9]]. ***Publish in the palaces at Ashdod, and in the palaces in the land of Egypt***,.... This is spoken to the prophets, to publish and declare in all the courts of the Philistines and Egyptians, and among all the princes and great men therein, the sins of the people of Israel, and the punishment God threatened them with; and let them, even these very Heathens, judge whether there was not a just proportion between them, and whether their sins did not deserve such calamities to be brought upon them, the Lord by his prophets had denounced;

and say, assemble yourselves on the mountains of Samaria; the metropolis of the ten tribes, **Isa 7:9**; and which was built upon a mountain, and several others were about it, and joined to it; where these princes of Ashdod or Azotus in Palestine, and of Egypt, are called to leave their courts, and meet together, to behold the iniquities committed by Israel, and to sit in judgment upon them, and declare their sense of what was just and fitting to be done to such a people:

and behold the great tumults in the midst thereof; the riots of its inhabitants, the noise of the mob committing all manner of outrages and wickedness:

and the oppressed in the midst thereof; the poor, the fatherless, and the widow, injured in their persons and properties, plundered of their substance, or defrauded of it.

[[@Amos 3:10]]Ver. [[10 >> Bible:Amos 3:10]]. ***For they know not to do right, saith the Lord***,.... What is just and right between man and man, no, not in one single instance; they did not regard it, or advert to it; they were under no concern about it; and were so much under the power of their lusts, that they knew not how to do it; and had used themselves so long to such wicked and unjust ways, that they had lost at least the practical knowledge of doing justice; they knew what was right in the theory, but not in the practice; bribes blinded their eyes; for this seems to design judges, civil magistrates, such who had the administration of justice and the execution Of the laws in their hands. The Targum is,

"they know not to execute the law;"

see **Jer 4:22**;

who store up violence and robbery in their palaces; treasured up riches in their palaces, gotten in a violent way, by oppression and injustice; and which was no other, nor better, than robbery. This shows that persons in power and authority, that lived in palaces, in great splendour and grandeur, are here meant.

[[@Amos 3:11]]Ver. [[11 >> Bible:Amos 3:11]]. **Therefore thus saith the Lord God**,.... Because of these tumults and riots, oppression and injustice, violence and robbery:

an adversary there [shall be] even round about the land: not Tyre, as Theodoret renders the word; but the king of Assyria, who invaded the land of Israel in the days of Hoshea, took Samaria, and carried Israel captive, and placed them in foreign countries, 2Ki 17:6;

and he shall bring down thy strength from thee; take away their riches, demolish their fortresses, and strip them of everything in which they put their confidence:

and thy palaces shall be spoiled; plundered of the treasures laid up in them, and pulled down to the ground; and a just retaliation this for their being the repositories of ill gotten substance and wealth.

[[@Amos 3:12]]Ver. [[12 >> Bible:Amos 3:12]]. **Thus saith the Lord, as the shepherd taketh out of the mouth of the lion**,.... Or what the lion has left, to show to his master that it had been seized and torn by a beast of prey; for otherwise it is a most daring thing, and not usual, for a shepherd to take anything out of a lion's mouth, though David did: and here it is said to be not a whole sheep, or a lamb, but

two legs, or a piece of an ear; the body of the creature being devoured by the lion, only some offal left he cared not for; two shanks of the legs that had no flesh upon them, and the gristle of the ear, as the Targum; having satisfied his hunger with the best of it: signifying hereby that only a few of the Israelites should escape the enemy, and those poor and insignificant, he made no account of; and this in a miraculous manner, it being like taking anything out of the mouth of a lion, to which a powerful enemy is compared, and particularly the king of Assyria, Jer 50:17;

so shall the children of Israel be taken out that dwell in Samaria; only a few of them, and those the poorest; and their escape will be next to a miracle, when the city will be taken; even such as are weak and sickly, or faint hearted: being

in a corner of a bed; who either through sickness lie there, or slothfulness, danger being near; or through poverty, having only a corner or a piece of a bed to lie on; or through cowardice they hid themselves in one part of it:

and in Damascus [in] a couch; or "in a bed of Damascus" {h}; the chief city in Syria, taken much about the same time as Samaria was; and where some of the Israelites might betake themselves, and think themselves secure as persons laid on a couch: or at the bed's feet {i}, as some render it; or "in a corner of a couch" {k}, as before. The Targum paraphrases it,

"that dwell in Samaria, in the strength of power, trusting in Damascus."

{h} vre qvmdb "in sponda Damasci", Tigurine version; "in grabbato Damasci", so some in Drusius; "in lectis Damascenis", Castalio; so Abendana. {i} "In crure spondae", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Tarnovius. {k} "Angulo grabati", Pagninus; "in angulo strati", Montanus. So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 75. 1.

[[@Amos 3:13]]Ver. [[13 >> Bible:Amos 3:13]]. **Hear ye, and testify in the house of Jacob**,.... The prophets and priests, whose business it was to speak to the people from the Lord, and declare his will to them, and to admonish them of their sin and danger, are here called upon to hearken to what the Lord was about to say, and to testify and publish it to the people of Israel, the posterity of Jacob, though sadly degenerated:

saith the Lord God, the God of hosts; the eternal Jehovah, the Being of beings, the God of the whole earth, the God of the armies above and below; and, being so great, ought to be heard with the greatest attention and reverence in what follows.

[[@Amos 3:14]]Ver. [[14 >> Bible:Amos 3:14]]. **That in the day that I shall visit the transgressions of Israel upon him**,.... The three or four mentioned in the preceding chapter, the great multitude of them, their profaneness, uncleanness, and luxury, their injustice and oppression of the poor; when he should visit and punish for these sins, as he would by the hand of the Assyrian, he would not forget their idolatry; though no notice is taken of this before, in the appeal to the Heathen princes, who were likewise guilty of it:

I will also visit the altars of Bethel; where one of the calves Jeroboam made was set up and worshipped; and where was an altar erected, and sacrifice offered on it, 1Ki 12:28; and here the plural number is put for the singular; though it may be, that in process of time more altars might be set up as they increased in idolatry, and as seems from **Ho 8:11**; and now the Lord would show his resentment at them, and punish those that worshipped and sacrificed there. So the Targum,

"that worship at the altars in Bethel;"

and the horns of the altar shall be cut off, and fall to the ground; for it seems this altar was made after the form of that at Jerusalem, with four horns at the four corners of it; and which were reckoned the more principal parts of it, and the more sacred, where the blood of the sacrifices was poured, and to which persons in distress fled and laid hold of for refuge; but now these should be of no use unto them, since they would be entirely demolished by the enemy, and laid level with the ground.

[[@Amos 3:15]]Ver. [[15 >> Bible:Amos 3:15]]. **And I will smite the winter house with the summer house**,.... Both the one and, the other shall fall to the ground, being beat down by the enemy, or shook and made to fall by the earthquake predicted, **Am 1:1**; as Kimchi thinks: kings and great personages had houses in the city in the winter season, in which they lived for warmth; and others in the country in the summertime, to which they retired for the benefit of the air; or they had, in one and the same house, a summer and a winter parlour; see **Jud 3:20**; it signifies that the destruction should reach city and country, and deprive them of what was for their comfort and pleasure:

and the houses of ivory shall perish; or "of the tooth" {l}; the elephant's tooth, of which ivory is made. Ahab made a house of ivory; and perhaps more were made by others afterwards, following his example, 1Ki 22:39; not that these houses were made wholly of ivory, only "covered" with it, as the Targum here paraphrases it; or they were cieled or wainscotted with it, or were inlaid and covered with it, and were reckoned very curious work; but should be demolished, and perish in the general ruin:

and the great houses shall have an end, saith the Lord; the houses of princes, nobles, and other persons of figure and distinction; houses great in building, or many in number, as Kimchi observes, and as the word {m} will bear to be rendered; these, which the builders and owners of them thought would have continued many ages, and have perpetuated their names to posterity, should now be thrown down, and be no more; of which they might assure themselves, since the Lord had said it.

{l} Nvh ytb "domus dentis", Montanus, Mercerus, Vatablus. {m} Mybr Mytb "aedes multi", V. L. "domus multae", Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus, Cocceius, Burkus.

[[@Amos 4]]

Chapter 4

INTRODUCTION TO AMOS 4

In this chapter, the great ones, or the people of Israel, are threatened with calamities for their oppression of the poor, **Am 4:1**; and in an ironic manner are reproved for their idolatry, **Am 4:4**; then follows an enumeration of several judgments that had been upon them, yet had had no effect on them, to bring them to repentance, nor even mercies, **Am 4:6**; and notwithstanding all this, in a wonderful gracious manner, they are called upon to prepare to meet their God, who is described by his power, greatness, and goodness, **Am 4:12**.

[[@Amos 4:1]]Ver. [[1 >> Bible:Amos 4:1]]. *Hear this word, ye kine of Bashan*,.... Or "cows of Bashan" {n}; a country beyond Jordan, inhabited by the tribes of Gad and Reuben, and the half tribe of Manasseh, very fruitful of pasturage, and where abundance of fat cattle were brought up; to whom persons of distinction, and of the first rank, are here compared. Aben Ezra, Jarchi, and Kimchi, interpret them of the wives of the king, princes, ministers of state, and great men; and so it may be thought that Amos, a herdsman, in his rustic manner, compliments the court ladies with this epithet, for their plumpness, wantonness, and petulancy. Though it may be the princes and great men themselves may be rather intended, and be so called for their effeminacy, and perhaps with some regard to the calves they worshipped; and chiefly because being fat and flourishing, and abounding with wealth and riches, they became wanton and mischievous; like fat cattle, broke down their fences, and would be under no restraint of the laws of God and man; entered into their neighbours' fields, seized on their property, and spoiled them of it. So the Targum paraphrases it,

"ye rich of substance."

In like manner the principal men among the Jews, in the times of Christ, are called bulls of Bashan, **Psalms 22:12**;

that [are] in the mountains of Samaria; like cattle grazing on a mountain; the metaphor is still continued: Samaria was the principal city of Ephraim, the metropolis of the ten tribes, **Isa 7:9**; situated on a mountain; Mr. Maundrell {o} says, upon a long mount, of an oval figure, having first a fruitful valley, and then a ring of hills running about it. Here the kings of Israel had their palace, and kept their court, and where their princes and nobles resided. Ahab is said to be king of Samaria, **1Ki 21:1**;

which oppress the poor, which crush the needy; by laying heavy taxes upon them; exacting more of them than they are able to pay; lessening their wages for work done, or withholding it from them; or by taking from them that little they have, and so reducing them to the utmost extremity, and refusing to do them justice in courts of judicature:

which say to their masters, bring, and let us drink; Kimchi, who interprets these words of the wives of great men, supposes their husbands are here addressed, who are, and acknowledged to be, their masters or lords; see **1 Peter 3:6**; whom they call upon to bring them money taken from the poor, or for which they have sold them, that they may have wherewith to eat and drink, fare sumptuously, and live in a grand manner, feasting themselves and their visitors: or these are the words of inferior officers to superior ones, desiring they might have leave to pillage the poor, that so they might live in a more gay and splendid manner, and in rioting and drunkenness, in chambering and wantonness. So the Targum,

"give us power, that we may spoil it."

Or rather these words are directed to the masters of the poor, who had power over them, had them in their clutches, in whose debt they were; or they had something against them, and therefore these corrupt judges, and wicked magistrates, desire they might be brought before them; who for a bribe would give the cause against them, right or wrong, so long as they got something to feast themselves with; or they are spoken by the rich, to the masters of the poor, to whom they had sold them, to bring them the purchase money, that they might indulge and gratify their sensual appetites; see **Am 2:6**.

{n} Nvbh twrp "vaccae Basan", Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Vatablus, Drusius, Mercerus, Grotius, Cocceius. {o} Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem, p. 59. Ed. 7.

[[@Amos 4:2]]Ver. [[2 >> Bible:Amos 4:2]]. **The Lord God hath sworn by his holiness**,.... That is, by himself, holiness being his nature, and an essential attribute of his; this is done to ascertain the truth of what is after said, and that men may be assured of the certain performance of it. Some render it, "by his holy place"; and interpret it of heaven; so Aben Ezra and Kimchi; which is not likely; see **Mt 5:34**. The Targum is,

"the Lord God hath sworn by his word in his holiness;"

that, lo, the days shall come upon you; speedily, swiftly, and at an unawares:

that he will take you away with hooks, and your posterity with fish hooks; the enemy, the king of Assyria, or God by him, would take them out of their own land, as fish out of water, out of their own element, and carry them captive into a strange land, both them and their posterity; and which should be as easily done as fish are taken with the hook, even though they were as the kine of Bashan. The word for fish hooks signifies "thorns" {p}, and is by some so rendered; these perhaps being used in angling, before iron hooks were invented. The Targum is,

"that people shall take you away on their shields, and your daughters in fishermen's {q} boats;"

see Jer 16:16.

{p} twryob "spinis", Mercerus, Liveleus, Drusius, Grotius. {q} So it is interpreted by R. Sol Urbin Ohel Moed, fol. 65. 2. likewise Elias says the word signifies a small ship, or a boat that is in a large ship, Tishbi, p. 59. So Vatablus interprets it, "scaphas piscatorias, [sive] cymbas"; and some in Munster.

[[@Amos 4:3]]Ver. [[3 >> Bible:Amos 4:3]]. *And ye shall go out at the breaches*,.... Not at the gates of the city, as they had used to do at pleasure; but at the breaches of the walls of it, made by the enemy, in order to make their escape, if possible; they who had broke down the fences of law and justice, and injured the poor and needy, shall now have the walls of their city broken down and they themselves exposed to the most imminent danger, and glad to get out of them to save their lives:

every [cow] at that [which is] before her; every woman, as Jarchi and Kimchi; or every great person, compared to the kine of Bashan, shall make up as fast as he can to the breach before him, to get out; shall follow one another as quick as they can, and clamber on one another's backs, as such cattle do, to get out first; which shows the hurry and confusion they should be in, upon the taking of their city Samaria:

and ye shall cast [them] into the palace, saith the Lord; either their children, or their substance, which they shall cast into the royal palace, or fort, or citadel, for safety. Some render it, "ye shall cast yourselves"; so Abarbinel; that is, such as could not get out at the breaches should betake themselves to the palace or fort for their security. The Targum of the whole is,

"and they shall break down the wall upon you, and bring you out, gathered everyone before him, and carry you beyond the mountains of Armenia."

And so some others, taking it to be the name of a place, render it, "ye shall be cast into Armon", or Mona; which Bochart {r} suspects to be the same with Minni, mentioned with Ararat, a mountain in Armenia, Jer 51:27.

{r} Geograph. Sacr. l. 1. c. 3. col. 20.

[[@Amos 4:4]]Ver. [[4 >> Bible:Amos 4:4]]. *Come to Bethel and transgress*,.... and what follows, are ironic and sarcastic speeches, not giving liberty to sin, but in this way reproving for it: Bethel was one of the places where the calves were placed and worshipped: and here they are bid to go thither, and go on with and continue in their idolatrous worship, by which they transgressed the law of God, and mark what would be the issue of it. The sense is the same with **Ecclesiastes 11:9**; see **Eze 20:29**;

at Gilgal multiply transgression; that is, multiply acts of idolatry: Gilgal was a place where high places and altars were erected, and idols worshipped; as it had formerly been a place of religious worship of the true God, the ten tribes made use of it in the times of their apostasy for idolatrous worship; see **Ho 4:15**;

and bring your sacrifices every morning; and offer them to your idols, as you were wont formerly to offer them unto the true God, according to the law of Moses, Ex 29:38;

[and] your tithes after three years; the third year after the sabbatical year was the year of tithing; and after the tithe of the increase of the fruits of the earth, there was "maaser sheni", the second tithe, the same with "maaser ani", the poor's tithe, which was given to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless; and the widow, to eat with them, **Deuteronomy 14:22**; and this they are sarcastically bid to observe in their idolatrous way. It is, in the Hebrew text, "after three days"; and so the Targum,

"your tithes in three days;"

days being put for years, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe. It may be rendered, "after three years of days" {s}; three complete years.

{s} Mymy tvlvl "post tres [annos] dierum", Piscator.

[[@Amos 4:5]]Ver. [[5 >> Bible:Amos 4:5]]. *And offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven*,.... Which some observe was contrary to the law, which forbids all leaven in a meat offering; or "burning" it in any offering, **Le 2:11**; which the word {t} here used suggests was done by these idolaters, as well as eaten by them, their priests not liking to eat unleavened bread; but; though it was forbidden in the meat offering, was allowed, yea, ordered, with the sacrifice of thanksgiving, **Le 7:13**. So Abarbinel understands it here, as what was according, to law, but ironically commanded to be offered to idols:

and proclaim [and] publish the free offerings; let all know of them when you make your freewill offerings, and invite them to partake of them:

for this liketh you, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord God; or ye love to offer such sacrifices to your idols, rather than to the Lord God; preferring these to him, and delighting more in the worship of them than of him.

{t} rjq "incendendo", Munster, Tigurine version; "incendito incensum", Vatablus.

[[@Amos 4:6]]Ver. [[6 >> Bible:Amos 4:6]]. *And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities*,.... Meaning a famine, having no food to fowl them with, or to stick in them. This was not the famine in Samaria, **2Ki 6:25**; for that was only in that city, and for a short time, while besieged; whereas this was in all the cities in Israel; rather therefore it designs the famine predicted by Elisha, which should be upon the land for seven years, **2Ki 8:1**;

and want of bread in all your places: this is the same with the former clause, and explains it, and still makes the famine more general, not only in their cities, but in all their places of abode, their towns and villages:

yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord; this judgment had no influence upon them, to bring them to a sense of their evils, particularly their idolatry, and to repentance them, and to reclaim them from them, and return them to the Lord, and to his worship, as the Targum paraphrases it.

[[@Amos 4:7]]Ver. [[7 >> Bible:Amos 4:7]]. ***And also I have withholden the rain from you***,.... As he did for the space of three years successively in the days of Ahab, as predicted by Elijah, 1Ki 17:1; the consequences of which are very bad to men and beast, and bring on a scarcity of food for both, and a famine if long withheld:

when [there were] yet three months to the harvest; that is, three months before the harvest, as Jarchi; when, as Kimchi observes, there was need of rain: this was the latter rain which was usually given and expected about this time, and on which the goodness of the crop, and so of the harvest, greatly depended; these three months before barley harvest were December, January, and February, that being in March; and before the wheat harvest, February, March, and April, that being in May usually:

and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city; so that it might appear to be not by the course of nature, or through the influence of the planets, or by chance; but was according to the direction of divine Providence, the hand of God was manifestly in it: yea,

one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered; one piece of ground or field had a plentiful shower on it, whereby it became fruitful; and another field or close on the other side of the hedge or partition had none, whereby what did spring up withered away and came to nothing: or "one inheritance" {u}, or farm, as some render it; one man's estate was well watered with rain from heaven, and brought forth much fruit; and another man's estate, for want of it, was barren, and brought forth nothing: thus God was pleased to do in his providence, to show his sovereignty, and to chastise men for their sins; and in such a manner as that they might, if not blind easily perceive his hand in it.

{u} hqlx "fundus", Mercerus, Vatablus; "hereditas", Targum.

[[@Amos 4:8]]Ver. [[8 >> Bible:Amos 4:8]]. ***So two [or] three cities wandered unto one city, to drink water***,.... Two or three cities, that is, the inhabitants of them, being without water, went up and down in quest of any city or place where they could find water for themselves and cattle to drink:

but they were not satisfied; could not get enough for their present use and much less to carry back with them to supply them for any length of time; such a scarcity there was of it in other parts; see 1Ki 18:5;

yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord; this had no more effect upon them than the other to relinquish their former courses, and return unto the Lord by humiliation and repentance.

[[@Amos 4:9]]Ver. [[9 >> Bible:Amos 4:9]]. ***I have smitten you with blasting and mildew***,.... "Blasting" is what we commonly call "blights", generally occasioned by an east wind; and so Kimchi interprets the word here used; and the Vulgate Latin version renders it, "a burning wind"; which causes the buds and leaves of trees to shrivel up as if they were burnt with fire. "Mildew" is a kind of clammy dew, which falling upon corn, &c. corrupts and destroys by its moisture; and is a kind of jaundice to the fruits of the earth; and has its name as that, from yellowness, in the Hebrew language: when the Lord is said to smite them with

these the sense is, that he sent these upon the fruits of their gardens, fields and vineyards, which consumed them:

when your gardens and your vineyards and your fig trees and your olive trees increased, the palmer worm devoured [them]; just when they were budding and blossoming, and bringing forth fruit; and so what the blasting and mildew did not consume, that the palmer worm, a kind of locust, did; which has its name from its biting and cutting off the leaves and branches of trees, as of those mentioned vines, olives and fig trees, with which the land of Canaan abounded, the cutting off which was a great calamity. The Targum is,

"the multitude of your gardens, &c. the palmer worm hath eaten:"

yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord; this dispensation of Providence was also without its desired fruit and effect;

See Gill on "Am 4:6".

[[@Amos 4:10]]Ver. [[10 >> Bible:Amos 4:10]]. ***I have sent among you the pestilence, after the manner of Egypt,***.... Like that which was sent among the firstborn of Egypt, and cut them off in one night; or when in the way of Egypt, as the Targum; either as in the wilderness, when they came out of Egypt, so Jarchi interprets it; see Nu 16:46; or the Lord sent the pestilence as they went in the way to Egypt for help and assistance, or for shelter, for food in time of famine; for they went thither, as Kimchi says, because of the famine, to fetch food, from thence; and this was displeasing to the Lord, and he sent the plague among them, which cut them off in the way:

your young men have I slain with the sword; of the enemy in battle; or as they were in the way to Egypt, being sent there to fetch food, but were intercepted by the enemy:

and have taken away your horses; on which they rode to Egypt on the above errand; or rather which they brought up from thence, contrary to the command of God:

and have made the stink of your camps to come up unto your nostrils; such numbers of their armies being slain, and these lying unburied, the smell of them was very noisome:

yet have ye not returned unto me saith the Lord; still they continued obstinate and impenitent; See Gill on "Am 4:6".

[[@Amos 4:11]]Ver. [[11 >> Bible:Amos 4:11]]. ***I have overthrown [some] of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah,***.... Either their houses were burnt, or their bodies consumed by fire from heaven, with lightning; not whole cities, but the habitations of some particular persons, or they themselves:

and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning; some escaped such an awful calamity, their houses were not consumed, while others were; and their persons were safe, while others, just by them, were struck dead at once:

yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord; neither the judgments of God on themselves and others had any effect upon them to humble and reclaim them: such dispensations, without the grace of God is exerted, rather harden than soften; and, instead of

bringing men to repentance, cause them to blaspheme; see **Re 16:8**; nor will the mercy and goodness of God, which should lead persons to repentance, attain that end, unless accompanied with the Spirit and grace of God; who, notwithstanding such mercies and deliverances, will remain senseless, stupid obdurate, and impenitent; see **Re 9:20**.

[[@Amos 4:12]]Ver. [[12 >> Bible:Amos 4:12]]. *Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel*,.... What he would do is not expressly and particularly said; it is commonly understood to be something in a way of judgment, and worse than what he had done, since they had no effect upon them; or these things should be done over again, until an utter end was made of them; or the reference is to **Am 3:11**; and the following words are usually interpreted, either, ironically, since the Lord was coming forth as an enemy to issue the controversy with them; they are called upon to meet, him in a hostile way, and muster up all their forces, exert all their power and strength, and make use of their best weapons and military skill, and see what would be the consequence of all this; feeble worms set in opposition to the mighty God; thorns and briers he can easily go through, and burn up quickly: or else they are seriously addressed, and exhorted to meet the Lord in the way of his judgments, by humiliation, repentance, and reformation; not knowing but that after all he may be gracious and merciful to them, and turn away the fierceness of his anger from them; see **Am 5:15**; but I rather think the words are a promise or intimation of doing something to Israel in a way of special grace and kindness, notwithstanding their conduct and behaviour, and the ineffectualness both of judgments and providential mercies; for the words may be rendered, as the same particle should be in **Ho 2:14**; "notwithstanding", or "nevertheless, thus will I do unto thee" {w}; what I have from all eternity purposed and resolved to do, and what I have promised again and again, by the mouth of all the holy prophets, from the beginning of the world, I would do; namely, send my Son to be thy Saviour and Redeemer:

[and] because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel; the Messiah that was then to come was God, and so equal to the work of redemption and salvation he was to do; and the God of spiritual and mystical Israel, even all the elect, Jews and Gentiles, to be redeemed by him; was to be their Immanuel, God in their nature, and therefore to be met with the utmost joy and pleasure; see **Zec 9:9**; for this meeting him is not to be understood in a hostile way, and as spoken ironically to the enemies of Christ to oppose him, encounter with him, and mark the issue of it, who in time would cause them to be brought before him and slain, as some interpret the words; but in a friendly manner, as he was met by those that were waiting for his coming, such as Simeon and others; and by those John the Baptist called upon to prepare the way of the Lord; and as he was by his own disciples, who embraced him by faith, received him with joy, and left all and followed him; and as all such are prepared to meet him who are made truly sensible of sin, and of their own righteousness as insufficient to justify from it, and have seen the glory, fulness, and suitableness of his salvation. Christ is to be met with in his house and ordinances; and men are prepared for it when the desires of their hearts are towards him, and their graces are exercised on him; which preparation is from himself: he will be met at his second coming by his spiritual Israel; and they will be prepared for it who believe it, love it, and long for it; have their loins girt, and their lights burning, and they waiting for their Lord's coming; see **Mt 25:1**; and so at the hour of death, which is the day of the Lord; a preparation and readiness for which lies not in external humiliation, outward reformation, a moral righteousness, or a bare profession of religion, and submission to ordinances; but in regeneration, in faith in Christ, and spiritual knowledge of him; in a being washed in his blood, and clothed with his righteousness; for which readiness all truly sensible sinners will be concerned, and which is all from the grace of God; see

Mt 24:43. The Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read it, "prepare to call upon thy God"; and the Targum paraphrases it,

"to receive the doctrine of the law of thy God;"

rather the doctrine of the Gospel; but the former sense is best; for the confirmation of which it may be observed, that when God is said to do a thing to any, it is usually in a way of grace; and that when preparation is made to meet a divine Person, it is always meant of the Son of God; and that it is a common thing in prophecy, that when the Lord is threatening men with his judgments, to throw in a promise or prophecy of the Messiah, for the comfort of his people.

{w} Nkl "nihilominus tamen". Vid. Noldium, p. 507.

[[@Amos 4:13]]Ver. [[13 >> Bible:Amos 4:13]]. *For, lo, he that formeth the mountains,....* These words are a description of the glorious Person, "thy God" and Saviour, to be met; he is the Creator of all things, that formed the mountains, and so was before them, as in **Proverbs 8:25**; and able to surmount and remove all mountains of difficulties that lay in his way of working out salvation for his people:

and createth the wind; or "spirit"; not the Holy Spirit, which is uncreated; but either angels, whom he makes spirits; or the spirit and soul of man he is the Creator of; or rather the natural wind is meant, which is his creature, he holds in his fists, restrains and commands, at his pleasure, **Mt 8:26**;

and declareth unto man what [is] his thought; not what is man's thought, though he knows what is in man without any information, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, and can reveal them to men, and convince them that he knows them, **Mt 9:4**; but rather the thought of God, the meditation of his heart, concerning the salvation of men; his thoughts of peace, which are the deep things of God, and which Christ, lying in the bosom of his Father, was privy to, and has declared, **Joh 1:18**. The Septuagint and Arabic versions, reading the words wrong, render them, "declaring to men his Christ"; which, though true of God, is not the sense of this clause. The Targum is,

"what are his works {x}?"

his works of creation, providence, redemption, and grace:

that maketh the morning darkness; or "darkness morning", or "the morning [out of] darkness" {y}; being the dayspring from on high, the morning star, the sun of righteousness, that, rising, made the Gospel day, after a long night of Jewish and Gentile darkness; and who made the same dispensation a morning to one, and darkness to another, **Joh 9:39**. The Septuagint version is, "making the morning and the cloud"; the Vulgate Latin version, "making the morning cloud"; his coming was as the morning, **Ho 6:3**;

and treadeth upon the high places of the earth; the land of Israel, which is Immanuel's land, is said by the Jews to be higher than other lands; Jerusalem higher than any part of Judea, and the mountain the temple was built on higher than Jerusalem: here Christ trod in the days of his flesh, and from the mount of Olives ascended to heaven, after he had trampled upon and spoiled principalities and powers, spiritual wickednesses in high places, and when he led

captivity captive. Jarchi interprets it of humbling the mighty and proud, who are compared to the high places of the earth. The Targum is,

"to declared to men what are his works, to prepare light for the righteous as the morning light, who goes and prepares darkness for earth;"

the Lord, the God of hosts, [is] his name; he is the Jehovah, the Lord our righteousness, the God and Governor of the armies of heaven the hosts of angels, and to whom all creatures on earth are subject; all power in heaven and earth belongs unto him; this is Israel's God, his Redeemer and Saviour he is called upon to prepare to meet.

{x} So Kimchi and R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 4. 5. {y} hpye rxv hvwe "faciens obscuritatem auroram", Drusius.

[[@Amos 5]]

Chapter 5

INTRODUCTION TO AMOS 5

In this chapter the prophet exhorts Israel to hear his lamentation over them for their impending ruin, **Am 5:1**; nevertheless to seek the Lord, and all that is good; to forsake their idols, and repent of their sins, in hopes of finding mercy, and living comfortably; or otherwise they must expect the wrath of God for their iniquities, especially their oppression of the poor, **Am 5:4**; otherwise it would be a time of weeping and wailing, of darkness and distress, however they might harden or flatter themselves, or make a jest of it, **Am 5:16**; for all their sacrifices and ceremonial worship would signify nothing, so long as they continued their idolatry with them **Am 5:21**; and therefore should surely go into captivity, **Am 5:27**.

[[@Amos 5:1]]Ver. [[1 >> Bible:Amos 5:1]]. *Hear ye the word which I take up against you*,.... And which was not his own word, but the word of the Lord; and which he took up, by his direction as a heavy burden as some prophecies are called, and this was; and which, though against them, a reproof for their sins, and denunciation of punishment for them, yet was to be heard; for every word of God is pure, and to be hearkened to, whether for us or against us; since the whole is profitable, either for doctrine and instruction in righteousness, or for reproof and correction. It may be rendered, "which I take up concerning you", or "over you" {z}:

[even] a lamentation, O house of Israel; a mournful ditty, an elegiac song over the house of Israel, now expiring, and as it were dead. This word was like Ezekiel's roll, in which were written "lamentation, and mourning, and woe", **Eze 2:10**; full of mournful matter, misery, and distress, as follows:

{z} Mkyle "de vobis", Tigurine version, Mercerus, Piscator, Cocceius; "super vos", Pagninus, Montanus; "pro vobis", Vatablus.

[[@Amos 5:2]]Ver. [[2 >> Bible:Amos 5:2]]. *The virgin of Israel is fallen*,.... The kingdom of Israel, so called, because it had never been subdued, or become subject to a foreign power, since it was a kingdom; or because, considered in its ecclesiastic state, it had been espoused

to the Lord as a chaste virgin; and perhaps this may be ironically spoken, and refers to its present adulterate and degenerated state worshipping the calves at Dan and Bethel; or else because of its wealth and riches and the splendour and gaiety in which it appeared; but now, as it had fallen into sin and iniquity, it should quickly fall by it, and on account of it, into ruin and misery; and because of the certainty of it it is represented as if it was already fallen:

she shall no more rise; and become a kingdom again, as it never has as yet, since the ten tribes were carried away captive by Shalmaneser king of Assyria, to which calamity this prophecy refers, The Targum is,

"shall not rise again this year;"

very impertinently; better Kimchi and Ben Melech, for a long time; since as they think, and many others, that the ten tribes shall return again, as may seem when all Israel shall be converted and saved, and repossess their own land; see **Ho 1:10**. Abendana produces a passage out of Zohar, in which these words are interpreted, that the virgin of Israel should not rise again of herself, she not having power to prevail over her enemies; but God will raise her up out of the dust, when he shall raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, who shall reign in future time over all the tribes together, as it is said in **Am 9:11**;

she is forsaken upon her land; by her people, her princes, and her God; or prostrate on the ground, as the Targum; she was cast upon the ground, and dashed to pieces by the enemy as an earthen vessel, and there left, her ruin being irrecoverable; so whatever is cast and scattered, or dashed to pieces on the ground, and left, is expressed by the word here used, as Jarchi observes:

[there is] none to raise her up: her princes and people are either slain by the sword, famine, and pestilence, or carried captive, and so can yield her no assistance; her idols whom she worshipped cannot, and her God she forsook will not.

[[@Amos 5:3]]Ver. [[3 >> Bible:Amos 5:3]]. *For thus saith the Lord God*,.... This is a reason why there were none to raise her up: since

the city that went out [by] a thousand shall leave an hundred; that is, the city in which there were a thousand constantly going in and out; or which sent, caused to go out, or furnished, a thousand men upon occasion for war, had only a hundred persons left in it; or there remained but a hundred of the thousand they sent out, the rest being destroyed by one means or another:

and that which went forth [by] an hundred shall leave ten, to the house of Israel; where there were a hundred persons going out and coming in continually; or which sent out a hundred men to the army to fight their battles had now only ten remaining; to such a small number were they reduced all over the land, so that there were none, or not a number sufficient to raise up Israel to its former state and glory.

[[@Amos 5:4]]Ver. [[4 >> Bible:Amos 5:4]]. *For thus saith the Lord unto the house of Israel*,.... Or "yet" {a}, notwithstanding all this, though such judgments were threatened and denounced, and such desolations should certainly come, in case of impenitence, and an

obstinate continuance in a course of sin; yet hopes are given of finding mercy and kindness upon repentance and reformation, at least to the remnant of them; see **Am 5:15**;

seek ye me; seek my fear, as the Targum; fear and reverence, serve and worship, the Lord God; return unto him by repentance; seek to him by prayer and supplication; acknowledge your sins, and humble yourselves before him, and implore his pardoning grace and mercy:

and ye shall live; in your own land, and not be carried out of it; live comfortably, in great plenty of good things; and live spiritually, enjoying the favour of God, and his presence in his ordinances, and live eternally in the world to come.

{a} yk "attamen", Grotius.

[[@Amos 5:5]]Ver. [[5 >> Bible:Amos 5:5]]. **But seek not Bethel**,.... Do not go to Bethel, the place where one of Jeroboam's calves was set up and worshipped, to consult the oracle, idols, and priests there; or to perform religious worship, which will be your ruin, if not prevented by another course of living:

nor enter into Gilgal; another place of idolatry, where idols were set up and worshipped See Gill on "Am 4:4";

and pass not to Beersheba; a place in the further part of the land of Israel; it formerly belonged to Judah, but was now in the hands of the ten tribes, and where idolatrous worship was practised; see **Am 8:14**; it having been a place where Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, had dwelt, and worshipped the true God:

for Gilgal shall surely go into captivity; that is, the inhabitants of it; they will not be able with their idols and idol worship to save themselves, and therefore go not thither. There is an elegant play on words here {b}, as there is also in the next words:

and Bethel shall come to nought; which also was called Bethaven, the house of vanity, or of an idol which is nothing in the world; and therefore, because of the idolatry in it, should come to nothing, be utterly destroyed, and the inhabitants of it. So the Targum,

"they, that are in Gilgal, and worship calves in Bethel."

{b} hlgy hlg lglgh.

[[@Amos 5:6]]Ver. [[6 >> Bible:Amos 5:6]]. **Seek the Lord, and ye shall live**,.... This is, repeated to stir up unto it, because of their backwardness and slothfulness, and to show the importance and necessity of it. By the "Lord" may be meant the Messiah, Israel's God that was to come, and they were to prepare to meet, **Am 4:12**; and the rather, since life spiritual and eternal is only to be had from him, and he is to be sought unto for it, and all the blessings of it, peace, pardon, righteousness, rest, and salvation as well as temporal deliverance, and all outward mercies:

lest he break out like fire in the house of Joseph, and devour [it]; that is, lest his wrath and fury break out like fire as the Targum, by sending an enemy to invade the land, destroy it, and carry the inhabitants of it captive; even all the ten tribes, who frequently go by the name of

Ephraim the son of Joseph, that being the principal tribe, and the first king of them being of it:

and [there be] none to quench [it] in Bethel; the calf worshipped there, and the priests that officiated, would not be able to avert the stroke of divine vengeance, or turn back the enemy, and save the land from ruin. The Targum is,

"and there be none to quench it, because of your sins, who have been serving idols in Bethel."

[[@Amos 5:7]]Ver. [[7 >> Bible:Amos 5:7]]. *Ye who turn judgment to wormwood*,.... This seems to be spoken to kings and judges, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi observe; in whose hands is the administration of justice, and who often pervert it, as these did here addressed and complained of; that which was the most useful and salubrious, and so the most desirable to the commonwealth, namely, just judgment, was changed into the reverse, what was as bitter and as disagreeable as wormwood; or "hemlock", as it might be rendered, and as it is in **Am 6:12**; even injustice:

and leave off righteousness in the earth; leave off doing it among men: or rather, "leave [it] on the earth" {c}; who cast it down to the ground, trampled upon it, and there left it; which is expressive not only of their neglect, but of their contempt of it; see **Da 8:12**.

{c} wxynh "in terram prosterunt", Piscator; "justitiam in terram reliquerunt, i.e. humi prosternitis et deseritis", Mercerus; "collocantes humi", Junius & Tremellius.

[[@Amos 5:8]]Ver. [[8 >> Bible:Amos 5:8]]. *[Seek him] that maketh the seven stars*,.... Which some connect with the preceding words, without a supplement, "they leave righteousness on the ground, who maketh the seven stars"; understanding it of Christ, the Lord our righteousness, who is made unto us righteousness, whom the Jews rejected and despised, though the Maker of the heavens and the constellations in them. Some continue, and supply the words thus, and remember not him "that maketh the seven stars", as Kimchi; or forget him, as Japhet in Aben Ezra. The Targum is,

"they cease to fear him that maketh, &c."

they have no regard unto him, no awe and reverence of him, or they would not act so unjustly as they do. There is but one word for the "seven stars" in the original text, which signifies that constellation called the Pleiades, and so the same word is rendered, **Job 9:9**; and the Vergiliae, because they appear in the spring of the year, when they yield their sweet influences, which the Scripture ascribes to them, and are desirable; hence they have their name in Hebrew from a word which signifies desire:

and Orion; another constellation; for Aben Ezra says, it is not one star, but many; and as he, with the ancients he mentions, takes the former to be the tail of Aries, and the head of Taurus; so this to be the heart of Scorpio. This constellation appears in winter, and is a sign of bad weather. Virgil calls it Nimbosus Orion; and it has its name in Hebrew from unsettledness and inconstancy, the weather being then very variable. Amos, being a herdsman, had observed the appearances and effects of these constellations, and adored the Maker of them, whom others neglected:

and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night: maketh the constant revolution of day and night, and the days longer in the summer, and shorter in winter, as Kimchi interprets it; and also the various changes of prosperity and adversity, turning the one into the other when he pleases:

that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth; as in the time of the universal deluge, to which some Jewish writers apply this, as Jarchi observes; or rather draws up by the heat of the sun the waters of the sea into the air, and forms them into clouds, where they lose their saltiness, and become sweet; and then lets them down in plentiful and gentle showers, to water, refresh, and fructify the earth; which is an instance of divine power, wisdom, and goodness. The Targum is,

"who commands many armies to be gathered like the waters of the sea, and scatters them upon the face of the earth."

Some, who understand these words of Christ our righteousness, interpret the whole mystically of his raising up the twelve apostles, comparable to stars; and of his turning the Gentiles, who were darkness itself, to the light of the Gospel; and of his giving up the Jews, who were formerly light, to judicial blindness and darkness; and of his watering the earth with large showers of the divine word;

the Lord [is] his name; he is the true Jehovah, that can and does do all this.

[[@Amos 5:9]]Ver. [[9 >> Bible:Amos 5:9]]. ***That strengtheneth the spoiled against the strong***,.... Such as have been taken by an enemy, who have been stripped of their armour, and spoiled of all their goods and substance, and have no friends nor allies, nor anything to help themselves with; the Lord can supply them with strength, furnish them with weapons, and send them helpers, so that they shall rise up against their conquerors and spoilers, and in their turn subdue them. The Targum is,

"that strengthens the weak against the strong;"

or causes the weak to prevail over the strong. A learned man, from the use of the word in the Arabic language, chooses to render it, "who intends", or "designs, destruction to the strong" {d}; that is, in his secret purposes, and which he brings about in providence; though he is doubtful whether it may not have the signification of recreation and refreshment, and whether the construction and circumstances will admit of it; and some do so translate it, "who refreshes himself with destruction against the strong" {e}; takes delight and pleasure in it; it is a recreation to him:

so that the spoiled shall come against the fortress: lay siege to it and take it, in which the spoiler thought himself secure with the spoil and substance he had taken from the spoiled; such sudden changes and vicissitudes can God bring upon men when he pleases. Some apply this to the Romans strengthened against the Jews, and besieging their fortified city Jerusalem; but not very aptly.

{d} ze le dv gylbmh "qui intendit destinat destructionem forti", Hottinger, Smegma Orientale, l. 1. c. 7. p. 129. {e} "Qui recreat se vastatione contra fortem [sive] robustum", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Tarnovius. So Stockius, p. 136.

[[@Amos 5:10]]Ver. [[10 >> Bible:Amos 5:10]]. ***They hate him that rebuketh in the gate***,.... Openly and publicly in the courts of judicature: wicked judges hated the prophets of the Lord, such as Amos, who faithfully reprov'd them for the perversion of justice, even when they were upon the bench: or the people were so corrupt and degenerate, that they hated those faithful judges who reprov'd them for their vices in the open courts of justice, when they came before them, The former sense seems best, and more agreeable to the context:

and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly; not only hate him, but abhor him, cannot bear the sight of him, or to hear his name mentioned that speaks out his mind freely and honestly, and tells them of their sins, and advises them to repent of them, and leave them.

[[@Amos 5:11]]Ver. [[11 >> Bible:Amos 5:11]]. ***Forasmuch therefore as your treading [is] upon the poor***,.... This seems to be spoken to the princes, judges, and civil magistrates, as Kimchi observes; who oppressed the poor and needy, and crushed them to the ground, trampled upon them, stripped them of the little substance they had, and left them destitute; exercising a cruel and tyrannical power over them, they having none to stand by them, and deliver them:

and ye take from him burdens of wheat; which perhaps he had been gleaning in the field, and was carrying home for the support of his family; or which he had gotten with great labour, and was all he had in the world: this they took away from him, for the payment of pretended debts, or lawsuits; or as not in right belonging to him, but taken out of fields where he should not have entered:

ye have built houses of hewn stones; in a very grand and pompous manner for themselves and their children, with money they had extorted from the poor, and got by oppression and injustice:

but ye shall not dwell in them; at least but a very short time; for quickly and suddenly the enemy will come and turn you out of them, and destroy them, which would be a just retaliation for their spoiling the houses of the poor:

ye have planted pleasant vineyards: well situated, and filled with the choicest vines, which promise a large produce of the best wine:

but ye shall not drink wine of them; for before the grapes are fully ripe they should be either taken away by death, or be carried captive, and others should dwell in their houses, and drink the wine of their vineyards.

[[@Amos 5:12]]Ver. [[12 >> Bible:Amos 5:12]]. ***For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins***,.... Their sins were numerous, and of the first magnitude, attended with very heavy aggravations; and these with all their circumstances were well known to the omniscient God, and therefore he determined to punish them as he had threatened. Some of their transgressions are pointed out, as follow:

they afflict the just; who are so both in a moral and evangelic sense; not comparatively only, but really; and particularly whose cause was just, and yet were vexed and distressed by unjust judges, who gave the cause against them, made them pay all costs and charges, and severely mulcted them: they take a bribe; of those that were against the just, and gave the cause for

them. The word signifies "a ransom" {f}. The Targum it false mammon. Corrupt and unjust judges are here taxed:

and they turn aside the poor in the gate [from their right]; in the court of judicature, where they should have done them justice, such courts being usually held in the gates of cities; but instead of that they perverted their judgment, and did them wrong.

{f} rpwk "pretium redemptionis", Mercerus, Liveleus, Drusius, Lytron, Cocceius.

[[@Amos 5:13]]Ver. [[13 >> Bible:Amos 5:13]]. **Therefore the prudent shall keep silence at that time**,.... Not the prophets of the Lord, whose business it was at all times to reprove, and not hold their peace, let the consequence be what it would; though the Targum calls them teachers; but private persons, whose wisdom it would be to say nothing; since reproof would do no good to these persons, and they would bring a great deal of hatred ill will, and trouble upon themselves as well as would hear the name of God blasphemed, which would be very afflictive to them: or the sense is, they would not speak to God on the behalf of these wicked men, knowing the decree was gone forth; nor say one murmuring word at it, believing it was in righteousness; and being struck also with the awfulness of God's righteous judgments:

for it [is] an evil time; in which sin abounded, and miseries and calamities on account of it.

[[@Amos 5:14]]Ver. [[14 >> Bible:Amos 5:14]]. **Seek good, and not evil**,.... Seek not unto, or after, evil persons and evil things; not the company and conversation of evil men, which is infectious and dangerous; nor anything that is evil, or has the appearance of it, especially the evil of evils, sin; which is hateful to God, contrary to his nature and will; is evil in its own nature, and bad in its consequences, and therefore not to be sought, but shunned and avoided; but seek that which is good, persons and things: seek the "summum bonnum", "the chief good", God, who is essentially, perfectly, immutably, and communicatively good, the fountain of all goodness, and the portion of his people; seek Christ the good Saviour and sacrifice, the good Shepherd, and the good Samaritan, who is good in all his relations, as a father, husband, and friend, and in whom all good things are laid up; seek the good Spirit of God, who works good things in his people, and shows good things to them, and is the Comforter of them; seek to him for assistance in prayer, and to help in the exercise of every grace, and in the discharge of every duty, and as the guide into all truth, and to eternal glory; seek the good ways of God, the way of truth, the path of faith and holiness, and especially the good way to the Father, the way of life and salvation by Christ; seek the good word of God, the Scriptures of truth, the promises contained in them, and the Gospel of them; seek the company of good men, and that good part that shall not be taken away, the true grace of God, the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; seek the glories of another world, the goodness of God laid up, the best things which are reserved to last:

that ye may live; comfortably, spiritually, and eternally, which is the consequence of all this; See Gill on "Am 5:4";

See Gill on "Am 5:6";

and so the Lord, the God of hosts, shall be with you, as ye have spoken; as they used to say, and boasted of; though they had not the temple, the ark of the testimony, the symbols of the divine Presence, as Judah had; but this they would have in reality, both his gracious presence

here, and his glorious presence hereafter, did they truly and rightly seek those things; than which nothing is more desirable to good men, or can make them more comfortable, or more happy. The Targum is,

"seek to do well, and not to do ill, that ye may live; and then the word of the Lord God of hosts shall be your help, as ye have said."

[[@Amos 5:15]]Ver. [[15 >> Bible:Amos 5:15]]. ***Hate the evil, and love the good***,.... Evil is not only not to be sought, but to be hated, especially the evil of sin, because of its evil nature, and pernicious effects and consequences; and, if it was for no other reason but because it is hateful and abominable unto God, therefore they that love him should hate evil, even with a perfect hatred; as all good men do, though it is present with them, and cleaves unto them, and they do it, **Psalm 97:10**; and "good" is to be loved for its goodness' sake; and the good effects of it; a good God is to be loved, and all good men, and all good things; the good word of God, and his commands and ordinances; and highly to be esteemed, and affectionately regarded:

and establish judgment in the gate; openly, publicly, in every court of judicature, which used to be kept in the gates of cities; not only execute judgment and justice in all, cases brought into court, but let it have its constant course, and be always practised according to the settled laws of it:

it may be that the Lord God of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph: who should escape the fire that should break out of his house, and devour it, even the ten tribes, **Am 5:6**; such of them as should seek the Lord, and that which is good; for in the worst of times God reserves a remnant for himself, as in the times of Elijah, Isaiah, Christ, and his apostles; a remnant according to the election of grace, to whom he has been gracious in the choice and reserve he has made of them; in the stores of grace he has hid up for them; in the provision and mission of his Son as a Saviour; and in waiting the time of their conversion, when he is gracious to them, in regenerating, quickening, pardoning, and justifying of them; and still will be in the visits of his love; in the supplies of his grace, in supporting them under afflictions, temptations, desertions, &c. and in giving them his word and ordinances for their comfort and relief: nor is this "may be" to be understood in a way of doubt or hesitation, but of good hope, yea, of a holy confidence; and so some render it, "without doubt the Lord God of hosts will be gracious" {g}, &c. see **Zep 2:3**.

{g} ylwa "sine dubio", Tarnovius; so Burkius.

[[@Amos 5:16]]Ver. [[16 >> Bible:Amos 5:16]]. ***Therefore the Lord, the God of hosts, the Lord, saith thus***,.... The connection of these words is not with those that immediately precede, but with the whole context; seeing neither promises nor threats, exhortations, good advice, and intimations of grace and mercy, had no effect, at least upon the generality of the people, therefore the Lord declared as follows:

wailing [shall be] in all streets; in all the streets of the towns and cities of Israel, because of the slain and wounded in them:

and they shall say in all the highways, alas! alas! in the several roads throughout the country, as travellers pass on, and persons flee from the enemy; they shall lament the state of

the kingdom, and cry Woe, woe, unto it; in what a miserable condition and circumstances it is in:

and they shall call the husbandmen to mourning: who used to be better employed in tilling their land, ploughing, sowing, reaping, and gathering in the fruits of the earth; but now should have no work to do, all being destroyed, either by the hand of God, by blasting, and mildew, and vermin, or by the trampling and forage of the enemy; and so there would be just occasion for mourning:

and such as are skilful of lamentation to wailing; that have got the art of mourning, and were expert in making moans, and using plaintive tones, and who assisted at funerals, and other doleful occasions; and who are made use of to this day in some countries, particularly in Ireland; and were the old Romans, by whom they were called "siticines", "praeifici", and "praeificae" and these mourning men and women were also employed among the Jews at such times; see **Mt 9:23**; in **Jer 9:17**, the mourning women are called "cunning women"; and so Lucian {h} calls: them sofistav twyn yrhnwn, "sophists at lamentations", artists: at them, well skilled therein, such as those are here directed to be called for. Mr. Lively, our countryman, puts both clauses together, and renders them thus, "the husbandmen shall call to mourning and wailing such as are skilful of lamentation"; to assist them therein, because of the loss of the fruits of the earth; and such a version is confirmed by Jarchi, though he paraphrases it to a different sense;

"companies of husbandmen shall meet those that plough in the fields with the voice of mourners that cry in the streets."

{h} Dialog. peri peny.

[[@Amos 5:17]]Ver. [[17 >> Bible:Amos 5:17]]. **And in all vineyards [shall be] wailing**,.... The vines being destroyed, and no grapes to be gathered, and put into the press; when there used to be great shoutings, and large expressions of joy, at the gathering in of the vintage, and pressing the grapes; but now there shall be a different tone; see **Jer 48:32**;

for I will pass through thee, saith the Lord; through their cities, towns, and country, fields and vineyards, and destroy all in his way, as he passed through Egypt when he destroyed their firstborn.

[[@Amos 5:18]]Ver. [[18 >> Bible:Amos 5:18]]. **Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord**,.... Either the day of Christ's coming in the flesh, as Cocceius interprets it; and which was desired by the people of Israel, not on account of spiritual and eternal salvation, but that they might be delivered by him from outward troubles and enemies, and enjoy temporal felicity; they had a notion of him as a temporal Saviour and Redeemer, in whose days they should possess much outward happiness, and therefore desired his coming; see **Mal 3:1**; or else the day of the Lord's judgments upon them, spoken of by the prophet, and which they were threatened with, but did not believe it would ever come; and therefore in a scoffing jeering manner, expressed their desire of it, to show their disbelief of it, and that they were in no pain or fear about it, like those in **Isa 5:19**;

to what end [is] it for you? why do you desire it? what benefit do you expect to get by it?

the day of the Lord [is] darkness, and not light; it will bring on affliction, calamities, miseries, and distress, which are often in Scripture expressed by "darkness", and not prosperity and happiness, which are sometimes signified by "light"; see **Isa 5:30**; and even the day of the coming of Christ were to the unbelieving Jews darkness, and not light; they were blinded in it, and given up to judicial blindness and darkness; they hating and rejecting the light of Christ, and his Gospel, and which issued in great calamities, in the utter ruin and destruction of that people, **Joh 3:19**.

[[@Amos 5:19]]Ver. [[19 >> Bible:Amos 5:19]]. ***As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him***,.... That is, should the day of the Lord come as they desired, they would not be the better for it; it would be only going from one trouble to another, like escaping Scylla, and falling into Charybdis: or as if a man, upon the sight of a lion, and at his yell, should take to his heels, and flee "from the face" of him, as the phrase is {i}, and a bear, a less generous, and more cruel and voracious creature, especially when: bereaved of its whelps, should meet him, and seize him: or should: he get clear of them both,

or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him; should he get into a house, and so escape the lion and the bear, and lean upon the wall of the house to support and ease him, being out of breath in running from these creatures; yet a serpent lurking in the wall of an old house bites him, and the venom and poison of it issues in his death; so he gains nothing by fleeing from the lion, or escaping the bear. These proverbial expressions signify that the Israelites would be no gainers by the day of the Lord, but rather fall into greater evils, and more distressing calamities. Some Jewish writers interpret the lion and the bear of Laban and Esau; the lion (they say {k}) is Laban, who pursued after Jacob to take away his life; the bear is Esau, who stood in the way to kill all that came, the mother with the children; but are much better interpreted of the Chaldeans, Persians, and Grecians, by Jerom; whose words are,

"fleeing from the face of Nebuchadnezzar the lion, ye will be met by Ahasuerus, under whom, was the history of Esther; or the empire of the Assyrians and Chaldeans being destroyed, the Medes and Persians shall arise; and when upon the reign of Cyrus ye shall have returned, and at the command of, Darius shall have begun to build the house of the Lord, and have confidence in the temple, so as to rest in it, lean your weary hands on its walls; then shall come Alexander king of the Macedonians, or Antiochus, surnamed Epiphanes, who shall abide in the temple, and bite like serpent, not without in Babylon, and in Susa, but within the borders of the holy land; by which it appears that the day ye desire is not a day of light and joy, but of darkness and sorrow."

The interpretation is pretty and ingenious enough, since the characters of the lion, bear, and serpent, agree with the respective persons and people mentioned; Nebuchadnezzar is often compared to a lion, **Jer 4:7**; and the Babylonian and Chaldean monarchy is represented by one in **Da 7:4**; and the Persian monarchy by a bear, **Da 7:5**; to which the Persians are compared, the Jews say {l}, because they eat and drink like a bear, are as fat as bears, and hairy like them, and as restless as they; and so the Persians were noted for their luxury and lust, as well as their cruelty; and, wearing long hair, are called hairy persons in the Delphic oracle, which Herodotus {m} interprets of them; See Gill on "Da 7:5"; and Antiochus may not unfitly be compared to a serpent; see See Gill on "Da 8:23";

See Gill on "Da 8:24";

See Gill on "Da 8:25";

See Gill on "Da 11:23"; but what is to be objected to this sense is, that the words are spoken to the ten tribes, or Israel, who were carried captive by the Assyrians; and not the two tribes, or the Jews, who fell into the hands, first of the Chaldeans, then the Persians, and then the Grecians, particularly into the hands of Antiochus; see **Da 7:4**.

{i} ynpm "a facie", V. L. Pagninus; "a faciebus", Montanus; "a conspectu", Mercerus. {k} Pirke Eliezer, c. 37. fol. 41. 1. {l} T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 72. 1. & Avoda Zara, fol. 2. 2. {m} Erato, sive l. 6. c. 19. Vid. Calliope, sive l. 9. c. 81.

[[@Amos 5:20]]Ver. [[20 >> Bible:Amos 5:20]]. ***[Shall] not the day of the Lord [be] darkness, and not light?....*** The design of such a question is strongly to affirm, that, in this day of the Lord spoken of, there should be nothing but misery and distress, and no prosperity and happiness, at least to the wicked Israelites, or the unbelieving Jews:

even very dark, and no brightness in it? signifying that there should be no deliverance, nor the least glimmering view or hope of it; that the calamity should be so very great, and the destruction so entire, that there should be no mixture of mercy, nor the least appearance of relief.

[[@Amos 5:21]]Ver. [[21 >> Bible:Amos 5:21]]. ***I hate, I despise your feast days,....*** Kimchi thinks this is said, and what follows, with respect to the kingdom of the house of Judah, which kept the feast the Lord commanded; but it is not necessary so to understand it; for doubtless the ten tribes imitated the worship at Jerusalem, and kept the feasts as the Jews did there, in the observance of which they trusted; but the Lord rejects their vain confidence, and lets them know that these were no ways acceptable to him; and were so far from atoning for their sins, that they were hated, abhorred, and despised by him, being observed in such a manner and with such a view as they were;

and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies; a sweet savour of rest, as in **Genesis 8:21**; take no pleasure in their duties and services performed, in their solemn assemblies convened together for religious purposes, nor accept of them; but, on the contrary, dislike and abhor them; see **Isa 1:11**.

[[@Amos 5:22]]Ver. [[22 >> Bible:Amos 5:22]]. ***Though ye offer me burnt offerings, and your meat offerings, I will not accept [them],....*** The daily burnt offerings, morning and night, and others which were wholly the Lord's; and the "minchah", or bread offering, which went along with them; in which they thought to do God service, and to merit his favour; but instead of that they were unacceptable to him, being neither offered up in a proper place, if in a right manner according to the law of Moses; however, not in the faith of the great sacrifice, Christ; nor attended with repentance towards God:

neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts; even though their peace offerings were of the best of the herd. Aben Ezra says the creature here meant is the same which in the Ishmaelitish or Arabic language is called "giamus", a creature bigger than an ox, and like one, which is called a buffle or buffalo. And so Ben Melech says it means one of the kinds of the

larger cattle; for not a lamb, a ram, or a sheep, is meant, as the word is sometimes rendered by the Septuagint, but a creature like an ox; not larger, or the wild ox, as the above Hebrew writers, but smaller; with which agrees the description Bellonius {n} gives of the Syrian "bubalus" or "buffalo", which he calls a small ox, full bodied, little, smooth, sleek, fat, and well made; and is no doubt the same the Arabs call "almari", from its smoothness.

{n} Apud Bochart. Hierozoic. p. 1. l. 2. c. 28. col. 283.

[[@Amos 5:23]]Ver. [[23 >> Bible:Amos 5:23]]. ***Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs***,.... The ten tribes, very probably, imitated the, temple music at Jerusalem, both vocal and instrumental, and had their songs and hymns of praise, which they sung to certain tunes; but the music of these is called a noise, being very disagreeable to the Lord, as coming from such carnal and wicked persons; and therefore he desires it might cease, be took away, and he be no more troubled with it:

for I will not hear the melody of thy viols: which may be put for all instruments of music used by them, as violins, harps, psalteries, &c. the sound of which, how melodious soever, the, Lord would turn a deaf ear unto, and not regard.

[[@Amos 5:24]]Ver. [[24 >> Bible:Amos 5:24]]. ***But let judgments run down as waters***,.... Or "roll" {o}; in abundance, with great rapidity, bearing down all before them, which nothing can resist; signifying the plenty of justice done in the land, the full and free exercise of it, without any stoppage or intermission:

and righteousness as a mighty stream; the same thing expressed in different words; though some think that not the execution of judgment and justice by men is here exhorted to, but the vindictive justice of God is threatened; which like a mighty torrent of water should come down, overwhelm, bear away, and destroy all before it, even all the transgressors in Israel.

{o} lgyw "volvatur", Munster, Mercerus, Liveleus, Drusius; "volvat se", Montanus, Vatablus; "revolvat se", Piscator; "provolvatur", Cocceius.

[[@Amos 5:25]]Ver. [[25 >> Bible:Amos 5:25]]. ***Have ye offered unto me sacrifices and offerings***,.... No; they were not offered to God, but to devils, to the golden calf, and to the host of heaven: so their fathers did

in the wilderness forty years; where sacrifices were omitted during that time, a round number for a broken one, it being about thirty eight years; and these their children were imitators of them, and offered sacrifice to idols too, and therefore deserved punishment as they: even ye,

O house of Israel? the ten tribes, who are here particularly charged and threatened; See Gill on "Ac 7:42".

[[@Amos 5:26]]Ver. [[26 >> Bible:Amos 5:26]]. ***But ye have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch***,.... The god of the Ammonites; See Gill on "Am 1:13"; and

See Gill on "Jer 7:31"; called theirs, because they also worshipped it, and caused their seed to pass through the fire to it; and which was carried by them in a shrine, or portable tent or chapel. Or it may be rendered, "but ye have borne Siccuth your king" {p}; and so Siccuth may be taken for the name of an idol, as it is by Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, to whom they gave the title of king, as another idol went by the name of the queen of heaven; perhaps by one was meant the sun, and by the other the moon;

and Chiun, your images; Moloch or Siccuth was one, and Chiun another image, or rather the same; and this the same with Chevan, which in the Arabic and Persic languages is the name of Saturn, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi say; and is so rendered by Montanus here; and who in the Egyptian tongue was called Revan, or Rephan, or Remphan; as by the Septuagint here, and in **Ac 7:43**;

the star of your god, which ye made to yourselves; or the star "your god" {q}; meaning the same with Chiun or Saturn; perhaps the same with the star that fell from the air or sky, mentioned by Sanchoniatho {r}; which Astarte, the wife of Chronus or Saturn, is said to take and consecrate in Tyre; this they made for themselves, and worshipped as a deity. The Targum is,

"ye have borne the tabernacle of your priests, Chiun your image, the star your God, which ye have made to yourselves."

Various are the senses put upon the word Chiun. Some read it Cavan, and take it to signify a "cake"; in which sense the word is used in **Jer 7:18**; and render it, "the cake of your images" {s}; and supposing that it had the image of their gods impressed upon it. Calmet interprets it "the pedestal of your images" {t}; and indeed the word has the signification of a basis, and is so rendered by some {u}; and is applicable to Moloch their king, a king being the basis and foundation of the kingdom and people; and to the sun, intended by that deity, which is the basis of the celestial bodies, and of all things on earth. Some take Moloch and Chiun to be distinct deities, the one to be the sun, the other the moon; but they seem rather to be the same, and both to be the Egyptian ox, and the calf of the Israelites in the wilderness, the image of which was carried in portable tents or tabernacles, in chests or shrines; such as the Succothbenoth, or tabernacles of Venus, 2Ki 17:30; and those of Diana's, Ac 19:24; the first of these portable temples we read of, is one drawn by oxen in Phoenicia, mentioned by Sanchoniatho {w}; not that the Israelites carried such a tent or tabernacle during their travels through the wilderness, whatever they might do the few days they worshipped the calf; but this is to be understood of their posterity in later times, in the times of Amos; and also when Shalmaneser carried them captive beyond Damascus, as follows. It may be further observed, for the confirmation and illustration of what has been said concerning Chiun, that the Egyptian Anubis, which Plutarch {x} says is the same with Saturn, is called by him Kyon, which seems to be no other than this word Chiun: and whereas Stephen calls it Rephan, this is not a corruption of the word, reading Rephan or Revan for Chevan; nor has he respect to Rimmon, the god of the Syrians, but it is the Egyptian name for Saturn; which the Septuagint interpreters might choose to make use of, they interpreting for the king of Egypt: and Diodorus Siculus {y} makes mention of an Egyptian king called Remphis, whom Braunius {z} takes to be this very Chiun; see **Ac 7:43**; but Rephas, or Rephan, was the same with Chronus, or Saturn, from whence came the Rephaim {a}, who dwelt in Ashtaroth Karnaim, a town of Ham or Chronus; see **Genesis 14:5**. Some {b}, who take Siccuth for an idol, render it in the future, "ye shall carry", &c. and take it to be a prediction of Amos, that the Israelites should, with great reproach and ignominy, be obliged by the Assyrians, as they were led

captive, to carry on their shoulders the idols they had worshipped, and in vain had trusted in, as used to be done in triumphs; See Gill on "Am 1:15".

{p} Mkklm twko "Siccuth regem vestrum", Munster, Montanus, Vatablus, Calvin, Mercerus. {q} Mkyhla bkww "sidus deum vestrum", Liveleus; "sidus, [vel] stellam deos vestros", Calvin. {r} Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 1. p. 38. {s} Mkymly Nwyk "placentam imagium vestrarum", Pagninus, Tigurine version, Vatablus. {t} Dictionary, in the word "Chiun". {u} "Basim imaginum vestrarum", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; "statumen", Burkius. {w} Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 1. p. 35. {x} **Deuteronomy** Iside. {y} Bibliothec. l. 1. p. 56. {z} Selecta Sacra. l. 4. c. 9. sect. 132. p. 435. {a} Vid. Cumberland's Sanchoniatho, p. 120. {b} Vid. Scholia Quinquarborei in loc. So Jarchi and Lyra.

[[@Amos 5:27]]Ver. [[27 >> Bible:Amos 5:27]]. **Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus**,.... The chief city of Syria; and which, as Aben Ezra says, lay to the east of the land of Israel, and was a very strong and fortified place: and Syria being in alliance with Israel, the Israelites might think of fleeing thither for refuge, in the time of their distress; but they are here told that they should be taken captive, and be carried to places far more remote than that: Stephen says, "beyond Babylon"; as they were, for they were carried into Media, to Halah and Habor by the river of Gozan, to the cities of the Medes; their way to which lay through Syria and Babylon;

See Gill on "Ac 7:43";

saieth the Lord, whose name [is] the God of hosts; and therefore is able to do what he threatens; and it might be depended upon it would be certainly done, as it is clear, beyond all contradiction, it has been done; see 2Ki 17:6.

[[@Amos 6]]

Chapter 6

INTRODUCTION TO AMOS 6

This chapter seems to be directed both to the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and the ten tribes of Israel, under the names of Zion and Samaria, and to the principal men in both; who are reprov'd and threatened for their carnal security and self-confidence, being in no fear of the evil day, though they had no reason for it no more than other people, **Am 6:1**; are charged with wantonness, luxury, intemperance, and want of sympathy with those in distress, **Am 6:4**; therefore are threatened to be carried captive first, and their city to be delivered up; which, for the certainty of it, is not only said, but sworn to, **Am 6:7**; and a great mortality in every house, and the destruction of all houses, both great and small, **Am 6:9**; and since a reformation of them seemed impracticable, and not to be expected, but they gloried in their wealth, and boasted of their strength, therefore they should be afflicted by a foreign nation raised against them, which affliction should be general, from one end of the country to the other, **Am 6:12**.

[[@Amos 6:1]]Ver. [[1 >> Bible:Amos 6:1]]. **Woe to them [that are] at ease in Zion**,.... Or "secure" {c} there; which was a strong hold, the city of David, the seat of the kings of Judah;

where their court was kept, and the princes and chief men resided and thought themselves safe, the place being well fortified with walls, towers, and bulwarks: or "at ease"; that is, in easy, prosperous, comfortable circumstances of life; as Job was before his troubles, and others he mentions, **Job 16:12**; though to be in such a state is not criminal, but a blessing of Providential goodness, for which men should be thankful, and make use of it aright: but "woe to the rich in Zion" {d}, as the Vulgate Latin Version renders it, when they have nothing else but temporal riches; this is all their portion, and the whole of their consolation, **Lu 6:24**; when they trust in these uncertain riches, and consume them on their lusts, as described in the following verses; are unconcerned at the troubles of others, and give them no relief, but despise them, **Job 12:5**; and even are thoughtless about their own future state, and put away the evil day far from them, **Lu 12:19**; and such are they who like Moab are at ease from their youth as to their spiritual state, **Jer 48:11**; never had any true sight of sin, or sense of danger; never complain of a body of sin, or are concerned about sins of omission or commission; nor troubled with the temptations of Satan, and have no fears and doubts about their happiness; and such there be who yet are in Zion, or in a church state, which Zion often signifies; and being there, trust in it, and in the privileges of it, and so are secure, and at ease; such are the foolish virgins and hypocrites, who place their confidence in a profession of religion, in being church members, and in their submission to external ordinances, and so cry Peace, peace, to themselves, when, destruction is at hand: and are moreover at ease, and wholly unconcerned about the affairs of Zion, both temporal and spiritual, and especially the latter; they do not trouble themselves about the doctrines they hear, whether truth or error; and about the success of them, whether they are made useful for conversion and edification; and about the continuance of a Gospel ministry, and a succession in it; and about the discipline of the church of God, and the walk of professors; or about what trials and afflictions are like to come upon the churches; or about the judgments of God in the earth; and therefore such carnal secure persons are either called upon to awake out of their sleep, and come off of their beds of ease, and shake off their vain confidence and carnal security; for the word may be rendered "ho" {e}, as a note of calling, as in **Isa 55:1**; or a threatening of calamity is denounced upon them, that the day of the Lord should come upon them as a thief in the night, or as a snare upon them that dwell on earth, and they be surprised with the midnight cry, and with the terrors of devouring flames, as the foolish virgins and hypocrite's in Zion will, **Mt 25:6**. The Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, render it, "who despise Zion", or "neglect" her; and the word is sometimes used of insolent persons, and to express their insolence; see **Isa 37:29**; and so may be understood, not of the Jews in Jerusalem, but of the ten tribes, as the following clause; who despised Zion, the city of solemnities, the temple; and, the worship of God there, and set up the calves at Dan and Bethel, and worshipped them; and therefore a woe is denounced upon them;

and trust in the mountain of Samaria; in the city of Samaria, built on a mountain, a strong fortified city, where they thought themselves safe; the royal city of the kings of Israel, the head of Ephraim, and the metropolis of the ten tribes, who here are intended: though the words may be rendered, and the sense given a little different from this, as woe to the "confident" ones that ate in Samaria {f}; not that put their trust in Samaria, but dwell there; but, however, are confident in their own strength, wealth, and might. The Targum is,

"that trust in the fortress of Samaria;"

see **1Ki 16:24**;

[which are] named the chief of the nations; the persons at ease in Zion, and trusted in Samaria, were the principal men of both nations, Judah and Israel; or these cities of Zion and

Samaria were the chief of the said nations: Zion, Which was near Jerusalem, and includes it, was the metropolis of Judea; as Samaria was the head city of Ephraim, or the ten tribes. The Targum is, that

"put the name of their children, as the name of the children of the nations;"

as the Jews did in later times, giving their children the names of Alexander, Antipater, &c.

to whom the house of Israel came; meaning not to the seven nations, of which the two named cities were chief, into which Israel entered, and took possession of, and dwelt in; for Samaria never belonged to them, but was built by Omri king of Israel, long after the entrance of the Israelites into the land of Canaan, 1Ki 16:24; but the cities of Zion and, Samaria, into which the whole house of Israel came, or had recourse unto, at certain times: the ten tribes came to Samaria, where their kings resided, the court was kept, and the seats of judgment were; and the two tribes came to Zion, to Jerusalem, to the temple there, to worship the Lord.

{c} Mynnavh "secure sedentibus", Munster; "securus", Mercerus, Castalio, Burkus. {d} "Opulentis", Tigurine version. {e} ywh "heus", Piscator, Tarnovius, Burkus. {f} Nwrmv rhb Myxjbh "confidentibus qui habitant in monte Samariae", Liveleus; "securis qui habitant in monte", Samariae, Drusius.

[[@Amos 6:2]]Ver. [[2 >> Bible:Amos 6:2]]. **Pass ye unto Calneh, and see**,.... What is become of that city, which was in the land of Shinar, an ancient city, as early as the days of Nimrod, and built by him, and was with others the beginning of his kingdom, **Genesis 10:10**; it belonged to Babylon, and is by Jarchi here interpreted by it, being put for Babel, as he supposes. According to Jerom {g}, it is the same city, sometimes called Seleucia, in his days Ctesiphon; very probably it had been lately taken by the king of Assyria, and therefore made mention of; see Isa 10:9; where it is called Calno;

and from thence go ye to Hamath the great; the same with Antiochia, as Jarchi and Jerom; called the great, to distinguish it from Hamath the less, sometimes called Epiphania; or from Hamathzobah, near Tadmor, or Palmyra, in the wilderness, **2Ch 8:3**; though it might be so called with respect to its own grandeur and magnificence; as Sidon is called "Sidon the great", though there was no other, Jos 11:8; for it was a royal city; we read of Toi, king of Hamath, in the times of David, **2Sa 8:9**. It is placed by Josephus {h} on the north of the land of Canaan; and so it appears to be, and to be between Damascus and the Mediterranean sea, from Eze 47:15. Abu'lfeda {i}, a learned prince, who reigned in Hamath, and should know its situation, places it on the Orontes, between Hems and Apamea, that river surrounding it on the east and north. The learned Vitringa {k} thinks that neither Antiochia nor Epiphania are meant, but the city Emissa; which Ammianus Marcellinus {l} makes mention of along with Damascus, as a famous city in Syria, equal to Tyre, Sidon, and Berytus: and of the same opinion was Theodoret {m} among the ancients, and so Calmet {n} of late. And so Hamath and Damascus are mentioned together as recovered by Jeroboam, 2Ki 14:28; very probably the kingdom of Hamath became subject to the kings of Damascus; see Jer 49:23; but, be it what place it will, it is very likely it had been lately spoiled by the king of Assyria; see Isa 37:13.

then go down to Gath of the Philistines; one of their five principalities, and a chief one, so called to distinguish it from other Gaths, as Gathhepher, Gathrimmon. It stood about five or six miles south of Jamnia, about fourteen south of Joppa, and thirty two west of Jerusalem. A

village of this name as shown, as Jerom {o} says, five miles from Eleutheropolis, as you go to Diospolis or Lydda, and is taken to be the same place. It is famous for being the birthplace of Goliath; and is called in **2Sa 8:1**; compared with 1Ch 18:1, Methegammah, or the bridle of Ammah, or Metheg and her mother; that is, Gath and her daughters. Reland {p} thinks Gath is the city Cadytis of Herodotus {q}, who says it is a city of the Syrians, called Palestines or Philistines, and speaks of the mountains of it; and this city was not far from the mountainous country of Judea: now this city had been taken by Hazael, king of Syria, and its wall was broke down by Uzziah, king of Judah, 2Ki 12:17;

[be they] better than these kingdoms? or their border greater than your border? that is, do Calneh, Hamath, and Gath, excel in dignity and grandeur, in wealth and strength, the kingdoms of Israel and Judah? or are they of a larger circumference, and exceed them in length and breadth? no, they did not; and therefore the more ungrateful were Israel and Judah to sin against the Lord as they had done, who had given them such rich and large kingdoms, and therefore might expect to be taken and spoiled as well as they: though some think there is a change of number and persons in the text, and that the sense is, are you better than these kingdoms, or your border greater than theirs? and, if not, you may expect to fare as they; see a like expression in **Na 3:8**.

{g} Quaest. in Gen. fol. 66. M. {h} Antiqu. l. 9. c. 10. sect. 1. {i} See the Universal History, vol. 2. p. 316. {k} Comment. in Jessiam, c. 10. 9. {l} Lib. 23. {m} Comment. in Jer. ii. 15. and xlix. 23. {n} Dictionary, in the word "Hamath". {o} **Deuteronomy** locis Hebr. fol. 92. A. {p} Palestina Illustrata, tom. 2. l. 3. p. 669. {q} Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 159. & Thalia, sive l. 3. c. 5.

[[@Amos 6:3]]Ver. [[3 >> Bible:Amos 6:3]]. *Ye that put far away the evil day*,.... The day of Israel's captivity, threatened by, the Lord, and prophesied of by the prophets; by this prophet, and by Hoshea and others: this they endeavoured to put out of their minds and thoughts, and supposed it to be at a great distance, yea, hoped it never would be; and like the Jews, with respect to their captivity, and the destruction of their city, said it was not near, but prolonged, yea, would never come to pass, Eze 11:3; so some men put far from them the day of death; which though to a good man is better than the day of his birth, yet to a wicked man is an evil and terrible day; he do not care to hear or speak, or think of it, lest it should dampen his carnal joys and pleasures: as also the day of Christ's coming to judgment; which though a good man hastens to in his affections, desires, and prayers, wicked men set at the greatest distance, yea, scoff at it, as believing it never will be, and to show that they are in no pain or uneasiness about it; see Isa 56:12. The Vulgate Latin version renders it, "who are separated to the evil day"; appointed to it; foreordained to this condemnation; destined to ruin and destruction for their sins; see

Proverbs 16:4;

and cause the seat of violence to come near; boldly venture upon the commission of acts of injustice, rapine, and violence, on a presumption the evil day threatened will never come; or place themselves on the bench in courts of judicature, and there, without any manner of concern, commit the greatest acts of unrighteousness, as believing they shall never be called to an account for them by God or man.

[[@Amos 6:4]]Ver. [[4 >> Bible:Amos 6:4]]. *That lie upon beds of ivory*,.... That were made of it, or inlaid with it, or covered with it, as the Targum; nor was it improbable that these were made wholly of ivory, for such beds we read of: Timaeus says {r}, the Agrigentines had beds entirely made of ivory; and Horace {s} also speaks of such beds: and if any credit can be given to the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem on **Genesis 50:1**. Joseph made his father Jacob to lie on a bed of ivory. Indeed, the Latin interpreters of these Targums render it a cedar bed; but Buxtorf {t} conjectures that ivory is meant by the word used; and so Bochart {u} translates it; on these they lay either for sleep and rest, or to eat their meals;

and stretch themselves upon their couches; for the same purposes, living in great splendour, and indulging themselves in ease and sloth; as it was the custom of the eastern countries, and is of the Arabs now; that they make little or no use of chairs, but either sitting cross legged, or lying at length, have couches to lie on at their meals; and when they indulge to ease, they cover or spread their floors with carpets, which for the most part are of the richest materials. Along the sides of the wall or floor, a range of narrow beds or mattresses is often placed upon these carpets; and, for their further ease and convenience, several velvet or damask bolsters are placed upon these, or mattresses {w}, to lean upon, and take their ease; see

Eze 13:18; and thus, and in some such like manner, did the principal men of the people of Israel indulge themselves. Some render it, "abound with superfluities"; the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions, "are lascivious"; and the Arabic version, "burn in lust"; and so some of the Jewish writers interpret it of their committing adulteries, and all uncleanness, on their beds and couches;

and eat the lambs out of the flock; pick the best and fattest of them for their use: so the Targum,

"eat the fat of the sheep."

and the calves out of the midst of the stall; where they are put, and kept to be fattened; from thence they took what they liked best, and perhaps not out of their own flocks and stalls, but out of others, and with which they pampered themselves to excess.

{r} Apud Aelian. Var. Hist. l. 12. c. 29. {s} "----Rubro ubi cocco Tincta super lectos cauderet vestis eburnos". Horat. Sermon. l. 2. Satyr. 6. v. 102. {t} Lexic. Talmud. col. 2475. {u} Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 2. c. 24. col. 252. {w} See Shaw's Travels, p. 209. Ed. 2.

[[@Amos 6:5]]Ver. [[5 >> Bible:Amos 6:5]]. *That chant to the sound of the viol*,.... Or psaltery; an instrument of twelve cords, and that gave twelve sounds, as Josephus {x} says, being stricken with the fingers; and to these sounds these men chanted or quivered, made like sounds with their voice, which they raised higher or lower, according to the sound of the instrument: they "particularized", as the word signifies {y}; or observed the divisions and distinctions of notes and sounds, by the modulation of their voice:

[and] invent to themselves instruments of music, like David: not content with old ones, such as were used in former times, they invented new instruments and new tunes, and new songs to sing to them; as David made songs and invented several instruments of music to sing them upon and to, in religious worship, and for the praise and glory of God; so these men invented new ones to indulge their carnal mirth and jollity, in which they thought themselves to be justified by the example of David.

{x} Antiqu. l. 7. c. 19. sect. 3. {y} Myjrwph "particularizantes", Montanus; "qui particularia habent cantica", Pagninus; "qui particulatim canunt", Vatablus, Mercerus; "variis modulationibus concinunt", Tigurine version.

[[@Amos 6:6]]Ver. [[6 >> Bible:Amos 6:6]]. *That drink wine in bowls*,.... Not in small cups or glasses, but in large bowls, that they might drink freely, even to drunkenness; hence we read of the drunkards of Ephraim, or the ten tribes, Isa 28:1; or "drink in bowls of wine"; which is much to the: same sense. The Targum is,

"that drink wine in silver phials;"

and anoint themselves with the, chief ointments; which Jarchi says was balsam, and the best is that which grew about Jericho; this they did not for moderate refreshment, but for pleasure, and to indulge themselves in luxury:

but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph; or the "breach" of him {z}; that was made upon him by some enemy or another: either what had been already made; Kimchi thinks it respects the carrying captive of some before the reign of Jeroboam; or it may regard the distress Pul king of Assyria gave to Israel, in the times of Menahem; or the carrying captive the inhabitants of several places by Tiglathpileser, king of Assyria, in the times of Pekah, 2Ki 15:19; or else, as Jarchi thinks, this refers to some breach and affliction to come, which these men were unconcerned about; even what they heard from the mouth of the prophets should come to them; that the kingdom of the house of Israel should case, and be utterly took away, Ho 1:4; which was fulfilled by Shalmaneser, who carried Israel captive into the cities of the Medes, 2Ki 17:6; but the prophecy of this did not trouble them, or make them sick at heart, as the word {a} signifies, nor any present affliction that might attend them; they did not weep with them that weep, were men of hard hearts, that had no sympathy with their brethren and fellow creatures. It is thought that here is some allusion to the attitude of Joseph's brethren to him, when in the pit, and sold by them into Egypt; or to the chief butler's forgetfulness of him, when advanced, and amidst his cups.

{z} rbv le "super contritione", Pagninus, Montanus; "propter confractienem Josephi", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; "ob fractionem Josephi", Cocceius. {a} wlxn al "neque afficiuntur argritudine", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius.

[[@Amos 6:7]]Ver. [[7 >> Bible:Amos 6:7]]. *Therefore now shall they go captive with the first that go captive*,.... That is, these men, who were the first and chief in the nation, who would not believe the day of Israel's captivity would ever come; or, however, had very distant apprehensions of it; but indulged and gratified their several senses of tasting, hearing, smelling, in a carnal way, and had no sympathy with and compassion upon their afflicted brethren; these should be the first the enemy should lay hold upon, and carry captive; as we find the royal family, the princes and nobles, the courtiers and chief tradesmen, were the first that were carried captive of the Jews, in Jeconiah's captivity, 2Ki 24:12;

and the banquet of them that stretched themselves shall be removed; that stretched themselves upon couches, Am 6:4; they shall have no more banquets or feasting bouts to attend to, by stretching themselves out, and lying upon couches at their ease; these shall be taken from them; and be glad of bread and water in an enemy's country, without a couch to recline upon. Some understand this of a funeral banquet, as in

Jer 16:5; and so the sense is, that when they die, they shall not have that honour done to their memory, as to have a funeral feast provided for those that attend their burial, as was customary. Kimchi interprets it, "the mourning [of such] shall draw nigh" {b}; and according to his father, Joseph Kimchi, the word in the Arabic language signifies to lift up the voice, either in mourning or joy; and so may signify, that as all feasts, and the joy that attends them, should be removed, which is the sense of the Targum, instead of that, mourning should take place; or they should be deprived of the common ceremony at death of mourning men and women.

{b} ro "ad veniet", Munster; "appropinquabit", Mercerus; "veniet", Calvin. So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 84. 2.

[[@Amos 6:8]]Ver. [[8 >> Bible:Amos 6:8]]. *The Lord God hath sworn by himself*,.... Because he could swear by no greater, **Heb 6:13**; which shows the importance and certainty of the thing sworn to, and is as follows:

saith the Lord, the God of hosts, I abhor the excellency of Jacob; or, "the pride of Jacob" {c}; of Israel, of the ten tribes, remarkable for their pride; hence called the crown of pride, Isa 28:3; it may include all that was glorious, valuable, and excellent among them, of which they were proud; their kingdom, riches, wealth, and strength, their fortified cities and towns: if Judah is comprehended in this, it may regard the temple, which was their excellency, and in which they gloried. So the Targum paraphrases it,

"the house of the sanctuary of the house of Jacob;"

and in like manner Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, interpret it;

and hate his palaces; the palaces of the king and nobles, and great men, which should fall into the enemy's hand, and be plundered and destroyed; which is meant by the Lord's abhorrence and hatred of them, this being an evidence of it;

therefore will I deliver up the city, with all that is therein; or, "with its fulness" {d}; with all its inhabitants and riches; according to Jarchi, the city of Jerusalem is meant; though rather the city of Samaria, unless both are intended, city for cities; since the chief men both of Israel and Judah seem to be addressed, **Am 6:1**.

{c} Nwag ta "superbiam", V. L. Pagninus, Montanus; "fastium", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius. {d} halmw "et plenitudinem ejus", Mercerus, Piscator, Cocceius.

[[@Amos 6:9]]Ver. [[9 >> Bible:Amos 6:9]]. *And it shall come to pass*,.... When the city is delivered up and taken:

if there remain; who are not carried captive, or destroyed by the sword:

ten men in one house; that is, many, a certain number for an uncertain:

that they shall die; either with famine, or by the pestilence, though they have escaped the other calamities; so general shall the destruction be, by one means or another.

[[@Amos 6:10]]Ver. [[10 >> Bible:Amos 6:10]]. *And a man's uncle shall take him up*,....

That is, his father's brother, as Kimchi; or his near kinsman, as the Targum; to whom the right of inheritance belongs, and also the care of his funeral; he shall take up the dead man himself, in order to inter him, there being none to employ in such service; the mortality being so universal, either through the pestilence raging everywhere, or through the earthquake, men being killed by the fall of houses upon them; which Aben Ezra takes to be the case here; see **Am 6:11**;

and he that burneth him; which may be read disjunctively, "or he that burneth him" {e}; his mother's brother, according to Judah ben Karis in Aben Ezra; for which there seems to be no foundation. The Targum renders it in connection with the preceding clause,

"shall take him up from burning;"

and so Jarchi interprets of a man's being found, and taken up in a house, burnt by the enemy at the taking of the city: but it is best to understand it of one whose business it was to burn the dead; which, though not commonly used among the Jews, sometimes was, 1Sa 31:12; and so should be at this time, partly because of the infection, and to stop the contagion; and chiefly because a single man could not well carry whole bodies to the grave, to bury them; and therefore first burnt their flesh, and then buried their bones, as follows:

to bring out the bones out of the house; in order to bury them:

and shall say unto him that [is] by the sides of the house; or "in the corner of it" {f}, as the Targum; either the uncle shall say to the burner, that is searching the house for the dead; or the uncle and burner, being one and the same person, shall say to the only surviving one of the ten, that is got into some corner of the house through fear or melancholy, under such a sad calamity,

[is there] yet [any] with thee? any dead corpse to be brought out and burned and buried?

and he shall say, no; there are no more: or "[there is] an end" of them all {g}; the last has been brought out: or, as the Targum,

"they are perished;"

they are all dead, and carried out:

then shall he say, hold thy tongue; lest the neighbours should hear, and be discouraged at the number of the dead in one house; or say not one word against the providence of God, nor murmur and repine at his hand, since it is just and righteous:

for we may not make mention of the name of the Lord; being forbid by their superiors; or it is not right to do it by way of complaint, since our sins have deserved such judgments to come upon us; or it will be to no purpose to make mention of the name of the Lord, and pray unto him to turn away his hand, since destruction is determined, the decree is gone forth. The Targum is,

"he shall say, remove (that is, the dead), since while they lived they did not pray in the name of the Lord."

And so the Syriac and Arabic versions make this to be the reason of the mortality, "because they remembered not the name of the Lord"; or, "called not upon" it.

{e} wpromw "aut vespillo", Tigurine version; "aut ustor ejus", Junius & Tremellius. {f} ytkryb "in penitissimis domus", Cocceius. {g} opa "finis est", V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Calvin, Drusius.

[[@Amos 6:11]]Ver. [[11 >> Bible:Amos 6:11]]. ***For, behold, the Lord commandeth***,.... Hath determined and ordered the judgment before, and what follows: Kimchi paraphrases it, hath decreed the earthquake, as in **Am 3:15**; of which he understands the following:

and he will smite the great house with breaches; or "droppings" {h}; so that the rain shall drop through:

and the little house with clefts; so that it shall fall to ruin; that is, he shall smite the houses both of great and small, of the princes, and of the common people, either with an earthquake, so that they shall part asunder and fall; or, being left without inhabitants, shall of course become desolate, there being none to repair their breaches. Some understand, by the "great house", the ten tribes of Israel; and, by the "little house", the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin; to which sense the Targum seems to incline,

"he will smite the great kingdom with a mighty stroke, and the little kingdom with a weak stroke."

{h} Myoyor "guttis, [seu] stillis", Piscator; qekadev, "quae est minuta et rorans pluvia", Drusius.

[[@Amos 6:12]]Ver. [[12 >> Bible:Amos 6:12]]. ***Shall horses run upon the rocks? or will [one] plough [there] with oxen?***.... Will any man be so weak and foolish, to propose or attempt a race for horses upon rocks, where they and their riders would be in danger of breaking their necks? or would any man act so unwise a part, as to take a yoke of oxen to plough with them upon a rock, where no impression can be made? as vain and fruitless a thing it would be to attempt to bring such persons under a conviction of their sins, and to repentance for them, and reformation from them, who are given up to a judicial hardness of heart, like that of a rock, as are the persons described in the next clause; or as such methods with horses and oxen would be contrary to all the rules of reason and prudence, so as contrary a part do such persons act whose characters are next given, and there is no probability of bringing them to better sense and practice of things;

for ye have turned judgment into gall, and the fruit of righteousness into hemlock; that which would be beneficial to a nation, than which nothing is more so, as the exercise of justice, and judgment, into that which is bitter and pernicious to it, as injustice and oppression; see **Am 5:7**.

[[@Amos 6:13]]Ver. [[13 >> Bible:Amos 6:13]]. ***Ye which rejoice in a thing of nought***,.... In their wealth and riches, which are things that are not, because of the uncertainty of them; and, in comparison of true riches, have no solidity and substance in them, **Proverbs 23:5**; or in any of the things of this world, the lusts of it, the honours of it, human wisdom or strength; all are things of nought, of no worth, give no satisfaction, and are of no continuance, and not to be gloried in, **Jer 9:23**; or in their idols, for an idol is nothing in the world, **1 Corinthians**

8:4; and yet they rejoiced in them, **Ac 7:41**; or in their own works of righteousness, as men of a pharisaical temper do, as these people were; these indeed are something, when done in obedience to the will of God, and according to that, and from right principles, and in the exercise of faith and love, and with a view to the glory of God, and as they are evidences of true grace, and profitable to men, and tend to glorify God, and serve the interest of religion; but they are things of nought, and not to be rejoiced and gloried in, in the business of justification before God, and in the affair of salvation: the same may be said of a mere outward profession of religion depended on, and all external rites and ceremonies, or submission to outward ordinances, whether legal or evangelical. The phrase may be rendered, "in that which is no word" {i}; is not the word of God, nor according to it; indeed everything short of Christ and his righteousness, and salvation by him, are things of nought, and not to be rejoiced in, **Php 3:3**;

which say, have we not taken to us horns by our own strength? by which we have pushed our enemies, got victory over them, and obtained power, dominion, and authority; all which horns are an emblem of. So Sanchoniatho {k} says, Astarte put upon her own head a bull's head, as an ensign of royalty, or a mark of sovereignty; by which, as Bishop Cumberland {l} thinks, is plainly meant the bull's horns, since it is certain that a horn, in the eastern languages, is an emblem or expression noting royal power, as in **1Sa 2:10**; and in other places; see **Da 7:24**; thus the kings of Egypt wore horns, as Diodorus relates; and perhaps for the same reason the Egyptians adorned Isis with horns {m}. And all this they ascribed not to God, but to themselves. The Targum interprets "horns" by riches; but it rather signifies victory {n}, and power and government, which they took to themselves, and imputed to their own strength, valour, and courage: very probably here is an allusion to their ensigns, banners, shields, or helmets, on which horns might be figured or engraven, being the arms of Ephraim, the son of Joseph, the chief of the ten tribes, who are here spoken of Ephraim is often put for the ten tribes, or the kingdom of Israel; and Joseph, whose son he was, "his glory [was] like the firstling of a bullock, [and] his horns" are said to be like "the horns of unicorns: with them", it is promised, "he shall push the people together, to the ends of the earth, and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh", **Deuteronomy 33:17**; and it may be, as the lion seems to be the ensign of the tribe of Judah, to which he is by Jacob compared; so the ox or the unicorn might be the ensign of the tribe of Ephraim: and so the ancient Jews, as Aben Ezra on **Nu 2:2**; observes, say, that the form of a man was on the standard of Reuben; and the form of a lion on the standard of Judah; and the form of an ox on the standard of Ephraim, &c. and others {o} of them say that the standard of Joseph was dyed very black, and was figured for the two princes of Ephraim and Manasseh; upon the standard of Ephraim was figured an ox, because "the firstling of a bullock"; and on the standard of Manasseh was figured an unicorn, because "his horns are like the horns of unicorns". Now the Israelites, or those of the ten tribes, at the head of which Ephraim was, set up their banners, not in the name of the Lord, but in their own strength; and attributed their conquests and dominions to their own conduct and courage, the horns of their own strength, and not to God {p}. And this also is the language of such persons, who ascribe regeneration and conversion, faith, repentance, the cleansing of a man's heart, and the reformation of his life, yea, his whole salvation, to the power and strength of his free will, when man has no strength at all to effect any of these things; these are all vain boasts, and very disagreeable and offensive to the Lord; and for such like things persons stand here reproved by him, and threatened with woes; for woe must be here supplied from **Am 6:1**.

{i} rbd all "in non verbo", Montanus. {k} Apud Euseb. Evangel. Prepar. l. 2. p. 38. {l} Sanchoniatho's History, p. 35. {m} Vid. Pignorii Mensa Isiaca, p. 30. {n} "Vieimus, et domitum pedibus calcamus amorem, Venerunt capiti cornua sera meo". Ovid. Amor. l. 3.

Eleg. 10. {o} Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 178. 3. {p} Vid. Lydium de Re Militari, l. 4. c. 4. p. 164.

[[@Amos 6:14]]Ver. [[14 >> Bible:Amos 6:14]]. *But, behold, I will raise up against you a nation, O house of Israel, saith the Lord, the God of hosts*,.... The Assyrian nation, under its king, Shalmaneser; who invaded Israel, came up to Samaria, and after a three years' siege took it, and carried Israel captive into foreign lands, 2Ki 17:5;

and they shall afflict you; by battles, sieges, forages, plunders, and burning of cities and towns, and putting the inhabitants to the sword:

from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of the wilderness; from Hamath the less, said by Josephus {q} and Jerom {r} to be called Epiphania, in their times, from Antiochus Epiphanes; it was at the entrance on the land of Israel, and at the northern border of it; so that "the river of the wilderness", whatever is meant by it, lay to the south; by which it appears that this affliction and distress would be very general, from one end of it to the other. Some, by this river, understand the river of Egypt, at the entrance of Egypt in the wilderness of Ethan; Sihor or Nile; which, Jarchi says, lay southwest of Israel, as Hamath lay northwest of it. And a late traveller {s} observes, that the south and southwest border of the tribe of Judah, containing within it the whole or the greatest part of what was called the "way of the spies", Nu 21:1; and afterwards Idumea, extended itself from the Elenitic gulf of the Red sea, along by that of Hieropolis, quite to the Nile westward; the Nile consequently, in this view and situation, either with regard to the barrenness of the Philistines, or to the position of it with respect to the land of promise, or to the river Euphrates, may, with propriety enough, be called "the river of the wilderness", **Am 6:14**; as this district, which lies beyond the eastern or Asiatic banks of the Nile, from the parallel of Memphis, even to Pelusium, (the land of Goshen only excepted,) is all of it dry, barren, and inhospitable; or if the situation be more regarded, it may be called, as it is rendered by the Septuagint, the western torrent or river. Though some {t} take this to be the river Bosor or Bezor, that parts the tribes, of Judah and Simeon, and discharges itself into the Mediterranean between Gaza, or rather Majuma, and Anthedon. Though Kimchi takes this river to be the sea of the plain, the same with the Salt or Dead sea, **Deuteronomy 3:17**; which may seem likely, since Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, under whom Amos prophesied, had restored the coast of Israel, from the entering of Hamath unto the sea of the plain, 2Ki 14:25; with which they were elevated, and of which they boasted; but now they should have affliction and distress in the same places, and which should extend as far.

{q} Antiqu. l. 1. c. 6. sect. 2. {r} Comment in Isa. x. fol. 20. G. & in Zech. ix. fol. 116. L. **Deuteronomy** locis Heb. fol. 88. E. & Quaest. in Gen. fol. 67. B. {s} Dr. Shaw's Travels, p. 287, 288. Ed. 2. {t} See the Universal History, vol. 2. p. 427, 428.

[[@Amos 7]]

Chapter 7

INTRODUCTION TO AMOS 7

In this and the two following chapters are the visions of Amos, in number five; three of which are contained in this chapter, and with which it begins. The first is of the grasshoppers or

locusts eating up the later grass of the land, which are stopped at the intercession of the prophet, **Am 7:1**; the second is of fire the Lord called for to contend by, whose devouring flames are made to cease by the same interposition, **Am 7:4**; and the other is of the plumbline, signifying the utter destruction of the people of Israel, according to the righteous judgment of God, **Am 7:7**; upon the delivery of which prophecies and visions, the priest of Bethel forms a charge against the prophet to the king; and advises Amos to flee into Judea, and prophesy there, and not at Bethel, being willing to be rid of him at any rate, **Am 7:10**; next follows the prophet's vindication of himself showing his divine call to the prophetic office, and his mission and express order he had from the Lord to prophesy unto Israel, **Am 7:14**; and concludes with a denunciation of divine judgments on the priest's family, and upon the whole land of Israel, **Am 7:16**.

[[@Amos 7:1]]Ver. [[1 >> Bible:Amos 7:1]]. *Thus hath the Lord showed unto me*,.... What follows in this and the two chapters, before the prophet delivered what he heard from the Lord; now what he saw, the same thing, the ruin of the ten tribes, is here expressed as before, but in a different form; before in prophecy, here in vision, the more to affect and work upon the hearts of the people:

and, behold, he formed grasshoppers; or "locusts" {u}, as the word is rendered, Isa 33:4; and so the Septuagint here, and other versions. Kimchi interprets it, and, behold, a collection or swarm of locusts; and the Targum, a creation of them. Though Aben Ezra takes the word to be a verb, and not a noun, and the sense to be, agreeably to our version, he showed me the blessed God, who was forming locusts; it appeared to Amos, in the vision of prophecy, as if the Lord was making locusts, large and great ones, and many of them; not that this was really done, only visionally, and was an emblem of the Assyrian army, prepared and ready to devour the land of Israel; see **Joe 1:4**. And this was

in the beginning of the shooting up of the latter growth; and, lo, [it was] the latter growth after the king's mowings; when the first grass was mowed down, and the first crop gathered in, for the use of the king's cattle; as the later grass was just springing up, and promised a second crop, these grasshoppers or locusts were forming, which threatened the destruction of it. This must be towards the close of the summer, and when autumn was coming on, at which time naturalists tell us that locusts breed. So Aristotle {w} says, they bring forth at the going out of the summer; and of one sort of them he says, their eggs perish in the waters of autumn, or when it is a wet autumn; but in a dry autumn there is a large increase of them: and so Pliny says {x}, they breed in the autumn season and lie under the earth all the winter, and appear in the spring: and Columella observes {y}, that locusts are most suitably and commodiously fed with grass in autumn; which is called "cordum", or the latter grass, that comes or springs late in the year; such as this now was. The Mahometans speak {z} much of God being the Maker of locusts; they say he made them of the clay which was left at the formation of Adam; and represent him saying, I am God, nor is there any Lord of locusts besides me, who feed them, and send them for food to the people, or as a punishment to them, as I please: they call them the army of the most high God, and will not suffer any to kill them; See Gill on "Re 9:3"; whether all this is founded on this passage of Scripture, I cannot say; however, there is no reason from thence to make the locusts so peculiarly the workmanship of God as they do, since this was only in a visionary way; though it may be observed, that it is with great propriety, agreeable to the nature of these creatures, that God is represented as forming them at such a season of the year. Some, by "the king's mowings", understand the carrying captive the ten tribes by Shalmaneser king of Assyria; so Ribera; after which things were in a

flourishing state, or at least began to be so, in the two tribes under Hezekiah, when they were threatened with ruin by the army of Sennacherib, from which there was a deliverance: but as this vision, and the rest, only respect the ten tribes of Israel, "the king's mowings" of the first crop may signify the distresses of the people of Israel, in the times of Jehoahaz king of Israel, by Hazael and Benhadad kings of Syria, 2Ki 13:3; when things revived again, like the shooting up of the later grass, in the reign of Joash, and especially of Jeroboam his son, who restored the coast of Israel, the Lord having compassion on them, 2Ki 13:25; but after his death things grew worse; his son reigned but six months, and he that slew him but one; and in the reign of Menahem, that succeeded him, an invasion of the land was made by Pul king of Assyria, 2Ki 15:19; which is generally thought to be intended here. Or else, as others, it may refer to the troubles in the interregnum, after the death of Jeroboam, to his son's mounting the throne, the space of eleven years, when, and afterwards, Israel was in a declining state.

{u} ybg "ecce fitor locustarum", Pagninus, Montanus; so Munster, Vatablus, Cocceius, Burkus. {w} Hist. Animal. l. 5. c. 28, 29. {x} Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 29. {y} Apud Bochart. Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 4. c. 6. col. 484. {z} Vid. Bochart, ib. col. 486.

[[@Amos 7:2]]Ver. [[2 >> Bible:Amos 7:2]]. ***And it came to pass, [that] when they had made an end of eating the grass of the land,***.... That is, the grasshoppers or locusts; when in the vision it seemed to the prophet that almost all the grass of the land was eaten up, and they were going to seize upon the corn, and other fruits of the earth: this signifies not Sennacherib's invasion of the land of Judea, but Pul's invasion of the land of Israel, whose army seemed like these locusts; and spreading themselves over the land, threatened it with desolation, as these locusts seemed to have wholly consumed all the grass of the land; then the prophet said what follows:

then I said, O Lord God, forgive, I beseech thee; the sins of the people, as the Targum, which were the cause of these locusts coming, or of the Assyrian army invading the land; and the prophet prays that God would avert this judgment, signified in this vision, or remove it, which is often in Scripture meant by the forgiveness of sin, Ex 32:31; this is the business of the prophets and ministers of the Lord, to intercede for a people when ruin is near; and happy is that people, when they have such to stand up in the breach for them. The argument the prophet uses is,

by whom shall Jacob arise? for he [is] small; or "little" {a}; like the first shooting up of the grass, after it has been own: or, as Noldius {b} renders it, "how [otherwise] should Jacob stand?" and so Kimchi, how should there be a standing for him? that is, unless God forgives his sin, and turns away his wrath, how shall he stand up under the weight of his sins, which must lie upon him, unless forgiven? and how shall he bear the wrath and indignation of God for them? and so if any sinner is not forgiven, how shall he stand before God to serve and worship him now? or at his tribunal with confidence hereafter? or sustain his wrath and displeasure to all eternity? see **Psalm 130:3**; or, "who of" or "in Jacob shall stand" {c}? not one will be left; all must be cut off, if God forgive not; for all are sinners, there are none without sin: or, "who shall stand for Jacob?" {d} or intercede for him? it will be to no purpose, if God is inexorable: so the Targum,

"who will stand and ask "pardon" for their sins?"

or, "who will raise up Jacob?" {e} from that low condition in which he is, or likely to be in, if God forgive not, and does not avert the judgment threatened, to a high and glorious state of

prosperity and happiness; for, if all are cut off, there will be none left to be instruments of such a work: "for he [is] small"; few in number, and greatly weakened by one calamity or another; and, if this should take place, would be fewer and weaker still. So the church of Christ, which is often signified by Jacob, is sometimes in a very low estate; the number of converts few; has but a little strength to bear afflictions, perform duty, and withstand enemies; it is a day of small things with it, with respect to light and knowledge, and the exercise of grace, especially faith; when some like the prophet are concerned for it, by whom it shall arise; the God of Jacob can cause it to arise, and can raise up instruments for such service, and make his ministers, and the ministry of the word and ordinances, means of increasing the number, stature, spiritual light, knowledge, grace, and strength of his people.

{a} Njq "parvulus", V. L. Pagninus, Montanus; "parvus", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius. {b} bqey Mwqy ym "quomodo (alias) surget Jacob?" Concord. Ebr. Part. p. 60. No. 1979. "quomodo consistet?" Liveleus; "quomodo surget Jacob?" Drusius. {c} "Quis staret, Jahacobo?" Junius & Tremellius; "quis remaneret Jacobo?" Piscator. {d} "Quis stabit pro Jacobo?" Mercerus. {e} "Quis suseitabit Jahacobo?" V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus.

[[@Amos 7:3]]Ver. [[3 >> Bible:Amos 7:3]]. ***The Lord repented for this***,.... He heard the prayer of the prophet, and at his intercession averted, the threatened judgment; thus the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much, **Jas 5:16**; this is spoken after the manner of men; as men, when they repent of a thing, desist from it, so the Lord desisted from going on with this judgment; he did not change his mind, but changed the dispensations of his providence according to his mind and will:

it shall not be, saith the Lord; these grasshoppers or locusts, the Assyrian army, shall not at this time destroy the land of Israel: Pul king of Assyria took a sum of money of the king of Israel, and so turned back, and stayed not in the land, 2Ki 15:19.

[[@Amos 7:4]]Ver. [[4 >> Bible:Amos 7:4]]. ***Thus hath the Lord showed unto me***,.... Another vision after this manner:

and, behold, the Lord God called to contend by fire; gave out that he would have a controversy with his people Israel, and proclaimed the time when he would try the cause with them, and that by fire: or he called his family, as Jarchi; that is, his angels, as Kimchi, to cause fire to descend upon Israel, as upon Sodom and Gomorrah; so other Rabbins Kimchi mentions: or, as he interprets it, the scorching heat of the sun, like fire that restrained the rain, dried up the plants, and lessened the waters of the river, and so brought on a general drought, and in consequence famine: or rather a foreign army, involving them in war, burning their cities and towns; see **Am 1:4**;

and it devoured the great deep; it seemed, as if it did; as the fire from heaven, in Elijah's time, licked up the water in the trench, 1Ki 18:38; so this, coming at God's command, seemed to dry up the whole ocean; by which may be meant the multitude of people, nations, and kingdoms, subdued by the Assyrians; see Re 17:15;

and did eat up a part; a part of a field, as Jarchi and Aben Ezra; of the king's field, **Am 7:1**; as Kimchi; showing, as he observes, that the reigning king was a bad king, and that this was for his sin: or rather a part of the land of Israel; and so refers, as is generally thought, to Tiglathpileser's invasion of the land, who carried captive a part of it, 2Ki 15:29.

[[@Amos 7:5]]Ver. [[5 >> Bible:Amos 7:5]]. ***Then said I, O Lord God, cease, I beseech thee***,.... From destroying the land; suffer not this calamity to proceed any further; using the same argument as before:

by whom shall Jacob arise? for he [is] small; See Gill on "Am 7:2".

[[@Amos 7:6]]Ver. [[6 >> Bible:Amos 7:6]]. ***The Lord repented for this***,.... He heard the prophet's prayer, and desisted from going on with the threatened destruction:

this also shall not be, saith the Lord God; the whole land shall not be destroyed, only a part of it carried captive.

[[@Amos 7:7]]Ver. [[7 >> Bible:Amos 7:7]]. ***Thus he showed me***,.... A third vision, which was in the following manner:

and, behold, the Lord stood upon a wall [made] by a plumbline, with a plumbline in his hand: this "wall" was the people of Israel, who were built up as a wall, firm and strong; and so stood against their enemies, while supported by the Lord, and he stood by them. The Septuagint version is, "an adamantine wall". In their constitution, both civil and ecclesiastic, they were formed according to the good and righteous laws of God, which may be signified by the plumbline; and so the Targum renders it, "the wall of judgment". And now the Lord appears standing upon this wall, to trample it down, and not to support it; and with a plumbline in his hand, to examine and try whether this wall was as it was first erected; whether it did not bulge out, and vary from its former structure, and was not according to the line and rule of his divine word, which was a rule of righteousness.

[[@Amos 7:8]]Ver. [[8 >> Bible:Amos 7:8]]. ***And the Lord said unto me, Amos, what seest thou?***.... This question was put to him, the rather, since he was silent, and did not upon this vision, as the former, make any supplication to the Lord; as also, because this vision portended something of moment and importance, which he would have the prophet attend to:

and I said, a plumbline; the same word as before, and is differently rendered, as already observed. The Vulgate Latin version renders it, "a plasterer's" or "mason's trowel"; with which they lay their plaster and mortar on in building: the Septuagint, an adamant: and which, by Pliny {f}, is called "anachites"; a word in sound near to this here used: the Targum renders it, "judgment": but Jarchi and Aben Ezra observe, that in the Arabic tongue it signifies lead or tin, as it does {g}; and so a line with lead at the end of it;

then said the Lord, behold, I will set a plumbline in the midst of my people Israel; take an exact account of their actions, and see how they agree or disagree with the rule of the word; and in the most strict and righteous manner deal with them for their sins and transgressions, "lay judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet", Isa 28:17;

I will not again pass by them any more; wink at their sins, and overlook their transgressions, by not correcting and punishing for them; or will not pardon them, but inflict punishment on them. So the Targum,

"behold, I will exercise judgment in the midst of my people Israel, and I will not add any more to pardon them."

Though some understand it of God's making such an utter end of them, that he should no more "pass through them" {h}, to destroy them, having done it at once, and thoroughly.

{f} Nat. Hist. l. 3. c. 4. {g} "plumbum, sive nigrum, sive album puriusque", Camusus; "plumbum et stannum", Ibn Maruph apud Golium, col. 176. Avicenna apud Castel. col. 161. Vid. Hottinger. Smegma Oriental. l. 1. c. 7. p. 122. {h} wl rwbe dwe Pyowa al "non adjiciam ultra pertransire eum", Montanus; "non ultra per eum transibit", some in Mercerus.

[[@Amos 7:9]]Ver. [[9 >> Bible:Amos 7:9]]. ***And the high places of Isaac shall be desolate***,.... Such as the ten tribes of Israel, who descended from Isaac, built at Beersheba, in imitation of Isaac, and pleading his example; who worshipped there, though not idols, as they, but the true God; and in commemoration of his being bound upon an altar on Mount Moriah: but these, as the Septuagint version renders it, were "high places of laughter", ridiculous in the eyes of the Lord, despised by him, and so should be made desolate:

and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste; the temples built for the calves at Dan and Bethel, and other places:

and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword; or, as the Targum,

"I will raise up against the house of Jeroboam those that slay with the sword;"

this was fulfilled by Shallum, who conspired against Zachariah the son of Jeroboam, and slew him, and reigned in his stead, which put an end to the family of Jeroboam, 2Ki 15:10.

[[@Amos 7:10]]Ver. [[10 >> Bible:Amos 7:10]]. ***Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel***,.... The Targum calls him the prince or president of Bethel; and the word used signifies both a prince and a priest; and very probably this man had the care of the civil as well as religious matters in Bethel. Aben Ezra styles him the priest of Baal; he was one that succeeded the priests that Jeroboam the son of Nebat placed here, to offer sacrifices to the calf he set up in this place, 1Ki 12:32; who hearing the above three visions of Amos delivered, and fearing that he would alienate the people from the idolatrous worship he was at the head of, and frighten them from an attendance on it, which would lessen his esteem with the people, and also his worldly gain and profit; and observing that Amos did not make any intercession for the averting of the judgment threatened in the last vision, as in the other two, and which particularly concerned the king's family: he

sent to Jeroboam king of Israel; either letters or messengers, or both; who, it seems, was not at this time at Bethel, but at some other place; perhaps Samaria, which was not a great way from hence:

saying, Amos hath conspired against thee in the midst of the land of Israel; he speaks of Amos as if he was well known to the king, and perhaps he might be, having long prophesied in the land of Israel, and near the court; and represents him as a seditious person, not as affecting the crown and kingdom himself, but as stirring up a spirit, of rebellion among the people; taking off their affections from their prince, and them from their allegiance to him, by

representing him as a wicked person that would in a little time be cut off; and this he did not privately, and in a corner, but publicly, in the midst of the land, and before all the people of Israel; and this was no new and unusual thing to represent good man, and especially ministers of the word, as enemies to the civil government, when none are truer friends to it, or more quiet under it:

the land is not able to bear all his words; either to withstand the power of them; they will have such an influence upon the people, if timely care is not taken, as to cause them both to reject the established religion and worship at Dan and Bethel, and to rise up in arms against the civil government, and dethrone him the king; such terrible things he says to the people, as will frighten them, and put them upon taking such measures as these: or else the prophet's words were so intolerable, that his good subjects, the inhabitants of the land could not bear them; and if he did not give orders himself to take away his life, they would rise up against him, and dispatch him themselves.

[[@Amos 7:11]]Ver. [[11 >> Bible:Amos 7:11]]. ***For thus Amos saith, Jeroboam shall die by the sword***,.... Which was not saying truth; for Amos said not that Jeroboam should die by the sword, but that God would raise up the sword against his house or family; nor did Jeroboam die by the sword, but his son Zachariah did:

and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of their own land; this was true; Amos did say this, and he afterwards confirms it. This is the amount of the charge brought against the prophet, which has some truth and some falsehood mixed together; and by which method the priest hoped to gain his point, and get the prophet either banished or put to death.

[[@Amos 7:12]]Ver. [[12 >> Bible:Amos 7:12]]. ***Also Amaziah said unto Amos***,.... Either at the same time; or, it may be, after he had waited for the king's answer, and received none; or what did not come up to his expectations and wishes. We have no account of any answer the king returned; who either gave no heed to the representations of the priest, or had a better opinion of, he prophet, and did not credit the things imputed to him; which the priest observing, took another way to get rid of the prophet, and that by flattery:

O thou seer; that seest visions, and foretells things to come. This title, which of right belonged to him, and is given to the true prophets of God sometimes, is here given to Amos, either seriously or ironically:

go, flee thee away into the land of Judah; to which he belonged, and where the temple stood, and the true worship of God was performed; and where the king, princes, and people, were on his side of the question; and where his prophecies would be received, and he caressed for them, being against the ten tribes, with whom they were at variance, and where also he would be safe; for he suggests, that, in giving this advice, he consulted his good and safety; for, if he stayed here long, King Jeroboam would certainly take away his life; and therefore he advised him to flee with all haste to his own country:

and there eat bread, and prophesy there: he took him for a mercenary man like himself, and that he prophesied for bread; which he intimates he would never be able to get in the land of Israel, but in all probability might in the land of Judea.

[[@Amos 7:13]]Ver. [[13 >> Bible:Amos 7:13]]. **But prophesy not again any more at Bethel**,.... He might prophesy any where, if he did not there, for what the priest cared, that so his honour and interest were not hurt. The reasons he gave were,

for it [is] the king's chapel; or "sanctuary" {i}; where a temple was built for the idol calf, and where the king worshipped it, and attended all other religious service:

and it [is] the king's court; or "the house of the kingdom" {k}; the seat of it, where the king had a royal palace, and sometimes resided here, and kept his court, as well as at Samaria; often coming hither to worship, it being nearer to him than Dan, where the other calf was placed; intimating hereby that the king would never suffer such a troublesome man as he to be so near him; and by prophesying to interrupt him, either in his religious or civil affairs; and therefore advises him by all means to depart, if he had any regard to his life or peace.

{i} vdqm "sanctuarium", Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Mercerus, Junius & Tremellius. Piscator, Drusius, Cocceius. {k} awh hklmm tybw "et domus regni est", V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus, Cocceius; "domus regia", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[[@Amos 7:14]]Ver. [[14 >> Bible:Amos 7:14]]. **Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah**,.... With much freedom, boldness, and intrepidity, and yet with modesty and humility; not at all moved by his frowns or his flattery:

I [was] no prophet, neither [was] I a prophet's son: he was not a prophet originally, or from his youth, as Kimchi; he was not born and bred one; neither his father was a prophet, by whom he could get any instructions in the mystery of prophesying; nor was he a disciple of any of the prophets, or brought up in any of their schools as some were; he was no prophet till the Lord called him immediately, at once, from his secular employment to this office; and therefore did not take it up to get a livelihood by Jarchi and Aben Ezra interpret it, that he was not one of the false prophets that prophesied for hire, and took a reward:

but I [was] an herdsman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit; that is, originally: this was the employment he was brought up in from his youth, and was in it when he was called to be a prophet; he looked after cattle, both great and small; and at a certain time of the year used, to gather sycamore fruit, which was a kind of figs; and by, its name had the resemblance both of figs and mulberries. Some take it to be what were called Egyptian figs; these he gathered, either for the use of his masters, or for food for himself, or for the cattle, or both: or he was an "opener" of them, as the Septuagint; he cut, them, and made incisions in them; for, as Pliny {l}, Dioscorides {m}, and Theophrastus {n} observe, this fruit must be cut or scratched, either with the nail, or with iron, or it will not ripen; but, four days after being scratched or cut, will become ripe. Mr. Norden {o}, a late traveller in Egypt, has given us a very particular account of this tree and its fruit.

"This sycamore (he says) is of the height of a beech, and bears its fruit in a manner quite different from other trees; it has them on the trunk itself, which shoots out little sprigs in form of grape stalks; at the end of which grow the fruit close to one another, almost like bunches of grapes. The tree is always green, and bears fruit several times in the year, without observing any certain seasons: for I have seen (says he) some sycamores that have given fruit two months after others. The fruit has the figure and smell of real figs, but is inferior to them in the taste, having a disgusting sweetness. Its colour is a yellow, inclining to an ochre, shadowed by a flesh colour. In the inside it resembles the common figs, excepting that it has a

blackish colouring with yellow spots. This sort of tree is pretty common in Egypt; the people for the greater part live upon its fruit, and think themselves well regaled when they have a piece of bread, a couple of sycamore figs, and a pitcher filled with water from the Nile."

This account in several things agrees with what Pliny {p} and Solinus {q} relate of this tree and its fruit; very likely there might be many of these trees in Judea; there seem to have been great numbers of them in Solomon's time, 1Ki 10:27; and perhaps it was one of these that Zacchaeus climbed, in order to see Christ, Lu 19:4; for this sort of trees delight in vales and plains, such as were the plains of Jericho; and in the Talmud {r} we read of sycamore trees in Jericho; and of the men of Jericho allowing the branches of them to be cut down for sacred uses. These also grew in lower Galilee, but not in upper Galilee; and that they were frequent in the land of Israel appears from the rules the Misnic doctors {s} give about the planting, and cutting them down; and in the opening of these trees, and making incisions in them, and in gathering the fruit of them, Amos might be concerned. Kimchi and Ben Melech say the word signifies to "mix", and that his business was to mix these together with other fruit. Aben Ezra observes, that in the Arabic language it signifies to dry; and then his work was, after he had gathered them, to lay them a drying. Some render the word a "searcher" {t} of them; as if his employment was to look out for them, and seek them where they were to be got: however, be this as it will, the prophet suggests that he had been used to a low life, and to mean fare, with which he was contented, and did not take up this business of prophesying for bread, and could return to his former employment without any regret, to get a maintenance, if so was the will of God. The Targum gives it a different sense,

"for I am a master of cattle, and have sycamores in the fields;"

and so Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, represent him as suggesting that he was rich, and had no need of bread to be given him, or to prophesy for that.

{l} Nat. Hist. l. 13. c. 7. {m} L. 1. c. 143. {n} Hist. l. 4. c. 2. {o} Travels in Egypt and Nubis, vol. 1. p. 79, 80. {p} Nat. Hist. l. 13. c. 7. {q} Polyhistor. c. 45. {r} T. Bab Pesachim, fol. 56. 1. & 57. 1. & Menachot, fol. 71. 1. {s} Misn. Shevath, c. 9. sect. 2. & Bava Bathra, c. 2. sect. 7. {t} olzb "disquirens", Montanus, Vatablus; "perquirens", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Burkus. So R. Sol. Urbin Ohel Moed, fol. 31. 2.

[[@Amos 7:15]]Ver. [[15 >> Bible:Amos 7:15]]. ***And the Lord took me as I followed the flock***,.... Or "from behind" it {u}; a description of a shepherd, such an one Amos was, and in this employ when the Lord called him, and took him to be a prophet; he did not seek after it, nor did he take this honour to himself; by which it appears that his mission was divine, and that he did not enter on this work with lucrative views: thus God took David in a like state of life, and made him king of Israel; and Elisha from the plough, and made him a prophet: and Christ several of his disciples from being fishermen, and made them fishers of men, or ministers of the word; and so their call appeared more clear and manifest;

and the Lord said unto me; in a vision or dream by night; or by an articulate voice he heard; or by an impulse upon his spirit, which comes from the Spirit of God:

go, prophesy unto my people Israel; for so they were by profession, and notwithstanding their apostasy; as yet they were not tallied "Loammi", Ho 1:9; to these the prophet was bid to go out of the land of Judea, where he was a herdsman, and prophesy in the name of the Lord to them; wherefore what he did was in obedience to the command of God, and he did but his

duty; and what he in this verse and **Am 7:14** declares, is a sufficient vindication of himself, his character, and conduct; and having done this, he has something to say to the priest, as follows.

{u} Nau yrtam "de post pecus", Montanus; "de post gregem", Vatablus; "a post gregem", Liveleus.

[[@Amos 7:16]]Ver. [[16 >> Bible:Amos 7:16]]. **Now therefore hear thou the word of the Lord**,.... Which I have from him concerning thee, and which he has pronounced upon thee and thy family:

thou sayest, prophesy not against Israel; when God has bid me prophesy:

and drop not [thy word] against the house of Isaac; say nothing against it, though in ever so soft and gentle a manner: it designs the same thing as before, only in different words; and is a prohibition of the prophet to prophesy against the ten tribes that descended from Isaac, in the line of Jacob. So the Targum paraphrases it,

"thou shalt not teach against the house of Isaac;"

or deliver out any prophecy or doctrine that is against them, or threatens them with any calamity. Jarchi says the phrase is expressive of prophecy; see **Deuteronomy 32:2**.

[[@Amos 7:17]]Ver. [[17 >> Bible:Amos 7:17]]. **Therefore thus saith the Lord**,.... For withstanding the prophet of the Lord, and forbidding him to speak in his name against the idolatry of Israel, as well as for his own idolatry:

thy wife shall be an harlot in the city: either of Bethel or Samaria; either through force, being ravished by the soldiers upon taking and plundering the city; so Theodoret and others: or rather of choice; either, through poverty, to get bread, or through a vicious inclination, and that in a public manner: the meaning is, that she should be a common strumpet; which must be a great affliction to him, and a just punishment for his idolatry, or spiritual adultery; this must be before the siege and taking of Samaria, since by that time the priest's wife would be too old to be used as a harlot:

and thy sons and thy daughters shall fall by the sword; either of Shallum, who smote Zachariah the son of Jeroboam with the sword, before the people, and very probably many of his friends with him, among whom this family was; or of Menahem, who slew Shallum, and destroyed many places that opened not to him, with their inhabitants, and ripped up the women with child; or in the after invasions by Pul, Tiglathpileser, and Shalmaneser, 2Ki 15:10;

and thy land shall be divided by line; either the whole land of Israel be lived in, or the land that was in the possession of this priest, and was his own property; this should be measured with a line, and be parted among foreigners, that should invade the land, and subdue it; a just punishment of the sins he had been guilty of, in getting large possessions in an ill manner:

and thou shalt die in a polluted land; not in his own land, reckoned holy, but in a Heathen land, which was accounted defiled, because the inhabitants of it were uncircumcised and

idolaters, and he was no better; perhaps the land of Assyria, whither he might with others be carried captive; or some other land he was forced to flee into:

and Israel shall surely go into captivity forth of his land; as he had before prophesied, and here confirms it; and which was fulfilled in the times of Hoshea king of Israel, by Shalmaneser king of Assyria, 2Ki 17:6.

[[@Amos 8]]

Chapter 8

INTRODUCTION TO AMOS 8

In this chapter a fourth vision is delivered, the vision of a "basket of summer fruit"; signifying the destruction of the ten tribes, for which they were ripe, and which would quickly come upon them, **Am 8:1**; the rich are reprov'd for their oppression of the poor, their covetousness and earthly mindedness, **Am 8:4**; for which they are threatened with entire ruin, sudden calamities, and very mournful times, instead of light, joy, and gladness, **Am 8:7**; and particularly with a famine of hearing the word of God, **Am 8:11**; the consequence of which would be, a fainting of the young men and virgins for thirst, and the utter and irrecoverable ruin of all idolaters, **Am 8:13**.

[[@Amos 8:1]]Ver. [[1 >> Bible:Amos 8:1]]. *Thus hath the Lord God showed unto me*,.... Another vision, which is the fourth, and after the following manner:

and, behold, a basket of summer fruit; not of the first ripe fruit, but of such as were gathered at the close of the summer, when autumn began. So the Targum,

"the last of the summer fruit;"

such as were fully ripe, and would not keep till winter; or, if kept, would rot; but must be eaten directly, as some sort of apples, grapes, &c. denoting the people of Israel being ripe for destruction, and would be quickly devoured by their enemies; and that, as they had had a summer of prosperity, they would now have a sharp winter of adversity.

[[@Amos 8:2]]Ver. [[2 >> Bible:Amos 8:2]]. *And he said, Amos, what seest thou?*.... To quicken his attention, who might disregard it as a common thing; and in order to lead him into the design of it, and show him what it was an emblem of:

and I said, a basket of summer fruit; some render it "a hook" {w}, such as they pull down branches with to gather the fruit; and the word so signifies in the Arabic language {x}; but the other is the more received sense of the word:

then said the Lord unto me; by way of explanation of the vision: the end is come upon my people Israel: the end of the kingdom of Israel; of their commonwealth and church state; of all their outward happiness and glory; their "summer [was] ended", and they "not saved", **Jer 8:20**; all their prosperity was over; and, as the Targum, their

"final punishment was come,"

the last destruction threatened them {y}:

I will not again pass by them any more; pass by their offences, and forgive their sins; or pass by their persons, without taking notice of them, so as to afflict and punish them for their iniquities: or, "pass through them and more" {z} now making an utter end of them;

See Gill on "Am 7:8".

{w} bwlk "unicuus", V. L. {x} "ferramentum incurvum, seu uncus ex quo de sella commeatum suspendit viator", Giggeius apud Golium, col. 2055. {y} There is an elegant play on words in the words Uyq, "summer", and

Uq, "the end". {z} So Mercerus, Grotius.

[[@Amos 8:3]]Ver. [[3 >> Bible:Amos 8:3]]. ***And the songs of the temple shall be howlings in that day,***

saith the Lord God,.... Not the songs sung by the Levites in the temple of Jerusalem, this prophecy respects the ten tribes only; but those in imitation of them, sung in the temple at Bethel, and other idol temples; or profane songs in the palaces of princes and nobles; that is, instead of these, there should be howlings for the calamities come upon them. So the Targum,

"they shall howl, instead of a song, in their houses then;"

particularly because of the slain in them, as follows; see **Am 5:23**;

[there shall be] many dead bodies in every place; in all houses and palaces, in all towns and cities; and especially in Samaria, during the siege, and when taken, partly through the famine, and partly through the sword:

they shall cast [them] forth with silence; they that have the care of burying the dead bodies shall either cast them out of the houses upon the bier or cart in which they are carried to the grave, or into the pit or grave without any funeral lamentation: or, "they shall cast them forth", and say, "be silent"; that is, as Kimchi explains it,

"one of them that casts them forth shall say to his companion, be silent;"

say not one word against God and his providence, since this is righteously come upon us; or say nothing of the number of the dead, lest the hearts of those that hear should become tender, and be discouraged, as Aben Ezra; or the enemy should be encouraged to go on with the siege.

[[@Amos 8:4]]Ver. [[4 >> Bible:Amos 8:4]]. ***Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy***,.... Like a man that pants after a draught of water when thirsty; and, when he has got it, greedily swallows it down at one gulp; so these rich men swallowed up the poor, their labours, gains, and profits, and persons too; got all into their own hands, and made them bondsmen and slaves to them; see **Am 2:7**; these are called upon to hear this dreadful calamity threatened, and to consider what then would become of them and their ill gotten riches; and suggesting, that their oppression of the needy was one cause of this destruction of the land:

even to make the poor of the land to fail; or "cease" {a}; to die for want of the necessities of life, being obliged to such hard labour; so unmercifully used, their faces ground, and pinched with necessity; and so sadly paid for their work, that they could not live by it.

{a} twbvl "ad cessare faciendum", Mercerus; "et facitis cessare", Munster, Drusius.

[[@Amos 8:5]]Ver. [[5 >> Bible:Amos 8:5]]. *Saying, when will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn?*.... The first day of every month, on which it was forbid to sell any thing, or do any worldly business, being appointed and used for religious service; see **2Ki 4:23**; and which these carnal earthly minded men were weary of, and wanted to have over, that they might be selling their grain, and getting money, which they preferred to the worship of God. Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it of the month of harvest, when the poor found what to eat in the fields; when they gleaned there, and got a sufficiency of bread, and so had no need to buy corn; and hence these rich misers, that hoarded up the grain, are represented as wishing the harvest month over, that they might sell their grain to the poor, having had, during that month, no demand for it; and so the Targum renders it the month of grain: or the month of intercalation, as Jarchi understands it; every three years a month was intercalated, to bring their feasts right to the season of the year; and that year was a month longer than the rest, and made provision dearer; and then the sense is, when will the year of intercalation come, that we may have a better price for our grain? but the first sense seems best;

and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat; in the shops or markets, for sale: or "open wheat" {b}; the granaries and treasures of it, to be seen and sold. Now the sabbath, or seventh day of the week, as no servile work was to be done on it, so no trade or commerce was to be carried on on that day; which made it a long and wearisome one to worldly men, who wished it over, that they might be about their worldly business. Kimchi and Ben Melech, by "sabbath", understand a "week", which these men put off the poor unto, when the price of grain would rise; and so from week to week refused to sell, and longed till the week came when it would be dearer. The Targum and Jarchi interpret it of the seventh year Sabbath, when there was no ploughing, nor sowing, nor reaping, and so no selling of grain, but the people lived upon what the earth brought forth of itself. But the first sense here is also best;

making the ephah small; a dry measure, that held three scabs, or about a bushel of ours, with which they measured their grain and their wheat; so that, besides the exorbitant price they required, they did not give due measure:

and the shekel great; that is, the weight, or shekel stone, with which they weighed the money the poor gave for their grain and wheat; this was made heavier than it should be, and so of course the money weighed against it was too light, and the poor were obliged to make it up with more; and thus they cheated them, both in their measure, and in their money:

and falsifying the balances by deceit? contrary to the law in

Deuteronomy 25:13.

{b} rb hxtpnw "et aperimus frumentam", Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus; "ut aperiamus frumenti [horrea]", Junius & Tremellius; "ut aperiamus frumentum", Piscator, Cocceius; "quo far aperiamus", Castalio.

[[@Amos 8:6]]Ver. [[6 >> Bible:Amos 8:6]]. ***That we may buy the poor for silver***,.... Thus making them pay dear for their provisions, and using them in this fraudulent manner, by which they would not be able to support themselves and their families; they might purchase them and theirs for slaves, at so small a price as a piece of silver, or a single shekel, worth about half a crown; and this was their end and design in using them after this manner; see

Le 25:39;

and the needy for a pair of shoes; See Gill on "Am 2:6";

[yea], and sell the refuse of the wheat; not only did they sell the poor grain and wheat at a dear rate, and in scanty measure, but the worst of it, and such as was not fit to make bread of, only to be given to the cattle; and, by reducing the poor to extreme poverty, they obliged them to take that of them at their own price. It may be rendered, "the fall of wheat" {c}; that which fell under the sieve, when the wheat was sifted, as Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, observe.

{c} rb lpm "labile frumenti", Montanus; "decidum frumenti", Cocceius; "deciduum triciti", Drusius, Mercerus, Stockius, p. 690.

[[@Amos 8:7]]Ver. [[7 >> Bible:Amos 8:7]]. ***The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob***,.... Not by the ark, as R. Japhet; nor by the temple, as Kimchi; but by himself; which sense Kimchi also mentions, and Aben Ezra; the God of Jacob and his glory, the most excellent of all Jacob's enjoyments, and of whom he had reason to boast and glory; see **Am 6:8**;

surely I will never forget any of their works; their wicked works, especially those now mentioned; God forgets when he forgives them, or suffers them to go unpunished; but though he had done so long, he would do so no more; on which they might depend, since he had not only said it, but swore to it.

[[@Amos 8:8]]Ver. [[8 >> Bible:Amos 8:8]]. ***Shall not the land tremble for this***,.... For this wickedness committed, in using the poor with so much inhumanity? may not an earthquake be expected? and which happened two years after Amos began to prophesy, **Am 1:1**; or that the earth should gape and swallow up these men alive, guilty of such enormities? or shall not the inhabitants of the land tremble at such judgments, which the Lord hath sworn he will bring upon it?

and everyone mourn that dwelleth therein? at the hearing of them, and especially when they shall come upon them: as the calamity would be general, the mourning should be universal:

and it shall rise up wholly as a flood; that is, the calamity threatened shall rise up at once like a flood of waters, like Noah's flood, and cover the whole land, and wash off and utterly destroy man and beast:

and it shall be cast out and drowned, as [by] the flood of Egypt; or the river of Egypt, the Nile, which overflows at certain times, and casts up its waters and its mud, and drowns all the country; so that the whole country, during its continuance, looks like a sea: it overflows both its banks, both towards Lybia or Africa, and towards Arabia, and on each side about two days'

journey, as Herodotus {d} relates; and this it does regularly every year, in the summer solstice, in the higher and middle Egypt, where it seldom rains, and its flood is necessary; but is not so large in the lower Egypt, where it more frequently rains, and the country needs it not. Strabo {e} says this flood remains more than forty days, and then it decreases by little and little, as it increased; and within sixty days the fields are seen and dried up; and the sooner that is, the sooner they plough and sow, and have the better harvests. Herodotus {f} says it continues a hundred days, and is near the same in returning; and he says, unless it rises to sixteen, or at least fifteen cubits, it will not overflow the country {g}: and, according to Pliny {h}, the proper increase of the waters is sixteen cubits; if only they arise to twelve, it is a famine; if to thirteen, it is hunger; if to fourteen, it brings cheerfulness; if to fifteen, security; and if to sixteen, delights. But Strabo {i} relates, that the fertility by it is different at different times; before the times of Petronius, the greatest fertility was when the Nile arose to the fourteenth cubit; and when to the eighteenth, it was a famine: but when he was governor of that country, when it only reached the twelfth cubit, there was great fruitfulness; had when it came to the eighth (the eighteenth I suppose it should be) no famine was perceived. An Arabic writer {k} gives an account of the Nilometry, or measures of the Nile, from the year of Christ 622 to 1497; and he says, that, when the depth of the channel of the Nile is fourteen cubits, a harvest may be expected that will amount to one year's provision; but, if it increases to sixteen, the corn will be sufficient for two years; less than fourteen, a scarcity; and more than eighteen makes a famine. Upon the whole, it seems that sixteen cubits have been reckoned the standard that portends plenty, for many generations, to which no addition has appeared to have been made during the space of five hundred years.

"This we learn (says Dr. Shaw) {l}, not only from the sixteen children that attend the statue of the Nile, but from Pliny also; and likewise from a medal of Hadrian in the great brass where we see the figure of the Nile, with a boy upon it, pointing to the number sixteen. Yet in the fourth century, which it will be difficult to account for, fifteen cubits only are recorded by the Emperor Julian {m} as the height of the Nile's inundation; whereas, in the middle of the sixth century, in the time of Justinian, Procopius {n} informs us that the rise of the Nile exceeded eighteen cubits; in the seventh century, after Egypt was subdued by the Saracens, the amount was sixteen or seventeen cubits; and at present, when the river rises to sixteen cubits, the Egyptians make great rejoicings, and call out, "wafaa Allah", that is, "God has given them all they wanted"."

The river begins to swell in May, yet no public notice is taken of it till the twenty eighth or twenty ninth of June; by which time it is usually risen to the height of six or eight pikes (or cubits, pheov, a Turkish measure of twenty six inches); and then public criers proclaim it through the capital, and other cities, and continue in the same manner till it rises to sixteen pikes; then they cut down the dam of the great canal. If the water increases to the height of twenty three or twenty four pikes, it is judged most favourable; but, if it exceed that, it does a great deal of mischief, not only by overflowing houses, and drowning cattle, but also by engendering a great number of insects, which destroy the fruits of the earth {o}. And a late learned traveller {p} tells us, that

"eighteen pikes is an indifferent Nile (for so high it is risen when they declare it but sixteen); twenty is middling; twenty two is a good Nile, beyond which it seldom rises; it is said, if it rises above twenty four pikes, it is looked on as an inundation, and is of bad consequence."

And to such a flood the allusion is here. Thus the land of Israel should be overwhelmed and plunged into the utmost distress, and sink into utter ruin, by this judgment coming upon them;

even the Assyrian army, like a flood, spreading themselves over all the land, and destroying it. So the Targum,

"a king shall come up against it with his army, large as the waters of a river, and shall cover it wholly, and expel the inhabitants of it, and shall plunge as the river of Egypt;"

see **Isa 8:7**.

{d} Euterpe, sive l. 9. c. 19. {e} Geograph. l. 17. p. 542. {f} Ut supra. (Euterpe, sive l. 9. c. 19.) {g} Ibid. c. 13. {h} Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 9. {i} Ut supra. (Geograph. l. 17. p. 542.) {k} Apud Calmet. Dictionary, in the word "Nile". {l} Travels, p. 384. Ed. 2. {m} Ecdicio, Ep. 50. {n} **Deuteronomy** Rebus Gothicis, l. 3. {o} Universal History, vol. 1. p. 413. {p} Pocock's Description of the East, p. 200.

[[@Amos 8:9]]Ver. [[9 >> Bible:Amos 8:9]]. ***And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God,***,... When this deluge and desolation of the land shall be, now spoken of:

that I will cause the sun to go down at noon: or to be so dark as if it was set; as at the time of our Lord's crucifixion, to which many of the ancient fathers refer this prophecy, though it has respect to other times and things. Jarchi interprets it of the kingdom of the house of David. It doubtless designs the kingdom of Israel, their whole policy, civil and ecclesiastic, and the destruction of it; particularly their king, princes, and nobles, that should be in great adversity, and that suddenly and unexpectedly; it being a fine sunshine morning with them, and they in great prosperity, and yet by noon their sun would be set, and they in the utmost darkness and distress;

and I will darken the earth in a clear day; the land of Israel, the people of it, the common people, who should have their share, in this calamity and affliction; and though it had been a clear day with them, and they promised themselves much and long felicity, yet on a sudden their light would be turned into darkness, and their joy into sadness and sorrow.

[[@Amos 8:10]]Ver. [[10 >> Bible:Amos 8:10]]. ***And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation,***,... Either their religious feasts, the feasts of pentecost, tabernacles, and passover; at which three feasts there were eclipses of the sun, a few years after this prophecy of Amos, as Bishop Usher {q} observes: the first was an eclipse of the sun about ten digits, in the year 3213 A.M. or 791 B.C., June twenty fourth, at the feast of pentecost; the next was almost twelve digits, about eleven years after, on November eighth, 780 B.C., at the feast of the tabernacles; and the third was more than eleven digits in the following year, 779 B.C., on May fifth, at the feast of the passover; which the prophecy may literally refer to, and which might occasion great sorrow and concern, and especially at what they might be thought to forebode: but particularly this was fulfilled when these feasts could not be observed any longer, nor the songs used at them sung any more; or else their feasts, and songs at them, in their own houses, in which they indulged themselves in mirth and jollity; but now, instead thereof, there would be mourning and lamentation the loss of their friends, and being carried captive into a strange land;

and I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins; of high and low, rich and poor; even those that used to be covered with silk and rich embroideries: sackcloth was a coarse cloth put on in times of mourning for the dead, or on account of public calamities:

and baldness upon every head: the hair being either shaved off or pulled off; both which were sometimes done, as a token of mourning:

and I will make it as the mourning of an only [son]; as when parents mourn for an only son, which is generally carried to the greatest height, and continued longest, as well as is most sincere and passionate; the case being exceeding cutting and afflictive, as this is hereby represented to be:

and the end thereof as a bitter day; a day of bitter calamity, and of bitter wailing and mourning, in the bitterness of their spirits; though the beginning of the day was bright and clear, a fine sunshine, yet the end of it dark and bitter, distressing and sorrowful, it being the end of the people of Israel, as in **Am 8:2**.

{q} Annales Vet. Test. ad A. M. 3213.

[[@Amos 8:11]]Ver. [[11 >> Bible:Amos 8:11]]. **Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God,**.... Which Kimchi interprets of all the days of the second house or temple after Malachi, when prophecy ceased; but it rather has respect to the time of Shalmaneser's carrying captive the ten tribes, when they had no more prophets nor prophecy among them, or any to tell how long their captivity should last, or when it would be better times with them, **Psalm 74:9**;

that I will send a famine in the land; which, in a literal sense, is one of God's arrows he has in his quiver, and sends out when he pleases; or one of his sore judgments, which he sometimes orders to come upon a people for their sins: but here is meant,

not a famine of bread; or through want of that, which is very dreadful; as was the famine of Samaria, when an ass's head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver, and a certain measure of dove's dung for five pieces of silver, **2Ki 6:25**; and as were the famines of Jerusalem, when taken both by the Chaldeans and Romans, when delicate women boiled and ate their own children, **La 4:8**;

nor a thirst for water; which is more distressing and tormenting than hunger; and to be slain with thirst is to be destroyed in the most afflictive manner, **Ho 2:3**. Lysimachus is said to part with his kingdom for a draught of water; and the torments of hell are set forth by a violent thirst for it, **Lu 16:24**; but something worse than either of these is here threatened:

but of hearing the words of the Lord; the word of prophecy, and the preaching of the word, or explaining the Scriptures. Of this blessing the ten tribes were deprived at their captivity, and have been ever since; and the Jews, upon their rejection of Christ, have had the kingdom of God, the Gospel of the kingdom, the word and ordinances of God, taken from them, and remain so to this day; the seven churches of Asia have had their candlestick removed out of its place, and this famine continues in those parts to this time; and, by the symptoms upon us, we may justly fear it, will be our case before long. "The words of the Lord" are the Scriptures, which come from him, and are concerning him; the doctrines of grace contained in them, the wholesome words of Christ: hearing them signifies the preaching of them, **Isa 53:1**; by which hearing comes, and is a great blessing, and should be attended to, as being the means of conversion, regenerations, the knowledge of Christ, faith in him, and the joy of it. Now, to be deprived of hearing the Gospel is a spiritual famine, for that is food, bread, meat, milk, honey, yea, a feast; it is food that is savoury, wholesome, nourishing, satisfying, strengthening, and comforting; and when this is took away a famine ensues, as when a church state is dissolved, ministers are ordered to preach no more in such a place, or are scattered by

persecution, or removed by death, and none raised up in their stead; or when error prevails, to the suppressing of truth: all which is done, or suffered to be done, for indifference to the word of God, unfruitfulness under it, and contempt of it, and, opposition to it; which is a dreadful case, when such a famine is; for the glory, riches, and light of a nation, are gone; bread for their souls is no more; and the means of conversion, knowledge, comfort, &c. cease; and people in course must die, for lack of these things; see **Isa 3:1**.

[[@Amos 8:12]]Ver. [[12 >> Bible:Amos 8:12]]. *And they shall wander from sea to sea*,.... From the sea of Tiberias, or Galilee; or from the Dead sea, the lake Asphaltites; or from the Red sea, which was to the south of the land of Israel, to the great sea, which is to the west, as Aben Ezra: so the Targum,

"from the sea to the west;"

that is, to the Mediterranean sea:

and from the north even to the east; proceeding from the south to the west, they shall turn from thence to the north, and so to the east, which describes the borders of the land of Canaan, Nu 34:3; and the sense is, that

they shall go to and fro; throughout the whole land, and all over it,

to seek the word of the Lord; not the written word, but the interpretation of it; doctrine from before the Lord, as the Targum; the preaching of the word, or ministers to instruct them in it; or the word of prophecy, and prophets to tell them when it would be better times, and how long their present distress should last:

and shall not find [it]; there should be no ministry, no preaching, no prophesying; as never since among the ten tribes, so it has been the case of the Jews, the two tribes, upon the rejection of the Messiah; the Gospel was taken from them; no tidings could they hear of the Messiah, though they ran to and fro to find him, it being told them Lo, here, and Lo, there; see **Joh 7:34**.

[[@Amos 8:13]]Ver. [[13 >> Bible:Amos 8:13]]. *In that day shall the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst*. After the word, for want of that grain and wine, which make young men and maids cheerful, **Zec 9:17**; but, being destitute of them, should be covered with sorrow, overwhelmed with grief, and ready to sink and die away. These, according to some, design the congregation of Israel; who are like to beautiful virgins, as the Targum paraphrases it; and the principal men of it, the masters of the assemblies: or, as others, such who were trusting to their own righteousness, and seeking after that which they could never attain justification by, and did not hunger and thirst after the righteousness of Christ, and so perished.

[[@Amos 8:14]]Ver. [[14 >> Bible:Amos 8:14]]. *They that swear by the sin of Samaria*,.... The calf at Bethel, which was near Samaria, and which the Samaritans worshipped; and was set up by their kings, and the worship of it encouraged by their example, and which is called the calf of Samaria, **Ho 8:5**; the making of it was the effect of sin, and the occasion of leading

into it, and ought to have been had in detestation and abhorrence, as sin should; and yet by this the Israelites swore, as they had used to do by the living God; so setting up this idol on an equality with him:

and say, thy God, O Dan, liveth; the other calf, which was set up in Dan; and to this they gave the epithet of the bring God, which only belonged to the God of Israel:

and the manner of Beersheba liveth; or, "the way of Beersheba" {r}; the long journey or pilgrimage of those at Beersheba; who chose to go to Dan, rather than Bethel, to worship; imagining they showed greater devotion and religion, by going from one extreme part of the land to the other, for the sake of it. Dan was on the northern border of the land of Judea, about four miles from Paneas, as you go to Tyre {s}; and Beersheba was on the southern border of the land, twenty miles from Hebron {t}; and the distance of these two places was about one hundred and sixty miles {u}. And by this religious peregrination men swore; or rather by the God of Beersheba, as the Septuagint render it; though the phrase may only intend the religion of Beersheba, the manner of worship there, it being a place where idolatry was practised; see **Am 5:5**. The Targum is,

"the fear (that is, the deity) which is in Dan liveth, and firm are the laws of Beersheba;"

even they shall fall, and never rise up again; that is, these idolatrous persons, that swear by the idols in the above places, shall fall into calamity, ruin, and destruction, by and for their sins, and never recover out of it; which was fulfilled in the captivity of the ten tribes, from whence they have never returned to this day.

{r} ebv-rab Krd "via Beersebah", Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Vatablus, Mercerus, Tigurine version; "iter, peregrinatio", Drusius; "Bersabanum iter", Castalio. {s} Hieronymus de locis Heb. fol. 92. H. {t} Ibid. fol. 89. F. {u} Ib. Epist. ad Dardanura, fol. 22. I.

[[@Amos 9]]

Chapter 9

INTRODUCTION TO AMOS 9

This chapter contains the fifth and last vision the prophet saw; which represents the certain desolation of the land, city, and temple, and the slaughter of all sorts of persons, high and low, none should escape it, **Am 9:1**; be they where they would, they should be found out, whether in hell or heaven, on the tops of the highest mountains, or in the bottom of the sea, or in a foreign land, since the eyes of the Lord were upon them for evil, **Am 9:2**; nor could they hope to escape, when they considered his greatness and his power, and what he could do, and had done; and how they had behaved towards him, even though they were the people he had brought out of Egypt, **Am 9:5**; but though the sinful kingdom should be destroyed, yet not utterly, a remnant should be saved, **Am 9:8**; and the chapter is concluded with gracious promises of raising up the tabernacle of David fallen down, and of the return of the people of Israel to their own land; and of their settlement and continuance in it, never more to depart from it, **Am 9:11**.

[[@Amos 9:1]]Ver. [[1 >> Bible:Amos 9:1]]. *And I saw the Lord standing upon the altar*,.... Either upon the altar of burnt offerings in the temple of Jerusalem, whither he had removed

from the cherubim; signifying his being about to depart, and that he was displeased, and would not be appeased by sacrifice: so the Targum,

"said Amos the prophet, I saw the glory of the Lord removing from the cherub, and it dwelt upon the altar;"

and the vision may refer to the destruction of the Jews, their city and temple, either by the Chaldeans, or by the Romans: or rather, since the prophecy in general, and this vision in particular, seems to respect the ten tribes only, it was upon the altar at Bethel the Lord was seen standing, as offended at the sacrifices there offered, and to hinder them from sacrificing them, as well as to take vengeance on those that offered them, 1Ki 13:1;

and he said; the Lord said, either to the prophet in vision, or to one of the angels, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi; or to the executioners of his vengeance, the enemies of the people of Israel:

smite the lintel of the door, that the posts may shake; the upper lintel, on which pomegranates and flowers were carved, and therefore called "caphtor", as Kimchi thinks; this was the lintel of the door, either of the temple at Jerusalem, as the Jewish writers generally suppose; or rather of the temple at Bethel, see 1Ki 12:31; which was to be smitten with such three, that the posts thereof should shake; signifying the destruction of the whole building in a short time, and that none should be able to go in and out thereat:

and cut them in the head, all of them; and I will slay the last of them with the sword; which shows that the lintel and doorposts are not to be taken literally, but figuratively; and that the smiting and cutting of them intend the destruction of men; by the "head", the king, and the princes, and nobles, or the priests; and, by "the last of them", the common people, the meanest sort, or those that were left of them, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi:

he that fleeth of them shall not flee away; he that attempts to make his escape, and shall flee for his life, shall not get clear, but either be stopped, or pursued and taken:

and he that escapeth of them shall not be delivered; he that does get out of the hands of those that destroy with the sword shall not be delivered from death, but shall die by famine or pestilence. The Targum is,

"and he said, unless the people of the house of Israel return to the law, the candlestick shall be extinguished, King Josiah shall be killed, and the house destroyed, and the courts dissipated, and the vessels of the house of the sanctuary shall go into captivity; and the rest of them I will slay with the sword, &c."

referring the whole to the Jews, and to the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem.

[[@Amos 9:2]]Ver. [[2 >> Bible:Amos 9:2]]. **Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them,**.... That is, they that endeavour to make their escape from their enemies, though they seek for places of the greatest secrecy and privacy; not hell, the place of the damned; nor the grave, the repository of the dead; neither of which they chose to be in, but rather sought to escape them; but the deepest and darkest caverns, the utmost recesses of the earth, the very centre of it; which, could they get into, would not secure them from the power and providence of God, and from their enemies in pursuit of them, by his permission:

though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down; the summit of the highest mountains, and get as near to heaven, and at as great a distance from men, as can be, and yet all in vain. The Targum is,

"if they think to be hid as it were in hell, from thence their enemies shall take them by my word; and if they ascend the high mountains, to the top of heaven, thence will I bring them;"

see **Psalm 139:8**.

[[@Amos 9:3]]Ver. [[3 >> Bible:Amos 9:3]]. ***And though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel***,.... One of the highest mountains in the land of Israel; in the woods upon it, and caves in it:

I will search and take them out from thence: by directing their enemies where to find them: so the Targum,

"if they think to be hid in the tops of the towers of castles, thither will I command the searchers, and they shall search them:"

and though they be hid from my sight in the bottom of the sea; get into ships, going by sea to distant parts; or make their escape to isles upon the sea afar off, where they may think themselves safe:

thence will I command the serpent, and he shall bite them; the dragon that is in the sea, Isa 27:1; the great whale in the sea, or the leviathan, so Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Ben Melech; and is that kind of whale which is called the "Zygaena", as Bochart {w} thinks; and which he, from various writers, describes as very monstrous, horrible, and terrible, having five rows of teeth, and very numerous; and which not only devours other large fishes, but men swimming it meets with; and, having such teeth, with great propriety may be said to bite. It appears from hence that there are sea serpents, as well as land ones, to which the allusion is. Erich Pantoppidan, the present bishop of Bergen {x}, speaks of a "see ormen", or sea snake, in the northern seas, which he describes as very monstrous and very terrible to seafaring men, being of seven or eight folds, each fold a fathom distant; nay, of the length of a cable, a hundred fathom, or six hundred English feet; yea, of one as thick as a pipe of wine, with twenty five folds. Some such terrible creature is here respected, though figuratively understood, and designs some crafty, powerful, and cruel enemy. The Targum paraphrases it, though hid

"in the isles of the sea, thither will I command the people strong like serpents, and they shall kill them;"

see **Psalm 139:9**.

{w} Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 5. c. 13. p. 747. {x} Natural History of Norway, par. 2. p. 198, 199, 207.

[[@Amos 9:4]]Ver. [[4 >> Bible:Amos 9:4]]. ***And though they go into captivity before their enemies***,.... Alluding to the manner in which captives are led, being put before their enemies, and so carried in triumph; see **La 1:5**; though some think this refers to their going voluntarily into a foreign country, in order to escape danger, as Johanan the son of Kareah with the Jews went into Egypt, Jer 43:5; in whom Kimchi instances:

thence will I command the sword, and it shall slay them; or them that kill with the sword, as the Targum; so that though they thought by going into another country, or into an enemy's country of their own accord, to escape the sword of the enemy, or to curry favour with them, yet should not escape:

and I will set mine eyes upon them for evil, and not for good: this is the true reason, why, let them be where they will, they cannot be safe, because the eyes of the omniscient God, which are everywhere, in heaven, earth, hell, and the sea, are set upon them, for their ruin and destruction; and there is no fleeing from his presence, or getting out of his sight, or escaping his hand. The Targum is,

"my Word shall be against them."

[[@Amos 9:5]]Ver. [[5 >> Bible:Amos 9:5]]. *And the Lord God of hosts [is] he that toucheth the land, and it shall melt*,.... Which is another reason why it is impossible to escape the hands of a sin revenging God, because he is omnipotent as well as omniscient; he is the Lord of all the armies above and below; and if he but touch the land, any particular country, as the land of Israel, it shakes and trembles, and falls into a flow of water, or melts like wax; as when he toucheth the hills and mountains they smoke, being like fuel to fire; see **Psalm 104:32**;

and all that dwell therein shall mourn; their houses destroyed, their substance consumed, and all that is near and dear to them swallowed up:

and it shall rise up wholly like a flood, and shall be drowned as [by] the flood of Egypt; See Gill on "Am 8:8".

[[@Amos 9:6]]Ver. [[6 >> Bible:Amos 9:6]]. *[It is] he that buildeth his stories in the heaven*,.... The three elements, according to Aben Ezra, fire, air, and water; the orbs, as Kimchi, one above another; a word near akin to this is rendered "his chambers", which are the clouds, **Psalm 104:3**; perhaps the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, which are three stories high, may be meant; we read of the third heaven, **2 Corinthians 12:2**; and particularly the throne of God is in the highest heaven; and the "ascents" {y} to it, as it may be rendered. The Targum is,

"who causeth to dwell in a high fortress the Shechinah of his glory:"

and hath founded his troop in the earth; this Kimchi interprets of the three above elements. So the words are translated in the Bishops' Bible in Queen Elizabeth's time,

"he buildeth his spheres in the heaven, and hath laid the foundation of his globe of elements in the earth."

Aben Ezra interprets it of animals; it may take in the whole compass of created beings on earth; so Jarchi explains it of the collection of his creatures; though he takes notice of another sense given, a collection of the righteous, which are the foundation of the earth, and for whose sake all things stand. Abarbinel interprets it of the whole of the tribe of Israel; and so the Targum paraphrases it of his congregation or church on earth: he beautifies his elect, which are "his bundle" {z}, as it may be rendered; who are bound up in the bundle of life with

the Lord their God, and are closely knit and united, as to God and Christ, so to one another; and perhaps is the best sense of the words {a}:

he that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth, the Lord [is] his name; either to drown it, as at the general deluge; or to water and refresh it, as he does by exhaling water from the sea, and then letting it down in plentiful showers upon the earth; See Gill on "Am 5:8"; now all these things are observed to show the power of God, and that therefore there can be no hope of escaping out of his hands.

{y} wytwlem "ascensiones suos", Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Tigurine version, "gradus suo", Vatablus, Drusius, Cocceius. {z} wtdga "fasciculum suum", Montanus, Munster, Mercerus, Vatablus, Drusius, Burkius. {a} Schultens in Observ. ad Genesin, p. 197, 198, observes, that

"agad", with the Arabs, signifies primarily to "bind", and is by them transferred to a building firmly bound, and compact together; and so may intend here in Amos the Lord's building, the church, which he hath founded in the earth; and so with Golius and Castellus is a building firmly compacted together.

tdga is used for a bunch of hyssop, Exod. xii. 27. and in the Misnic language for a handful or bundle of anything; see Buxtorf. Lex. Talmud. rad. dga.

[[@Amos 9:7]]Ver. [[7 >> Bible:Amos 9:7]]. ***[Are] ye not as children of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel? saith the Lord***,.... And therefore had no reason to think they should be delivered because they were the children of Israel, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; since they were no more to God than the children of the Ethiopians, having behaved like them; and were become as black as they through sin, and were idolaters like them; and so accustomed to sin, and hardened in it, that they could no more change their course and custom of sinning than the Ethiopian could change his skin, Jer 13:23; The Ethiopians are represented by Diodorus Siculus {b} as very religious, that is, very idolatrous; and as the first that worshipped the gods, and offered sacrifice to them; hence they were very pleasing to them, and in high esteem with them; wherefore Homer {c} speaks of Jupiter, and the other gods, going to Ethiopia to an anniversary feast, and calls them the blameless Ethiopians; and so Lucian {d} speaks of the gods as gone abroad, perhaps to the other side of the ocean, to visit the honest Ethiopians; for they are often used to visit them, and, as he wittily observes, even sometimes without being invited. Jarchi suggests the sense to be, that they were as creatures upon the same foot, and of the same descent, with other nations; and paraphrases it thus,

"from the sons of Noah ye came as the rest of the nations."

Kimchi takes the meaning to be this,

"as the children of the Ethiopians are servants so should ye be unto me."

The Targum is very foreign from the sense,

"are ye not reckoned as beloved children before me, O house of Israel?"

the first sense is best:

have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt? and therefore it was ungrateful in them to behave as they have done; nor can they have any dependence on this, or argue from hence that they shall be indulged with other favours, or be continued in their land, since the like has been done for other nations, as follows:

and the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir? that is, have I not brought up the one from the one place, and the other from the other? the Philistines and Caphtorim are mentioned together as brethren, **Genesis 10:14**; and the Avim which dwelt in the land of Palestine in Hazerim unto Azzah were destroyed by the Caphtorim, who dwelt in their stead, **Deuteronomy 2:23**; from whom, it seems by this, the Philistines were delivered, who are called the remnant of the country of Caphtor, Jer 47:4. Aben Ezra understands it as if the Israelites were not only brought out of Egypt, but also from the Philistines, and from Caphtor: others take these two places, Caphtor and Kir, to be the original of the Philistines and Syrians, and not where they had been captives, but now delivered: so Japhet,

"ye are the children of one father, God, who brought you out of Egypt, and not as the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir, who were mixed together;"

and R. Joseph Kimchi thus,

"from Caphtor came destroyers to the Philistines, who destroyed them; and from Kir came Tiglathpileser, the destroyer, to the Syrians, who carried them captive there."

Of the captivity of the Philistines, and their deliverance from the Caphtorim, we nowhere read; the captivity of the Syrians in Kir Amos prophesied of, **Am 1:5**; and if he speaks here of their deliverance from it, he must live at least to the times of Ahaz; for in his times it was they were carried captive thither, 2Ki 16:9. Caphtor some take to be Cyprus, because it seems to be an island, Jer 47:4; but by it the Targum, Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac and Arabic versions understand Cappadocia; and the Cappadocians used to be called by the Greeks and Persians Syrians, as Herodotus {e} and others, observe. Bochart {f} is of opinion that that part of Cappadocia is intended which is called Colchis; and the rather since he finds a city in that country called Side, which in the Greek tongue signifies a pomegranate, as Caphtor does in Hebrew; and supposes the richness of the country led the Caphtorim thither, who, having stayed awhile, returned to Palestine, and there settled; which expedition he thinks is wrapped up in the fable of the Greek poets, concerning that of Typhon out of Egypt to Colchis and from thence to Palestine; and indeed the Jewish Targumists {g} every where render Caphtorim by Cappadocians, and Caphtor by Cappadocia, or Caphutkia; but then by it they understand a place in Egypt, even Pelusium, now called Damiata; for the Jewish writers say {h} Caphutkia is Caphtor, in the Arabic language Damiata; so Benjamin of Tudela says {i}, in two days I came to Damiata, this is Caphtor; and no doubt the Caphtorim were in Egypt originally since they descended from Mizraim; but Calmet {k} will have it that the island of Crete is meant by Caphtor; and observes, theft, the Philistines were at first called strangers in Palestine, their proper name being Cherethites, or Cretians, as in Eze 25:16; as the Septuagint render that name of theirs; and that the language, manners, arms, religion and gods, of the Philistines and Cretians, are much the same; he finds a city in Crete called Aptera, which he thinks has a sensible relation to Caphtor; and that the city of Gaza in Palestine went by the name of Minoa, because of Minos king of Crete, who, coming into that country, called this ancient city by his own name. The Targum and Vulgate Latin version render Kir by Cyrene, by which must be meant, not Cyrene in Africa, but in Media; so Kir is mentioned along with Elam or Persia in Isa 22:6; whither the people of Syria were carried captive by Tiglathpileser, as predicted in **Am 1:5**; and, as the above writer observes {l}, not certainly into the country of

Cyrene near Egypt, where that prince was possessed of nothing; but to Iberia or Albania, where the river Kir or Cyrus runs, which discharges itself into the Caspian sea; and Josephus {m} says they were transported into Upper Media; and the above author thinks that the Prophet Amos, in this passage, probably intended to comprehend, under the word "Cyr" or "Kir", the people beyond the Euphrates, and those of Mesopotamia, from whence the Aramaeans in reality came, who were descended from Aram the son of Shem; and he adds, we have no certain knowledge of their coming in particular out of this country, where the river Cyrus flows; and, upon the whole, it is difficult to determine whether this is to be understood of the origin of these people, or of their deliverance from captivity; the latter may seem probable, since it is certain that the prophet speaks of the deliverance of Israel from the captivity of Egypt; and it is as certain that the Syrians were carried captive to Kir, and, no doubt, from thence delivered; though we have no account of the Philistines being captives to Caphtor, and of their deliverance from thence; however, doubtless these were things well known to Amos, and in his times, he here speaks of. In some of our English copies it is read Assyrians instead of Syrians, very wrongly; for "Aram", and not "Ashur", is the word here used.

{b} Bibliothec. l. 3. p. 143, 144. {c} Ibid. l. 1. 423. {d} In Jupiter Tragaedus. {e} Clio, sive l. 1. 72. Terpsichore, sive l. 5. c. 40. & Polymnia, sive l. 7. c. 72. Vid. Strabo. Geograph. l. 22. p. 374. {f} Phaleg. l. 4. c. 32. col. 291, 292. {g} Targum Onkelos, Jon. & Jerus. in Gen. x. 4. & Ben Uzziel in Jer. xlvii. 4. & in loc. {h} Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Cetubot, c. 13. sect. 11. {i} Itinerarium, p. 125. {k} Dictionary in the word "Caphtor". {} Dictionary, in the word "Cyrene". {m} Antiqu. l. 9. c. 12. sect. 3.

[[@Amos 9:8]]Ver. [[8 >> Bible:Amos 9:8]]. ***Behold, the eyes of the Lord God [are] upon the sinful kingdom,***.... God is omniscient, and his eyes are everywhere, and upon all persons, good and bad, and upon all kingdoms, especially upon a sinful nation: "the sinning kingdom" {n}, or "the kingdom of sin" {o}, as it may be rendered; that is addicted to sin, where it prevails and reigns; every such kingdom, particularly the kingdom of Israel, Ephraim, or the ten tribes, given to idolatry, and other sins complained of in this prophecy; and that not for good, but for evil, as in **Am 9:4**; in order to cut them off from being a people:

and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth: so that it shall be no more, at least as a kingdom; as the ten tribes have never been since their captivity by Shalmaneser; though Japhet interprets this of all the kingdoms of the earth, being sinful, the eyes of God are upon them to destroy them, excepting the kingdom of Israel; so Abarbinel:

saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the Lord; and so it is, that though they have been destroyed as a kingdom, yet not utterly as a people; there were some of the ten tribes that mixed with the Jews, and others that were scattered about in the world; and a remnant among them, according to the election of grace, that were met with in the ministry of the apostles, and in the latter day all Israel shall be saved; see **Jer 30:10**.

{n} hajxh hklmm "hoc regnum peccans", V. L. Junius & Tremellius, Drusius, Mercerus; "peccatrix", Piscator. {o} "Regnum peccati", Pagninus, Montanus.

[[@Amos 9:9]]Ver. [[9 >> Bible:Amos 9:9]]. ***For, lo, I will command,***.... What follows; which is expressive of afflictive and trying dispensations of Providence, which are according

to the will of God, by his appointment and order, and overruled for his glory, and the good of his people:

and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, as [corn] is sifted in a sieve; this is to be understood of spiritual Israel, of those who are Israelites indeed, who are like to corns of wheat, first die before they live; die unto sin, and live unto righteousness; grow up gradually, and produce much fruit; or like to wheat for their choiceness and excellency, being the chosen of God and precious, and the excellent in the earth; and their whiteness and purity, as clothed with Christ's righteousness washed in his blood, and sanctified by his Spirit; and for their substance and fulness, being filled out of Christ's fulness, and with all the fulness of God, with the Spirit and his graces, and with all the fruits of righteousness; and for weight and solidity, not as chaff driven to and fro, but are firm and constant, settled and established, in divine things; and yet have the chaff of sin cleaving to them, and have need of the flail and fan of affliction; and this is the sieve the Lord takes into his hands, and sifts them with; whereby sometimes they are greatly unsettled, and tossed to and fro, have no rest and ease, but are greatly distressed on all sides, and are thoroughly searched and tried, and the chaff loosened and separated from them; and sometimes the Lord suffers them to be sifted by the temptations of Satan, whereby they are brought into doubts and fears, and are very wavering and uncomfortable, are sadly harassed and buffeted, and in great danger, were it not for the grace of God, and the intercession of the Mediator, Lu 22:31;

yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth; or, "the least stone" {p}; which is in the spiritual building, and laid on the rock and foundation Christ; or the least corn of wheat, so called because of its weight, solidity, and substance. The meaning is, that the least true Israelite, or child of God, who is the least in the kingdom of heaven, and has the least share of grace and spiritual knowledge, that is even less than the least of all saints, shall not be lost and perish; though they fall in Adam, yet they are preserved in Christ; though they fall into actual sins and transgressions, and sometimes into gross ones, and from a degree of steadfastness in the faith, yet not totally and finally, or so as to perish for ever; no, not a hair of their head shall fall to the ground, or they be hurt and ruined; see

1Sa 14:45; for they are beloved of God with an everlasting love, ordained, by him to eternal life, adopted into his family, justified by his grace, and are kept by his power, according to his promise, which never fails; they are Christ's property, given him of his Father, to whom he stands in the relation of Head and Husband; are the purchase of his blood, closely united to him, and for whom he intercedes, and makes preparations in heaven. The Spirit of God is their sanctifier and sealer; he dwells in them as their earnest of heaven; and the glory of all the divine Persons is concerned in their salvation; hence it is that not one of them shall ever perish.

{p} rwru "lapillus", Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus, Munster, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius, Cocceius; so Ben Melech.

[[@Amos 9:10]]Ver. [[10 >> Bible:Amos 9:10]]. ***All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword,***.... By the sword of the Assyrians, and of others, into whose countries they shall flee for shelter, **Am 9:1**; even all such who are notorious sinners, abandoned to their lusts, obstinate and incorrigible; live in sin, and continue therein; repent not of sin, disbelieve the prophets of the Lord, and defy his threatenings, and put away the evil day far from them:

which say, the evil shall not overtake nor prevent us; the evil threatened by the prophet, the sword of the enemy, the desolation of their land, and captivity in a foreign land; these evils, if they came at all, which they gave little credit to, yet would not in their days; they would never come so near them, or so close to their heels as to overtake them, and seize them, or to get before them, and stop them fleeing from them; they promised themselves impunity, and were in no pain about the judgments threatened them; so daring and impudent, so irreligious and atheistical, were they in their thoughts, words, and actions; and therefore should all and everyone of them be destroyed.

[[@Amos 9:11]]Ver. [[11 >> Bible:Amos 9:11]]. *In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen*,.... Not in the day of Israel's ruin, but in the famous Gospel day, so often spoken of by the prophets; and this prophecy is referred to the times of the Messiah by the ancient {q} Jews; and one of the names they give him is taken from hence, "Barnaphli" {r}, the Son of the fallen. R. Nachman said to R. Isaac, hast thou heard when Barnaphli comes? to whom he said, who is Barnaphli? he replied, the Messiah; you may call the Messiah Barnaphli; for is it not written, "in that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen down?" and they call him so, not because the son of Adam; but because he was the son of David, and was to spring from his family, when fallen into a low and mean condition; yea, they sometimes seem by the tabernacle of David to understand the dead body of the Messiah to be raised, whose human nature is by the New Testament writers called a tabernacle, **Heb 8:2**; see **Joh 1:14**; for, having mentioned {s} that passage in Jer 30:9; "they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their King, whom I will raise up unto them", add, whom I will raise up out of the dust; as it is said, "I will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen down"; but elsewhere {t} it is better interpreted of the Messiah's raising up Israel his people out of captivity; they say,

"her husband shall come, and raise her out of the dust; as it is said, "I will raise up the tabernacle of David", &c. in the day the King Messiah shall gather the captivity from the ends of the world to the ends of it, according to **Deuteronomy 30:4**;"

and which they understand of their present captivity, and deliverance from it, as in **Am 9:14**. Tobit {u} seems to have reference to this passage, when he thus exhorts Zion,

"praise the everlasting King, that his tabernacle may be built again in thee;"

and expresses {w} his faith in it, that so it would be,

"afterwards they (the Jews) shall return from all places of their captivity, and build up Jerusalem gloriously; and the house of God shall be built in it, as the prophets have spoken concerning it, for ever;"

agreeably to which Jarchi paraphrases it,

"in the day appointed for redemption;"

and so the Apostle James quotes it, and applies it to the first times of the Gospel, **Ac 15:15**. The Targum interprets this "tabernacle" of the kingdom of the house of David: this was in a low estate and condition when Jesus the Messiah came, he being the carpenter's son; but it is to be understood of the spiritual kingdom of Christ, the church; Christ is meant by David, whose son he is, and of whom David was an eminent type, and is often called by his name, **Eze 34:23**; and the church by his "tabernacle", which is of his building, where he dwells, and

keeps his court; and which in the present state is movable from place to place: and this at the time of Christ's coming was much fallen, and greatly decayed, through sad corruption in doctrine by the Pharisees and Sadducees; through neglect of worship, and formality in it, and the introduction of things into it God never commanded; through the wicked lives of professors, and the small number of truly godly persons; but God, according to this promise and prophecy, raised it up again by the ministry of John the Baptist, Christ and his apostles, and by the conversion of many of the Jews, and by bringing in great numbers of the Gentiles, who coalesced in one church state, which made it flourishing, grand, and magnificent; and thus the prophecy was in part fulfilled, as the apostle has applied it in the above mentioned place: but it will have a further and greater accomplishment still in the latter day, both in the spiritual and personal reign of Christ: and though this tabernacle or church of Christ is fallen to decay again, and is in a very ruinous condition; the doctrines of the Gospel being greatly departed from; the ordinances of it changed, or not attended to; great declensions as to the exercise of grace among the people of God; and many breaches and divisions among them; the outward conversation of many professors very bad, and few instances of conversion; yet the Lord will raise it up again, and make it very glorious: he will

close up the breaches thereof, and will raise up his ruins; the doctrines of the Gospel will be revived and received; the ordinances of it will be administered in their purity, as they were first delivered; great numbers will be converted, both of Jews and Gentiles; and there will be much holiness, spirituality, and brotherly love, among the saints:

and I will build it as in the days of old; religion shall flourish as in the days of David and Solomon; the Christian church will be restored to its pristine glory, as in the times of the apostles.

{q} Zohar in Exod. fol. 96. 2. {r} T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 96. 2. {s} Zohar in Gen. fol. 53. 2. {t} Zohar in Exod. fol. 4. 2. {u} Ch. xiii. 10. {w} Ch. xiv. 7.

[[@Amos 9:12]]Ver. [[12 >> Bible:Amos 9:12]]. *That they may possess the remnant or Edom, and of all the Heathen, which are called by my name*,.... Or that these may be possessed; that is, by David or Christ, who shall have the Heathen given him for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, **Psalm 2:8**; when the remnant, according to the election of grace, in those nations that have been the greatest enemies to Christ and his Gospel, signified by Edom, shall be converted, and call upon the name of the Lord, and worship him; and be called by his name, Christians, and so become his inheritance and possession. The Targum understands, by the Heathen or people, all the people of the house of Israel; and Kimchi, Aben Ezra, and Ben Melech, think the words are to be inverted, thus,

"that all the people on whom my name is called, may possess the remnant of Edom;"

and the forager says, that all the Edomites shall be destroyed in the days of the Messiah, but Israel shall inherit their land; and Aben Ezra says, that if this prophecy is interpreted of the Messiah, the matter is clear; as it is in the sense we have given, and as the apostle explains it; See Gill on "Ac 15:17". Some render the words, "that the remnant of Edom, and of all the Heathen, that are" (that is, shall be) "called by my name, may possess me the Lord" {x}. The truth and certainty of its performance is expressed in the following clause,

saith the Lord, that doeth this: whose word is true, whose power is great, whose grace is efficacious, to accomplish all that is here promised and foretold.

{x} "Ut possideant reliquiae Edom", **Deuteronomy** Dieu. See Bishop Chandler's Defence of Christianity, p. 172.

[[@Amos 9:13]]Ver. [[13 >> Bible:Amos 9:13]]. *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord*,.... Or "are coming" {y}; and which will commence upon the accomplishment of the above things, when the church of Christ is raised up and established, the Jews converted, and the Gentiles brought in:

that the ploughman shall overtake the reaper; or "meet the reaper" {z}; or come up to him, or touch him, as it may be rendered; and so the Targum; that is, before the reaper has well cut down the grain, or it is scarce gathered in, the ploughman shall be ready to plough up the ground again, that it may be sown, and produce another crop:

and the treaders of grapes him that soweth seed; or "draweth seed" {a}; out of his basket, and scatters it in the land; signifying that there should be such an abundance of grapes in the vintage, that they would continue pressing till seedtime; and the whole denotes a great affluence of temporal good things, as an emblem of spiritual ones; see

Le 26:5; where something of the like nature is promised, and expressed in much the same manner:

and the mountains shall drop sweet wine; or "new wine" {b}; intimating that there shall be abundance of vines grow upon the mountains, which will produce large quantities of wine, so that they shall seem to drop or flow with it:

and all the hills shall melt; with liquors; either with wine or honey, or rather with milk, being covered with flocks and herds, which shall yield abundance of milk; by all which, plenty of spiritual things, as the word and ordinances, and rich supplies of grace, as well as of temporal things, is meant; see **Joe 3:18**.

{y} Myab Mymy "dies venientes", Montanus, Burkius. {z} ruwqb vrwh vgn "et [vel] cum occurret arator messori", Vatablus, Drusius; "attinent arator messorum", Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; "accedet arator ad messorum", Cocceius. {a} erzh Kvwm "trahentem semen", Montanus, Liveleus, Drusius, Mercerus. {b} oyoe "mustum", Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator, Mercerus; "musto", Drusius, Cocceius.

[[@Amos 9:14]]Ver. [[14 >> Bible:Amos 9:14]]. *And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel*,.... Which is not to be understood of the captivity of the Jews in Babylon, and their return from thence, with whom some of the ten tribes of Israel were mixed; for they were not then so planted in their own land as no more to be pulled up again, as is here promised; for they afterwards were dispossessed of it by the Romans, and carried captive, and dispersed among the nations again; but the captivity both of Judah and Israel is meant, their present captivity, which will be brought back, and they will be delivered from it, and return to their own land, and possess it as long as it is a land; see Jer 30:3; as well as be freed from the bondage of sin, Satan, and the law, under which they have been detained some hundreds of

years; but now shall be delivered into the glorious liberty of the children of God, of Christians, with which Christ has made them free:

and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit [them]; literally the cities in Judea wasted by the Turks, and others; and mystically the churches of Christ, of which saints are fellow citizens, and will be in a desolate condition before the conversion of the Jews, and the gathering in the fulness of the Gentiles; but by these means will be rebuilt, and be in a flourishing condition, and full of inhabitants:

and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them; which, as before, will be literally true; and in a spiritual sense may signify the churches of Christ, compared to vineyards and gardens, which will be planted everywhere, and be set with pleasant and fruitful plants, and will turn to the advantage of those who have been instruments in planting them; see **So 6:2**.

[[@Amos 9:15]]Ver. [[15 >> Bible:Amos 9:15]]. ***And I will plant them upon their land***,.... The land of Israel, as trees are planted; and they shall take root and flourish, and abound with all good things, temporal and spiritual:

and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God; by which it appears that this is a prophecy of things yet to come; since the Jews, upon their return to their own land after the Babylonish captivity, were pulled up again, and rooted out of it by the Romans, and remain so to this day; but, when they shall return again, they will never more be removed from it; and of this they may be assured; because it is the land the Lord has, "given" them, and it shall not be taken away from them any more; and, because he will now appear to be the "Lord their God", the "loammi", **Ho 1:9**, will he taken off from them; they will be owned to be the Lord's people, and he will be known by them to be their covenant God; which will ensure all the above blessings to them, of whatsoever kind; for this is either said to the prophet, "the Lord thy God", or to Israel; and either way it serves to confirm the same thing.