

Language: English

Book: Amos

Amos

Chapter 1

¹ These are the words of Amos, who was among the shepherds from Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and also in the days of Jeroboam son of Joash king of Israel, two years before the earthquake.

² He said,

"Yahweh will roar from Zion;
he will raise his voice from Jerusalem.
The pastures of the shepherds will mourn;
the top of Carmel will wither."

³ This is what Yahweh says:

"For three sins of Damascus,
even for four, I will not turn away punishment,
because they threshed Gilead
with sharp threshing sledges of iron.

⁴ I will send a fire into the house of Hazael,
and it will devour the fortresses of Ben-Hadad.

⁵ I will break the gate bars of Damascus
and cut off the man who rules over the Valley of Aven,
and also the man who holds the scepter in Beth Eden.
The people of Aram will go in captivity to Kir,"
says Yahweh.

⁶ This is what Yahweh says:

"For three sins of Gaza,
even for four, I will not turn away punishment,
because they carried away captive a whole people,
to hand them over to Edom.

⁷ I will send fire on the walls of Gaza,
and it will devour her fortresses.

⁸ I will cut off the man who lives in Ashdod
and the man who holds the scepter from Ashkelon.
I will turn my hand against Ekron,
and the rest of the Philistines will perish,"
says the Lord Yahweh.

⁹ This is what Yahweh says:

"For three sins of Tyre,
even for four, I will not turn away punishment,
because they had delivered up a whole people to Edom,
and they broke their covenant of brotherhood.

¹⁰ I will send fire on the walls of Tyre,
and it will devour her fortresses."

¹¹ This is what Yahweh says,

"For three sins of Edom,

even for four, I will not turn away punishment,
because he pursued his brother with the sword
and cast off all pity.

His anger tore them apart continually,
and his wrath lasted forever.

12 I will send fire on Teman,
and it will devour the palaces of Bozrah."

13 This is what Yahweh says,

"For three sins of the people of Ammon,
even for four, I will not turn away punishment,
because they ripped open the pregnant women of Gilead,
that they may enlarge their borders.

14 I will light a fire in the walls of Rabbah,
and it will devour the palaces,
with a shout in the day of battle,
with a tempest in the day of the whirlwind.

15 Their king will go into captivity,
he and his officials together,"
says Yahweh.

Amos 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This book is written in a poetic form. Because it was written by a farmer, it includes many references to agricultural concepts.

"For three sins of Judah, even for four"

The phrase "For three sins of Judah, even for four," is used to begin each oracle. This is not intended to be a literal count but is an idiom indicating a large number of sins. (See: and sin)

Amos 1:1

General Information:

God speaks through Amos using poetic language.

the shepherds from Tekoa, ... concerning Israel

Tekoa is the name of a town or village in Judah, but this message is primarily to the northern kingdom of Israel. It seems that Amos was one of a group of shepherds who had left Tekoa to work in Israel, and while he was there at work, God gave him these words

saw

If your language uses a word for "see" only in poetry or mostly to indicate seeing in a vision or dream, you might want to use it here.

in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and also in the days of Jeroboam son of Joash king of Israel

The words "in the days of" is an idiom and refers to the time when each king reigned. Alternate translation: "when Uzziah was king of Judah, and also when Jeroboam son of Joash was king of Israel"

two years before the earthquake

The assumed knowledge is that the original hearers would be aware of when a large earthquake had affected the area.

Amos 1:2

Yahweh will roar from Zion; he will raise his voice from Jerusalem

These two phrases share similar meanings. Together they emphasize that Yahweh shouts loudly as he prepares to judge the nation.

Yahweh will roar

The author speaks of the voice of Yahweh as if it sounded like the roar of a lion or the roar of thunder.

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

Amos 1:3

For three sins of ... even for four

This is a poetic device. It does not mean that a specific number of sins had been committed, but it indicates that many sins had led to God's judgment.

Damascus

Here "Damascus" represents the people of the city of Damascus. Alternate translation: "the people of Damascus"

I will not turn away punishment

Yahweh uses two negatives here to emphasize that he would punish them. Alternate translation: "I will certainly punish those people"

they threshed Gilead with sharp threshing sledges of iron

Yahweh speaks of how the people of Damascus treated the people of Gilead as if they had threshed grain with sharp iron tools or weapons.

Gilead

Here "Gilead" represents the people of the region of Gilead. Alternate translation: "the people of Gilead"

Amos 1:4

I will send a fire into the house of Hazael

Here Yahweh speaks of his judgment against the house of Hazael as if it were a consuming fire.

the house of Hazael

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Hazael's descendants, who were rulers of the country where Damascus was located.

it will devour the fortresses of Ben-Hadad

Here Yahweh's judgment is spoken of as if it were a fire that was consuming the fortresses.

Hazael ... Ben-Hadad

These are the names of men.

Amos 1:5

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message of judgment on Damascus.

cut off the man

Here to "cut off" means either to destroy or to drive away, as one would cut a piece of cloth or cut a branch from a tree. Alternate translation: "destroy the man" or "drive away the man"

Valley of Aven

This is the name of a place that means "valley of wickedness." Possible meanings are 1) this is the name of an actual place in that region or 2) this is a

metonym for Damascus or the surrounding region. Alternate translation: "the valley of wickedness"

the man who holds the scepter in

This is a metonym for the ruler of that city or region. Alternate translation: "the ruler of"

Beth Eden

This is the name of a place that means "house of pleasure." Possible meanings are 1) this is the name of an actual place in that region or 2) this is another metonym for Damascus or the surrounding region. Alternate translation: "the house of pleasure"

Kir

This is the name of a region from which the people of Aram originally came.

Amos 1:6

For three sins of ... even for four

This is a poetic device. It does not mean that a specific number of sins had been committed, but it indicates that many sins had led to God's judgment. See how you translated these words in Amos 1:3.

Gaza

Here "Gaza" represents the people of the region of Gaza. Alternate translation: "the people of Gaza"

I will not turn away punishment

Yahweh uses two negatives here to emphasize that he would punish them. See how you translated these words in [Amos 1:3]

hand them over to

"deliver them up to" or "sell them to"

Edom

Here "Edom" represents the people of the country of Edom. Alternate translation: "the people of Edom"

Amos 1:7

it will devour her fortresses

Here Yahweh's judgment is spoken of as if it were a fire that was consuming the fortresses.

Amos 1:8

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message of judgment on Gaza.

cut off the man

Here to "cut off" means either to destroy or to drive away, as one would cut a piece of cloth or cut a branch from a tree. Alternate translation: "destroy the man" or "drive away the man"

the man who holds the scepter

This is a metonym for the ruler of that city or region. Alternate translation: "the ruler"

I will turn my hand against Ekron

Here "hand" represents Yahweh's power that he would use against Ekron. Alternate translation: "I will strike Ekron" or "I will destroy Ekron"

Ekron

Here "Ekron" represents the people of the city of Ekron. Alternate translation: "the people of Ekron"

Amos 1:9

For three sins of ... even for four

This is a poetic device. It does not mean that a specific number of sins had been committed, but indicates that many sins had led to God's judgment. See how you translated these words in Amos 1:3.

Tyre

Here "Tyre" represents the people of the city of Tyre. Alternate translation: "the people of Tyre"

I will not turn away punishment

Yahweh uses two negatives here to emphasize that he would punish them. See how you translated these words in [Amos 1:3]

their covenant of brotherhood

"the agreement they made to treat you as brothers"

Amos 1:10

it will devour her fortresses

Here Yahweh's judgment is spoken of as if it were a fire that was consuming the fortresses.

Amos 1:11

For three sins of ... even for four

This is a poetic device. It does not mean that a specific number of sins had been committed, but indicates that many sins had led to God's judgment. See how you translated these words in Amos 1:3.

Edom

Here "Edom" represents the people of the country of Edom. Alternate translation: "the people of Edom"

I will not turn away punishment

Yahweh uses two negatives here to emphasize that he would punish them. See how you translated these words in [Amos 1:3]

he pursued his brother

The assumed knowledge is that Esau, from whom the people of Edom were descended, was the brother of Jacob, from whom the people of Israel were descended. Here "his brother" represents the

people of Israel. Alternate translation: "he pursued the people of Israel"

cast off all pity

"showed them no mercy"

His anger tore them apart continually

The abstract noun "anger" can be translated using the adjective "angry." Here it is a metonym for a person who is angry and who tears his victims apart. If your language has a word for "tear apart" that implies that the subject is an animal, you might want to use it here. Alternate translation: "He was angry and did great harm to his victims"

his wrath lasted forever

The abstract noun "wrath" can be translated using the adjective "furious." This is an exaggeration that is meant to express the ongoing nature of his wrath. Alternate translation: "he was always furious"

Amos 1:12

Teman ... Bozrah

These are names of places. See:

it will devour the palaces of Bozrah

Here Yahweh's judgment is spoken of as if it were a fire that was consuming the palaces.

Amos 1:13

For three sins of ... even for four

This is a poetic device. It does not mean that a specific number of sins had been committed, but indicates that many sins had led to God's judgment. See how you translated these words in Amos 1:3.

I will not turn away punishment

Yahweh uses two negatives here to emphasize that he would punish them. See how you translated these words in [Amos 1:3]

enlarge their borders

"extend their boundaries" or "expand their territory"

Amos 1:14

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message of judgment on the people of Ammon.

it will devour the palaces

Here Yahweh's judgment is spoken of as if it were a fire that was consuming the palaces.

with a tempest in the day of the whirlwind

The fighting against the people of Ammon is spoken of as if it were a violent storm. Alternate translation: "and the fighting will be like a great storm"

tempest ... whirlwind

These are two kinds of violent storms.

whirlwind

a strong wind that spins very quickly as it moves and can cause damage

Amos 1:15

Their king will go into captivity

The abstract noun "captivity" can be translated as the verb "capture." This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Their enemies will capture their king and take him away as a prisoner"

Chapter 2

¹ This is what Yahweh says:

"For three sins of Moab,
even for four, I will not turn away punishment,
because he burned the bones
of the king of Edom to lime.

² I will send fire on Moab,
and it will devour the fortresses of Kerioth.
Moab will die in an uproar,
with shouting and the sound of the ram's horn.

³ I will destroy the judge in her,
and I will kill all the princes with him,"
says Yahweh.

⁴ This is what Yahweh says:

"For three sins of Judah,
even for four, I will not turn away punishment,
because they rejected the law of Yahweh
and did not keep his statutes.
Their lies caused them to go astray,
after which their fathers had also walked.

⁵ I will send fire on Judah,
and it will devour the fortresses of Jerusalem."

⁶ This is what Yahweh says:

"For three sins of Israel,
even for four, I will not turn away punishment,
because they sold the innocent for silver
and the needy for a pair of sandals.

⁷ They trample on the heads of the poor
as people trample on dust on the ground;
they push the oppressed away.
A man and his father go to the same girl
and so profane my holy name.

⁸ They lie down beside every altar
on clothes taken as pledges,
and in the house of their God
they drink the wine of those
who have been forced to pay a fine.

⁹ Yet I destroyed the Amorite before them,
whose height was like the height of cedars;
he was strong as the oaks.
Yet I destroyed his fruit above
and his roots below.

¹⁰ Also, I brought you up out of the land of Egypt
and led you forty years in the wilderness
to possess the land of the Amorites.

¹¹ I raised up prophets from among your sons
and Nazirites from your young men.
Is it not so, people of Israel?—
this is Yahweh's declaration.

¹² But you persuaded the Nazirites to drink wine
and commanded the prophets not to prophesy.

¹³ Look, I will crush you
as a cart that is full of grain can crush someone.

¹⁴ Escape will perish from the swift;
the strong will not add to his own strength;

- neither will the mighty save himself.
- 15 The archer will not stand;
the fast runner will not escape;
the horseman will not save himself.
- 16 Even the bravest warriors
will flee naked in that day—
this is Yahweh's declaration."
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Amos 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter consists of oracles against Moab and Judah by using poetic language and imagery. But the UDB translates it using prose. If possible, translate this chapter as poetry, but you may translate as narrative.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Idiom

You will notice that the phrase "For three sins of Judah, even for four," is used to begin each of these oracles. This is not intended to be a literal count but is an idiom indicating a large number of sins. (See: and sin)

Amos 2:1

For three sins of ... even for four

This is a poetic device. It does not mean that a specific number of sins had been committed, but indicates that many sins had led to God's judgment. See how you translated these words in Amos 1:3.

Moab

This represents the Moabite people. Alternate translation: "the people of Moab"

I will not turn away punishment

Yahweh uses two negatives here to emphasize that he would punish them. See how you translated these words in [Amos 1:3]

he burned the bones

The word "he" refers to Moab. Alternate translation: "the people of Moab burned the bones"

to lime

"to ashes"

Amos 2:2

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message of judgment on the people of Moab.

Kerioth

This is the name of a city or town.

Moab will die

Here "Moab" represents the people of Moab. Alternate translation: "The people of Moab will die"

in an uproar

An uproar is a very loud noise.

Amos 2:3

the judge in her

"the ruler of Moab"

all the princes

"all the officials" or "all the leaders"

Amos 2:4

For three sins of ... even for four

This is a poetic device. It does not mean that a specific number of sins had been committed, but indicates that many sins had led to God's judgment. See how you translated these words in Amos 1:3.

Judah

This represents the people of Judah. Alternate translation: "the people of Judah"

I will not turn away punishment

Yahweh uses two negatives here to emphasize that he will punish them. See how you translated these words in [Amos 1:3]

Their lies

This expression here probably refers to worshipping false gods or idols. Alternate translation: "Their worship of idols"

go astray ... walked

Worshipping false gods is spoken of as if people were walking behind them.

Amos 2:5

it will devour the fortresses of Jerusalem

Here Yahweh's judgment is spoken of as if it were a fire that was consuming the fortresses.

Amos 2:6

For three sins of ... even for four

This is a poetic device. It does not mean that a specific number of sins had been committed, but indicates that many of sins had led to God's judgment. See how you translated these words in Amos 1:3.

Israel

This represents the Israelite people. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel"

I will not turn away punishment

Yahweh uses two negatives here to emphasize that he would punish them. See how you translated these words in [Amos 1:3]

the innocent

This refers to innocent people in general. Alternate translation: "innocent people"

the needy

This refers to needy people in general. Alternate translation: "needy people"

Amos 2:7

General Information:

The word "they" in these verses refers to the people of Israel.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message of judgment on the people of Israel.

They trample on the heads of the poor as people trample on dust on the ground

How the people of Israel treated the poor is compared to how people step heavily on the ground

trample

repeatedly step heavily or roughly

the poor

This refers to poor people in general. Alternate translation: "poor people"

they push the oppressed away

This idiom means they refused to listen when the oppressed people said they were being treated unfairly

the oppressed

This refers to oppressed people in general. Alternate translation: "oppressed people"

go to the same girl

This is a polite way of talking about having sexual relations. Alternate translation: "have sexual relations with the same girl" or "lie with the same girl"

Amos 2:8

those who have been forced to pay a fine

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom they forced to pay a penalty"

Amos 2:9

General Information:

The words "them" and "you" in these verses both refer to the people of Israel.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message of judgment on the people of Israel.

whose height was like the height of cedars; he was strong as the oaks

This is an exaggeration. It describes how tall and strong the Amorite people were and compares them to the tallest and strongest trees in that region. Alternate translation: "who were tall and strong like great trees"

cedars

cedar trees

oaks

oak trees

Yet I destroyed his fruit above and his roots below

How Yahweh completely destroyed the Amorites is pictured as a tree being destroyed from top to bottom. Alternate translation: "Yet I destroyed them completely"

Amos 2:10

General Information:

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Amos 2:11

General Information:

The words "your" and "you" in these verses refer to the people of Israel.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message of judgment on the people of Israel.

raised up

"appointed"

Is it not so, people of Israel?

Yahweh asks this question to emphasize what he has said. This can be stated in active form.
Alternate translation: "You people of Israel certainly know that what I have said is true!"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. Alternate translation: "this is what Yahweh has declared" or "this is what I, Yahweh, have declared"

Amos 2:12

General Information:

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Amos 2:13

General Information:

The word "you" in these verses refers to the people of Israel.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message of judgment on the people of Israel.

Look

This alerts the reader to pay attention to what follows. Alternate translation: "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

I will crush you as a cart that is full of grain can crush someone

Yahweh compares his judgment on the people of Israel to crushing them with something very heavy.

Amos 2:14

Escape will perish from the swift

Possible meanings are 1) even people who usually can run fast will be unable to escape, or 2) there

will be no safe place to which even fast runners can escape.

the swift ... the strong ... the mighty

These adjectives refer to people in general.
Alternate translation: "Swift people ... strong people ... mighty people" or "The strong person ... the strong person ... the mighty person"

Amos 2:15

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message of judgment on the people of Israel.

The archer will not stand

Here "stand" means to keep one's place in battle.

the fast runner will not escape

The implied information is that the fast runner will not escape from his enemies. Alternate translation: "the fast runner will be captured"

Amos 2:16

flee naked

Possible meanings are 1) this is a metonym for "run away without his weapons" or 2) this is meant literally as "run away wearing no clothes"

in that day

"at that time"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Amos 2:11]

Chapter 3

¹ Hear this word that Yahweh has spoken against you, people of Israel, against the whole family that I brought up out of the land of Egypt:

² "I have chosen only you
from all the families of the earth.
Therefore I will punish you
for all your iniquities."

³ Will two walk together
unless they have made an appointment?

⁴ Will a lion roar in the forest
when he has no prey?
Will a young lion growl from his den
if he has caught nothing?

⁵ Can a bird fall in a trap on the ground
when no bait is set for him?
Will a trap spring up from the ground
when it has not caught anything?

⁶ If a ram's horn sounds in a city,
will the people not tremble?
If disaster overtakes a city,
has Yahweh not sent it?

⁷ Surely the Lord Yahweh will do nothing
unless he reveals his plan
to his servants the prophets.

⁸ The lion has roared;
who will not fear?
The Lord Yahweh has spoken;
who will not prophesy?

⁹ Proclaim this in the fortresses at Ashdod,
and in the fortresses in the land of Egypt;
say, "Assemble yourselves on the mountains of Samaria
and see what great tumults are in her,
and what oppression is in her.

¹⁰ For they do not know how to do right—
this is Yahweh's declaration—
They store up violence
and devastation in their fortresses."

¹¹ Therefore, this is what the Lord Yahweh says:

"An enemy will surround the land,
and pull down your strongholds
and plunder your fortresses."

¹² This is what Yahweh says:

"As the shepherd rescues out of the mouth of the lion
two legs only, or a piece of an ear;
so will the people of Israel who live in Samaria be rescued;
they will be left with only the corner of a couch
or a piece of a bed."

¹³ Hear and testify against the house of Jacob— this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh, the God of hosts:

¹⁴ "For in the day that I punish the sins of Israel,
I will also punish the altars of Bethel.
The horns of the altar will be cut off
and fall to the ground.

¹⁵ I will destroy the winter house
with the summer house.
The houses of ivory will perish,
and the large houses will vanish—
this is Yahweh's declaration."

Amos 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Amos continues to use poetic form in this chapter to prophesy the disaster coming to the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. (See: prophet)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Questions

This chapter begins with a number of rhetorical questions. The last question provides the reader with some answers: "Yahweh has certainly spoken through his prophets. So listen to them." The answer to these rhetorical questions have the expected response of "no" because they are things that are not expected to happen. The writer is helping the reader to conclude that God uses the prophets to speak his message.

Amos 3:1

Hear this word

"Hear this message" or "Listen to this message"

that Yahweh has spoken against you ... against the whole family

"this word that Yahweh has spoken about you ... about the whole family" or "Yahweh's message about you ... about the whole family"

you, people of Israel ... the whole family that I brought up out of the land of Egypt

These two phrases refer to the same group of people. The people God is speaking to are the descendants of those he had taken out of Egypt.

the whole family

Here "the whole family" represents to the whole nation. The people of Israel were all descendants of Jacob. Alternate translation: "the whole nation" or "the whole clan"

Amos 3:2

I have chosen only you from all the families of the earth

This implies that they should have obeyed him. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "I have chosen only you from all the families of the earth, so you should have obeyed me"

all the families of the earth

Here "families" represents nations or people groups. Alternate translation: "all the nations of the earth" or "all the clans on the earth"

Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities

It can be stated clearly that they did not obey God. Alternate translation: "But you did not obey me. Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities"

Amos 3:3

General Information:

Amos uses the questions in verses 3-6 to present examples of things that people already know about what causes things to happen and what are the results of things that happen.

Will two walk together unless they have made an appointment?

Amos uses this question to remind people of what they already know about what must happen in order for two people to walk together. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Two people will walk together only if they have first agreed to walk together." or "You know that two people will walk together only if they have made an appointment to do that."

Amos 3:4

Will a lion roar in the forest when he has no prey?

Amos uses this question to remind people of what they already know about what causes a lion to roar. The question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "A lion will roar in the forest only when he has a prey."

Will a young lion growl from his den if he has caught nothing?

Amos uses this question to remind people of what they already know about what causes a lion to growl. It can be translated as a statement.

Alternate translation: "A young lion will growl from his den only if he has caught something."

Amos 3:5

General Information:

Amos uses the questions in verses 3-6 to present examples of things that people already know about what causes things to happen and what are the results of things that happen.

Can a bird fall in a trap on the ground when no bait is set for him?

Amos uses this question to remind people of what they already know about what causes a bird to fall into a trap. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "A bird can fall into a trap on the ground only when bait has been set for him."

Will a trap spring up from the ground when it has not caught anything?

Amos uses this question to remind people of what they already know about what causes a trap to spring up. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "A trap will spring up from the ground only when it has caught something."

Will a trap spring up from the ground

This refers to a trap closing. When an animal steps on a trap, the trap closes and the animal cannot get out of it. Alternate translation: "Will a trap close"

Amos 3:6

If a ram's horn sounds in a city, will the people not tremble?

Amos uses this question to remind people of what they already know about what happens when a ram's horn sounds. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "When the ram's horn sounds in the city, the people will tremble." or "When the ram's horn sounds in the city, we expect that people will tremble."

If a ram's horn sounds in a city

The purpose of sounding the ram's horn is to warn people that enemies are about to attack the city. Alternate translation: "If someone blows the ram's horn in the city to warn the people about an enemy attack" or "If the warning ram's horn is blown in the city"

tremble

The reason for trembling can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "tremble because they are afraid" or "be afraid of the enemy and tremble"

If disaster overtakes a city, has Yahweh not sent it?

Amos uses this question to remind the people of what they should already know about what causes a disaster. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "If disaster

overtakes a city, Yahweh has sent it." or "If disaster overtakes a city, we know that Yahweh has sent it."

If disaster overtakes a city,

Something terrible happening to a city is spoken of as if disaster overtakes it.

Amos 3:7

Surely the Lord Yahweh will do nothing unless ... the prophets

The relationship between this sentence and the rhetorical questions in [Amos 3:3]

Surely the Lord Yahweh will do nothing unless he reveals ... prophets

This can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "Surely the Lord Yahweh will reveal ... prophets before he does anything"

his plan

"his secret plan"

Amos 3:8

The lion has roared; who will not fear?

Amos uses this question to remind people of what people do when a lion roars. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "The lion has roared; so we know that everyone will be afraid." or "The lion has roared; so of course everyone will be afraid."

The Lord Yahweh has spoken; who will not prophesy?

Amos uses this question to emphasize what people should already know about what prophets do when God speaks. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "The Lord Yahweh has spoken; so we know that the prophets will prophesy." or "The Lord Yahweh has spoken; so of course the prophets will prophesy."

Amos 3:9

Assemble yourselves

This command is to Israel's enemies in Ashdod and Egypt.

see what great tumults are in her

The word "her" refers to the city of Samaria. Cities were often spoken of as if they were women.

what great tumults are in her

Here "great tumults is in her" refers to people's fear because of the fighting and rioting there. The word "tumults" can be translated with a verbal phrase to make this meaning explicit. Alternate translation: "how the people in Samaria riot" or "how the people in Samaria fight against one another"

what oppression is in her

Here "oppression is in her" refers to leaders in Samaria oppressing the people. The abstract noun

"oppress" can be stated as "oppress" or "cause to suffer." Alternate translation: "how the leaders oppress people" or "and how they cause people to suffer"

Amos 3:10

For they do not know how to do right

The word "they" refers to the people of Samaria.

do right

"do what is right"

They store up violence and devastation

Here "violence" and "devastation" represent things they have taken by being violent and destructive. Alternate translation: "They store up things that they have violently stolen from others"

Amos 3:11

Therefore, this is what the Lord Yahweh says

It can be stated clearly who God was saying this to. Alternate translation: "Therefore, this is what the Lord Yahweh says to the people of Israel living in Samaria"

An enemy will surround the land

"An enemy army will surround the land"

plunder your fortresses

"steal all the things in your fortresses"

Amos 3:12

As the shepherd rescues ... so will the people of Israel ... be rescued

The Lord compares the people of Israel being rescued with an unsuccessful attempt to rescue an animal from a lion. They will not be completely rescued.

As the shepherd rescues out of the mouth of the lion two legs only, or a piece of an ear

It can be stated clearly that the shepherd tries to rescue the whole animal. Alternate translation: "As the shepherd tries to rescue an animal from the lion's mouth, but is able to save only two legs or a piece of an ear"

As the shepherd ... the lion

Here the phrases "the shepherd" and "the lion" refer to any shepherd or lion. Alternate translation: "As a shepherd ... a lion"

they will be left with only the corner of a couch or a piece of a bed

This phrase shows that they will not be completely rescued. Almost all of their possessions will be stolen. This passage in Hebrew is difficult to understand, and some modern versions interpret it differently.

couch

This is a soft chair big enough to lie down on.

Amos 3:13

the house of Jacob

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Jacob's descendants. They were the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "the descendants of Jacob"

this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh, the God of hosts

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated the similar phrase "this is Yahweh's declaration" in [Amos 2:11]

Amos 3:14

in the day that I punish the sins of Israel

"when I punish the sins of Israel"

I will also punish the altars of Bethel

People sinned against God by worshiping false gods at their altars. Here "punish the altars" represents punishing the people by destroying their altars. Alternate translation: "I will also destroy the altars at Bethel"

The horns of the altar will be cut off and fall to the ground

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Your enemies will cut off the horns of the altars, and the horns will fall to the ground"

horns of the altar

People worshiped false gods at their altars. At the top corners of the altars there were pieces of metal shaped like bull horns. These horns were a symbol of the strength of their gods.

Amos 3:15

the winter house with the summer house

Some of the wealthy people had two houses: one that they lived in during the winter and one that they lived in during the summer. This refers to any winter and summer houses. Alternate translation: "the houses they live in during the winter and the houses they live in during the summer"

The houses of ivory will perish

God speaks of the houses being destroyed as if they were alive and would die. Alternate translation: "The houses of ivory will be destroyed" or "The houses of ivory will collapse"

The houses of ivory

"the houses that are decorated with ivory." This refers to houses that had decorations made of ivory on the walls and furniture. Ivory was very

expensive, so only the wealthy people had things decorated with ivory.

ivory
the teeth and horns of large animals

the large houses will vanish
"the large houses will exist no more." Here "vanish" represents being destroyed. Alternate translation:
"the large houses will be destroyed"

this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Amos 2:11]

Chapter 4

- ¹ Listen to this word, you cows of Bashan,
you who are in the mountain of Samaria,
you who oppress the poor, you who crush the needy,
you who say to your husbands, "Bring us drinks."
- ² The Lord Yahweh has sworn by his holiness,
"Look, the days will come on you
when they will take you away with hooks,
the last of you with fishhooks."
- ³ You will go out through the breaks in the city wall,
each one of you going straight through it,
and you will be thrown out toward Harmon—
this is Yahweh's declaration.
- ⁴ "Go to Bethel and sin,
to Gilgal and multiply transgression,
bring your sacrifices every morning,
your tithes every three days."
- ⁵ Offer a thanksgiving sacrifice with bread;
proclaim freewill offerings; announce them,
for this is what you love to do,
you people of Israel—
this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh.
- ⁶ I gave you cleanness of teeth in all your cities
and lack of bread in all your places.
Yet you have not returned to me—
this is Yahweh's declaration.
- ⁷ I also withheld rain from you
when there were still three months to the harvest.
I caused it to rain on one city,
and caused it not to rain on another city.
One piece of land was rained on,
but the piece of land where it did not rain dried up.
- ⁸ Two or three cities staggered to another city to drink water,
but were not satisfied.
Yet you have not returned to me—
this is Yahweh's declaration.
- ⁹ I afflicted you with blight and mildew.
The multitude of your gardens,
your vineyards, your fig trees, and your olive trees—
the locusts devoured them all.
Yet you have not returned to me—
this is Yahweh's declaration.
- ¹⁰ I sent a plague on you
as on Egypt.
I killed your young men with the sword,
along with the captivity of your horses,
and made the stench of your camp come up
to your nostrils.
Yet you have not returned to me—
this is Yahweh's declaration.
- ¹¹ I overthrew cities among you,
as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.
You were like a burning stick snatched out of the fire.
Yet you have not returned to me—
this is Yahweh's declaration.
- ¹² Therefore I will do something terrible to you, Israel;
and because I will do something terrible to you,
prepare to meet your God, Israel!
- ¹³ For, look, he who forms the mountains
also creates the wind,

reveals his thoughts to mankind,
makes the dawn become darkness,
and treads on the high places of the earth.
Yahweh, God of hosts, is his name."

Amos 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is written in poetic form and is about the people's refusal to listen to Yahweh even as he tries to point them back to himself.

Special concepts in this chapter

Repetition

This chapter contains a repeated sentence: "Yet you have not returned to me—this is Yahweh's declaration." Please make sure this sentence is translated the same way each time to show the repetition. This repetition produces a list of sins Yahweh is mounting against his people. (See: sin and peopleofgod)

Amos 4:1

you cows of Bashan, you who are in the mountain of Samaria

Amos speaks to the women of Israel who live in Samaria as if they were well-fed cows. Alternate translation: "you wealthy women who live in the mountains of Samaria, you who are like the well-fed cows of Bashan"

you who oppress the poor

The phrase "the poor" refers to poor people. Alternate translation: "you who oppress poor people"

you who crush the needy

Hear "crush" is a metaphor that represents treating people badly. The phrase "the needy" refers to people who need help. Alternate translation: "you who treat needy people badly" or "you who hurt needy people"

Amos 4:2

The Lord Yahweh has sworn by his holiness

This means that Yahweh promised that he would do something, and he assured people that he would do what he promised because he is holy.

the days will come on you

The word "you" refers to the wealthy women of Israel who lived in Samaria, but also includes men.

the days will come on you when they will take you away with hooks

A time in the future when bad things will happen to the people is spoken of as if those days will attack the people. The word "they" refers to their enemies. Alternate translation: "There will be a time when your enemies will take you away with hooks"

they will take you away with hooks, the last of you with fishhooks

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that the enemy will capture the people like people catch fish. Alternate translation: "they will capture you as people capture animals, and they take you away" or "they will defeat you and cruelly force you to go away with them"

Amos 4:3

Connecting Statement:

God continues to speak to the people of Israel.

breaks in the city wall

places where the enemy had broken down the city wall to enter

you will be thrown out toward Harmon

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will throw you out toward Harmon" or "your enemies will force you to leave the city and go toward Harmon"

Harmon

This is either the name of a place that we do not know, or it refers to Mount Hermon. Some modern versions interpret it in that way.

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated these words in [Amos 2:11]

Amos 4:4

General Information:

God gives several commands in verse 4, but he does so to show that he is angry

Connecting Statement:

God continues to speak to the people of Israel.

Go to Bethel and sin, to Gilgal and multiply transgression

People would go to Bethel and Gilgal to make sacrifices to God, but they kept sinning anyway. God makes these commands to show that he is angry with them for doing these things. These commands can be expressed as statements. Alternate translation: "You go to Bethel to worship, but you sin. You go to Gilgal to worship, but you sin even more"

bring your sacrifices ... every three days

God makes these commands in order to show the people that he is angry that even though they do these things, they continue to sin against him in other ways. These commands can be expressed as statements. Alternate translation: "You bring your sacrifices ... every three days, but it does you no good."

every three days

Possible meanings are 1) on the third day or 3) every third day. Some versions have "every three years," because the Israelites were supposed to bring their tithes to God once every three years.

Amos 4:5

Offer a thanksgiving sacrifice ... proclaim freewill offerings; announce them, for this is what you love to do
God makes these commands in order to show the people that even though they do these things, he is angry because they continue to sin against him in other ways. Use the form in your language that shows that they will do these things no matter what Yahweh says, but these things will do them no good.

announce them
"boast about them"

for this is what you love to do, you people of Israel
Yahweh rebukes them for being proud about their offerings and sacrifices. They think that God should be pleased with them, but he is not. Alternate translation: "for this is what you love to do, you people of Israel. But it does not please me"

this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated the similar phrase "this is Yahweh's declaration" in [Amos 2:11]

Amos 4:6

Connecting Statement:

God continues to speak to the people of Israel.

I gave you cleanness of teeth

Here having clean teeth represents having no food in the mouth to make the teeth dirty. Alternate translation: "I caused you to starve"

lack of bread

Giving them "lack of bread" represents causing them to lack bread, and "bread" represents food in general. Alternate translation: "I caused you not to have enough food"

you have not returned to me

Returning to God represents submitting again to him. Alternate translation: "you have not submitted again to me"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated these words in [Amos 2:11]

Amos 4:7

I also withheld rain from you

"I prevented the rain from falling on your crops"

when there were still three months to the harvest

It can be stated clearly that the people needed the rain. Alternate translation: "when there were still three months to the harvest and your crops needed the rain"

One piece of land was rained on

This can be stated in active form. The phrase "One piece of land" represents any piece of land." Alternate translation: "It rained on one piece of land" or "It rained on some pieces of land"

the piece of land where it did not rain

This refers to any piece of land where it did not rain. Alternate translation: "the pieces of land where it did not rain"

Amos 4:8

Two or three cities staggered

Here "cities" represents the people of those cities. Alternate translation: "The people of two or three cities staggered"

you have not returned to me

Returning to God represents submitting again to him. See how you translated this in [Amos 4:6]

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated these words in [Amos 2:11]

Amos 4:9

I afflicted you with blight and mildew

Here "afflicted you" represents afflicting their crops. Alternate translation: "I afflicted your crops with blight and mildew" or "I destroyed your crops with blight and mildew"

blight

This is a disease that dries and kills plants. It is caused by the hot wind from the desert.

mildew

This is another disease that kills plants.

Amos 4:10

I sent a plague on you as on Egypt

"I sent a plague on you as I did on Egypt" or "I sent a plague on you as I sent plagues on Egypt"

I sent a plague on you

"I caused terrible things to happen to you"

I killed your young men with the sword

Here "the sword" represents battle. God killed them by sending enemies to fight against them. Alternate translation: "I made your enemies kill your men in battle"

along with the captivity of your horses

Possible meanings are 1) God also killed the horses that the Israelites had captured from other people, or 2) God also captured the Israelites' horses.

made the stench of your camp come up to your nostrils

A stench is a bad smell. The stench coming up to their nostrils represents them smelling something terrible. It can be stated clearly that the smell was from the dead bodies of those who were killed. Alternate translation: "I made you smell the terrible odor of the dead bodies in your camp"

you have not returned to me

Returning to God represents submitting again to him. See how you translated this in [Amos 4:6]

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated these words in [Amos 2:11]

Amos 4:11

You were like a burning stick snatched out of the fire

God speaks of those who survived the plague and war as if they were a burning stick that someone pulled out of a fire. Alternate translation: "Some of you survived, like a burning stick that someone pulls out of a fire"

Amos 4:12

Connecting Statement:

God continues to speak to the people of Israel.

prepare to meet your God

God says this to warn the people of Israel that he will judge them. Alternate translation: "prepare to meet me, your God"

Amos 4:13

he who forms the mountains ... reveals his thoughts ... is his name

It is not clear whether Amos is speaking about God, or God is speaking about himself. If God is speaking about himself, it can be translated with the words "I" and "me." Alternate translation: "I who form the mountains ... reveal my thoughts ... is my name"

makes the dawn become darkness

Possible meanings are 1) God causes the day to be very dark with thick clouds. Alternate translation: "makes the morning dark" or 2) God causes time to pass, so every day becomes night. Alternate translation: "makes morning and evening"

treads on the high places of the earth

God ruling over all the earth is spoken of as if he walks on the highest places of the earth. Alternate translation: "rules over all the earth" or "rules over even the highest places of the earth"

Yahweh, God of hosts, is his name

By declaring his full name, Yahweh is declaring his power and authority to do these things. Your language may have a way for people to do this.

Chapter 5

¹ Hear this word that I take up as a lament over you, house of Israel.

² The virgin Israel has fallen;
she will rise no more;
she is abandoned on her land;
there is no one to raise her up.

³ For this is what the Lord Yahweh says:

"The city that went out with a thousand
will have a hundred remaining,
and the one that went out with a hundred
will have ten remaining for the house of Israel."

⁴ For this is what Yahweh says to the house of Israel:

"Seek me and live!

⁵ Do not seek Bethel;
nor enter Gilgal;
do not journey to Beersheba.
For Gilgal will surely go into captivity,
and Bethel will become nothing.

⁶ Seek Yahweh and live,
or he will break out like fire
in the house of Joseph.

It will devour,
and there will be no one to quench it in Bethel.

⁷ Those people turn justice into a bitter thing
and throw righteousness down to the ground!"

⁸ God made the Pleiades and Orion;
he turns deep darkness into the morning;
he makes the day dark with night
and calls for the waters of the sea;
he pours them out on the surface of the earth.
Yahweh is his name!

⁹ He brings sudden destruction on the strong
so that destruction comes on the fortresses.

¹⁰ They hate anyone who reproves them in the city gate,
and they abhor anyone who speaks with integrity.

¹¹ Because you trample down the poor
and seize a tribute of wheat from him—
although you have built houses of worked stone,
you will not live in them.
You have planted delightful vineyards,
but you will not drink their wine.

¹² For I know how many are your offenses
and how mighty are your sins.
you who afflict the just, take bribes,
and turn aside the needy in the city gate.

¹³ Therefore any prudent person is silent at such a time,
for it is an evil time.

¹⁴ Seek good and not evil,
so that you may live.
So Yahweh, the God of hosts, will really be with you,
as you say he is.

¹⁵ Hate evil, love good,
establish justice in the city gate.
Perhaps Yahweh, the God of hosts, will be gracious
to the remnant of Joseph.

- 16 Therefore, this is what Yahweh says, the God of hosts, the Lord,
 "Wailing will be in all the squares,
 and they will say in all the streets,
 'Woe! Woe!'
They will call the farmers to mourning
 and those who know lamentation to wailing.
- 17 In all vineyards there will be wailing,
 for I will pass through your midst,"
 says Yahweh.
- 18 Woe to you who desire
 the day of Yahweh!
Why do you long for the day of Yahweh?
 It will be darkness and not light,
- 19 as when a man flees from a lion
 and a bear meets him,
or he goes in a house and puts his hand on the wall
 and a snake bites him.
- 20 Will not the day of Yahweh be darkness and not light?
 Gloom and no brightness?
- 21 "I hate, I despise your festivals,
 I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.
- 22 Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings,
 I will not accept them,
neither will I look at the fellowship offerings
 of your fattened animals.
- 23 Remove from me the noise of your songs;
 I will not listen to the sound of your lutes.
- 24 Instead, let justice flow like water,
 and righteousness like a constantly flowing stream.
- 25 Did you bring me sacrifices and offerings
 in the wilderness for forty years, house of Israel?
- 26 You have lifted up the images of Sikkuth, your king,
 and Kaiwan, your star god,
 which you made for yourselves.
- 27 Therefore I will exile you beyond Damascus,"
 says Yahweh, whose name is the God of hosts.
-

Amos 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues to be written in a poetic format and foretells the destruction of the kingdom of Israel.

Special concepts in this chapter

Place Names

This chapter refers to various places in land of Israel

City gate

The "city gate" is mentioned several times. This was a place where people would go with legal and financial issues.

Amos 5:1

house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Israel's descendants. Alternate translation: "you people of Israel" or "you Israelite people group"

Amos 5:2

The virgin Israel has fallen ... no one to raise her up

The phrase "The virgin Israel" represents the nation of Israel. The nation of Israel being destroyed and having no other nation to help them become strong again is spoken of as if it were a young woman who has fallen and has no one to raise her up. Alternate translation: "The nation of Israel is like a woman who has fallen ... no one to help her get up"

she is abandoned on her land

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People have abandoned her" or "they have left her"

Amos 5:3

The city that went out with a thousand ... the one that went out with a hundred

These phrases refer to any cities that sent out large numbers of soldiers. Alternate translation: "Cities that went out with a thousand ... cities that went out with a hundred"

The city that went out with a thousand will have a hundred remaining

The phrases "a thousand" and "a hundred" refer to a thousand soldiers and a hundred soldiers.

The city that went out with a thousand

"The city that went out" represents the soldiers of that city going out. It can be stated clearly why they went out. Alternate translation: "The city out of which a thousand soldiers went to fight" or "The city that sent out a thousand soldiers to fight"

will have a hundred remaining

"will have a hundred soldiers who have not been killed" or "will have only a hundred soldiers still alive." Here "remaining" refers to not being killed by the enemy.

for the house of Israel

Possible meanings are 1) "to defend the house of Israel" or 2) "belonging to the house of Israel"

house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Israel's descendants. See how you translated this in [Amos 5:1]

Amos 5:4

house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Israel's descendants. See how you translated this in [Amos 5:1]

Seek me

Here "Seek me" represents asking God for help. Alternate translation: "Ask me for help"

Amos 5:5

Do not seek Bethel

Here "seek Bethel" represents going to Bethel to ask for help. Alternate translation: "Do not go to Bethel to ask for help"

nor enter Gilgal

"and do not enter Gilgal"

For Gilgal will surely go into captivity

Here "Gilgal" represents the people of Gilgal, and going into captivity refers to being captured and taken away. Alternate translation: "For the people of Gilgal will surely be captured and taken away" or "For your enemies will surely capture the people of Gilgal and take them away"

Bethel will become nothing

Here "become nothing" represents being destroyed. Alternate translation: "Bethel will be completely destroyed" or "enemies will completely destroy Bethel"

Amos 5:6

Seek Yahweh

Here "Seek Yahweh" represents asking him for help. Alternate translation: "Ask Yahweh for help" or "Ask me, Yahweh, for help"

he will break out like fire

Here "break out like a fire" represents destroying things as fire destroys things. Alternate translation: "he will become like a fire that breaks out suddenly and destroys everything" or "he will destroy everything like a fire"

the house of Joseph

This phrase is a metonym for the descendants of Joseph. Here it represents the northern kingdom of Israel, whose two largest tribes were the descendants of Joseph. Alternate translation: "the descendants of Joseph" or "Israel"

It will devour

The word "it" refers to the fire, and "devour" represents destroying everything. God destroying everything is spoken of as if a fire were to destroy everything. Alternate translation: "It will destroy everything" or "He will destroy everything"

there will be no one to quench it
"there will no one to stop it" or "there will be no one to stop him from destroying everything"

Amos 5:7

turn justice into a bitter thing
Here "a bitter thing" represents actions that harm people, and "turn justice into a bitter thing" represents harming people rather than doing for them what is just. Alternate translation: "say that they are doing what is just, but instead they harm people" or "refuse to do what is just and harm people instead"

throw righteousness down to the ground
This represents treating righteousness as if it were worthless. Alternate translation: "treat righteousness as though it were as unimportant as dirt" or "you despise what is righteous"

Amos 5:8

the Pleiades and Orion
People saw patterns in the stars in the sky and gave names to them. These are two of those patterns. Alternate translation: "the stars" or "the groups of stars"

he turns deep darkness into the morning ... day dark with night
"he makes the night become morning, and he makes the day become night." This refers to causing the times of the day.

calls for the waters ... on the surface of the earth
This represents God causing the sea water to fall on the earth as rain. Alternate translation: "he takes the waters of the sea and makes them rain down on the surface of the earth"

Yahweh is his name!
By declaring his name, Yahweh is declaring his power and authority to do these things.

Amos 5:9

He brings sudden destruction on the strong
The abstract noun "destruction" can be translated with the verb "destroy." The phrase "the strong" refers to strong people, specifically soldiers. Alternate translation: "He suddenly destroys the strong people" or "He suddenly destroys the soldiers"

so that destruction comes on the fortresses
The abstract noun "destruction" can be translated with the verb "destroy." Alternate translation: "so that the fortresses are destroyed" or "and he destroys the fortresses"

Amos 5:10

They hate anyone
"The people of Israel hate anyone"

Amos 5:11

Connecting Statement:
Amos stops referring to the Israelites

you trample down the poor
This metaphor probably refers to forcing the poor to give money and receive nothing in return so that they cannot become wealthy. Alternate translation: "you keep the poor from becoming wealthy" or "you force the poor to pay high rent"

the poor
"poor people"

seize a tribute of wheat
Here Amos specifies that the Israelites ("the house of Joseph," [Amos 5:6](#)) force the poor to give as taxes part of the crops the poor have harvested.

worked stone
"cut stones" or "stones that people have cut"

you will not drink their wine
The word "their" refers to the vineyards. This may imply that no one will make the wine, or even that there will not be enough good grapes to make wine. Alternate translation: "you will not drink the wine that is made from the grapes in your vineyards"

Amos 5:12

afflict the just, take bribes, and turn aside the needy in the city gate
This is a list of some of their sins.

the just
The word "just" is a nominal adjective that refers to just people. Alternate translation: "just people" or "righteous people"

take bribes
"let people pay you to do bad things" or "let people pay you to lie about people"

turn aside the needy in the city gate
Here "turn aside the needy" represents telling the needy people to leave. It can be made clear why the needy were at the city gate. Alternate translation: "do not allow poor people to bring their cases to the judges in the city gate"

the needy
The word "needy" is a nominal adjective that refers to people who are in need. Alternate translation: "people in need"

Amos 5:13

any prudent person is silent

Those who do not want the evil people to harm them will not speak out against the evil deeds. Alternate translation: "wise people do not speak about the evil things people are doing"

for it is an evil time

Here "an evil time" represents a time when people are evil and do evil deeds. Alternate translation: "for it is a time when people are evil" or "for people do evil things"

Amos 5:14

Seek good and not evil

Here "Seek good" represents choosing to do what good. "Good" and "evil" represent good actions and evil actions. Alternate translation: "Choose to do what is good and not what is evil"

Amos 5:15

Hate evil, love good

"Hate evil actions, and love good actions." Here "good" and "evil" represent good actions and evil actions.

establish justice in the city gate

Here "establish justice" represents making sure that justice is done. Alternate translation: "make sure that justice is done in the city gates" or "make sure that the judges make just decisions in the city gates"

in the city gate

City gates were where business transactions occurred and judgments were made, because city walls were thick enough to have gateways that produced cool shade from the hot sun. Alternate translation: "in your courts"

the remnant of Joseph

Here "remnant" refers to people who are still living in Israel after the others are killed or taken away as captives. Here "Joseph" represents the northern kingdom of Israel, whose two largest tribes were the descendants of Joseph. See how you translated "house of Joseph" in [Amos 5:6]

Amos 5:16

this is what Yahweh says, the God of hosts, the Lord
"this is what Yahweh, the God of hosts, the Lord says"

Wailing will be in all the squares

"People will wail in all the town squares"

Wailing

long, loud, sad cries

the squares

broad open places in the town where people gather

those who know lamentation to wailing

The phrase "they will call" is understood from the beginning of the sentence. Alternate translation: "they will call those who know lamentation to wailing"

those who know lamentation

"professional mourners" or "those whom people pay to mourn"

to wailing

"to wail"

Amos 5:17

I will pass through your midst

God speaks of punishing the people as if he were to come and punish them while walking through the group of them. Alternate translation: "I will come and punish you" or "I will punish you"

Amos 5:18

Why do you long for the day of Yahweh?

God uses this question to rebuke the people for saying that they want the day of Yahweh to be soon. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You long for the day of Yahweh." or "You should not long for the day of Yahweh!"

It will be darkness and not light

Here "darkness" represents a time when disasters happen, and "light" represents a time when good things happen. Alternate translation: "It will be a time of darkness and disaster, not of light and blessing" or "On that day there will be disasters, not blessings"

Amos 5:19

General Information:

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Amos 5:20

Will not the day of Yahweh be darkness and not light?

This question emphasizes that bad things will happen then. It can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "The day of Yahweh will certainly be darkness and not light!" or "Bad things, not good things, will certainly happen on the day of Yahweh!"

Gloom and no brightness?

The words "Will not the day of Yahweh be" is understood from the previous sentence. Like the previous question, it emphasizes that terrible things, not good things, will happen on the day of Yahweh. It can be expressed as a statement.

Alternate translation: "It will be a time when terrible things, not good things, happen."

Amos 5:21

I hate, I despise your festivals

The word "despise" is a strong word for "hate." Together the two words emphasize the intensity of Yahweh's hatred for their religious festivals. Alternate translation: "I hate your festivals very much"

I take no delight in your solemn assemblies

"Your solemn assemblies do not please me at all"

Amos 5:22

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Amos 5:23

Remove from me the noise of your songs

This speaks of the noise of songs as if it could be put somewhere else. It represents stopping singing. Alternate translation: "Stop singing your noisy songs"

noise

unpleasant sounds

Amos 5:24

let justice flow like water, and righteousness like a constantly flowing stream

This represents causing there to be much justice and righteous. Alternate translation: "let there be so much justice that it is like flowing water, and let there be so much righteousness that it is like a constantly flowing stream" or "let justice abound like a flood, and let righteousness abound like a stream that never stops"

Amos 5:25

Did you bring me sacrifices ... Israel?

Possible meanings are 1) God uses this question to rebuke them because they did not offer sacrifices. Alternate translation: "You did not bring me sacrifices ... Israel." or 2) God uses this question to remind them that the sacrifices were not the most important part about their relationship. Alternate translation: "You did not have to bring me sacrifices ... Israel."

Did you bring

God speaks as though the Israelites he is speaking to were part of the group that wandered in the wilderness. Alternate translation: "Did your ancestors bring"

house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Israel's descendants. See how you translated it in Amos 5:1. Alternate translation: "you people of Israel" or "you Israelite people group"

Amos 5:26

You have lifted up the images of Sikkuth ... and Kaiwan

Here "lifted up the images" represents worshiping them. Alternate translation: "You have worshiped the images of Sikkuth ... and Kaiwan"

Sikkuth ... Kaiwan

These are the names of two false gods. The people had made images to represent them.

Kaiwan

Some versions write this as "Kiyyun."

Amos 5:27

General Information:

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Chapter 6

- ¹ Woe to those who are at ease in Zion,
and to those who are secure in the hill country of Samaria,
the notable men of the most important of the nations,
to whom the house of Israel comes for help!
- ² Your leaders say, "Go to Kalneh and look;
from there go to Hamath, the great city;
then go down to Gath of the Philistines.
Are they better than your two kingdoms?
Is their border larger than your border?"
- ³ Woe to those who put off the day of disaster
and make the throne of violence come near.
- ⁴ They lie down on beds of ivory
and lounge on their couches.
They eat lambs from the flock
and calves from the stall.
- ⁵ They sing foolish songs to the music of the lute;
they improvise on instruments as David did.
- ⁶ They drink wine from bowls
and anoint themselves with the finest oils,
but they do not grieve over the ruin of Joseph.
- ⁷ So they will now go into exile with the first exiles,
and the feasts of those who lounge about will pass away.
- ⁸ "I, the Lord Yahweh, have sworn by myself—
this is the declaration of Yahweh, the God of hosts,
I detest the pride of Jacob;
I hate his fortresses.
Therefore I will deliver up the city
with all that is in it."
- ⁹ It will come about that if ten men remain in one house, they will all die. ¹⁰ When his relative or the one who burns him takes up the bones from the house—when he says to the person in the inner room of the house, "Is there anyone with you?" that person will say, "No one." Then he will say, "Be quiet, for we must not mention Yahweh's name."
- ¹¹ For, look, Yahweh will give a command,
and the big house will be smashed to pieces,
and the little house to bits.
- ¹² Do horses run on the rocky cliffs?
Does one plow there with oxen?
Yet you have turned justice into poison
and the fruit of righteousness into bitterness—
- ¹³ you who rejoice over Lo Debar,
who say, "Have we not taken Karnaim by our own strength?"
- ¹⁴ "But look, I will raise up against you a nation,
house of Israel—this is the declaration of Yahweh, the God of hosts.
They will afflict you
from Lebo Hamath to the brook of the Arabah."

Amos 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues to be written in poetic style except for verses 9-10, which are in prose. These two verses contain many interested features.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Verses 9-10 will probably be difficult to translate because the situation is vague and details don't appear to align easily. It is appropriate to translate these verses with some ambiguity remaining. It may be helpful to read many different versions prior to translating these verses.

Amos 6:1

who are at ease

"who feel safe." The people are comfortable and not concerned that God will judge them.

the notable men of the most important of the nations

"the most important men of this great nation."
Yahweh may be using irony to describe how these men think of themselves. Alternate translation: "the men who think they are the most important people in the most important nation"

the house of Israel comes

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Israel's descendants. Alternate translation: "the Israelites come" or "the Israelite people group comes"

comes for help

Here "comes" can be stated as "goes." Alternate translation: "goes for help"

Amos 6:2

Kalneh

This is the name of a city.

Are they better than your two kingdoms?

The notable men use this question to emphasize that the kingdoms of Israel and Judah are better than those other kingdoms. Alternate translation: "Your two kingdoms are better than they are."

Is their border larger than your border?

The notable men use this question to emphasize that their kingdoms are larger than those other kingdoms. Alternate translation: "Their border is smaller than yours." or "Those countries are smaller than Judah and Samaria."

Amos 6:3

to those who put off the day of disaster

Refusing to believe that Yahweh will cause disaster is spoken of as if the "day of disaster" were an object the people could put far from themselves. Alternate translation: "to those who refuse to believe that I will cause them to experience disaster"

and make the throne of violence come near

Here "throne" is a metonym that represents reign or rule. The people doing evil things, which causes Yahweh to bring disaster on them, is spoken of as if they were causing "violence" to rule them.

Alternate translation: "but who are actually causing me to send violent people to destroy you"

Amos 6:4

lie down ... lounge

Israelites at that time usually ate while sitting on a floor cloth or a simple seat.

beds of ivory

"beds decorated with ivory" or "costly beds"

ivory

a white substance made from the teeth and horns of large animals

lounge

lie around like lazy people

couches

soft seats large enough to lie down on

Amos 6:5

they improvise on instruments

Possible meanings: 1) they invent new songs and ways of playing the instruments or 2) they invent new instruments.

Amos 6:6

drink wine from bowls

This implies that they drink a lot of wine because they drink it from a large bowl rather than a regular wine cup.

they do not grieve over the ruin of Joseph

Here "Joseph" represents his descendants. Alternate translation: "they do not grieve about the descendants of Joseph whom enemies will soon destroy"

Amos 6:7

they will now go into exile with the first exiles

"they will be among the first ones to go into exile" or "I will send them into exile first"

the feasts of those who lounge about will pass away

"there will be no more feasts for people to lie around at ease"

Amos 6:8

this is the declaration of Yahweh, the God of hosts
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Amos 3:13]

I detest the pride of Jacob

Here "Jacob" represents his descendants. Alternate translation: "I hate the descendants of Jacob because they have become arrogant"

I hate his fortresses

It is implied that Yahweh hates the fortresses because the people believed the fortresses would keep them safe. Alternate translation: "I hate the people of Israel because they trust in their fortresses, not in me, to protect them"

Amos 6:9

General Information:

In 6:9-10 Amos gives an example of the kinds of things that will happen when Yahweh hands the people of Israel over to their enemies.

if ten men remain in one house, they will all die

This seems to imply that something terrible is happening, and these ten men go into the house to hide. Alternate translation: "if ten men are hiding inside of a house, they will all still die"

Amos 6:10

General Information:

This verse is unclear in the Hebrew and is translated in many different ways.

his relative or the one who burns him

Possible meanings of the "relative" and the "one who burns him" are 1) they are the same person or 2) they are different people.

his relative ... burns him

Possible meanings are 1) "his" and "him" refer to the person who has died, or 2) only "burns him" refers to the person who has died, and "his relative" could be translated as "a relative."

the one who burns

This phrase translates a word that refers to a person whose duty is to burn the bodies of family members who have died and for some reason cannot be buried.

in the inner room

You may need to make specific that the house had one or more inner or back rooms in which people could hide from those in the outer or front room where the dead body was lying.

Then he will say, "Be quiet, for we must not mention Yahweh's name."

Possible meanings are 1) the speaker is the one who asked the question, or 2) the speaker is the one hiding in the inner room.

we must not mention Yahweh's name

The speaker was probably afraid that if the hearer mentioned Yahweh's name, both of them would also die.

Amos 6:11

look

"listen" or "pay attention"

the big house will be smashed to pieces, and the little house to bits

These two phrases share similar meanings. The contrast between "the big house" and "the little house" means that this refers to all houses.

Alternate translation: "all the houses will be smashed into small pieces"

the big house will be smashed to pieces

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the enemy will smash the big house to pieces"

to pieces ... to bits

You can use the same word for both of these phrases.

the little house to bits

This can be stated with the understood information included and also in active form. Alternate translation: "the little house will be smashed to bits" and "enemies will smash the little house to bits"

Amos 6:12

General Information:

Amos uses two rhetorical questions to draw attention to the rebuke that follows.

Do horses run on the rocky cliffs?

It is impossible for a horse to run on rocky cliffs without getting hurt. Amos uses this rhetorical question to rebuke them for their actions. Alternate translation: "Horses do not run on rocky cliffs."

Does one plow there with oxen?

One does not plow on rocky ground. Amos uses this rhetorical question to rebuke them for their actions. Alternate translation: "A person does not plow with oxen on rocky ground."

Yet you have turned justice into poison

Distorting what is just is spoken of as if the leaders "turned justice into poison." Alternate translation: "Yet you distort what is just" or "But you make laws that hurt innocent people"

the fruit of righteousness into bitterness

This means basically the same thing as the first part of the sentence. Distorting what is right is spoken of as if righteousness were a sweet fruit that the people made bitter tasting. Alternate translation: "you distort what is right" or "you punish those who do what is right"

Amos 6:13

Lo Debar ... Karnaim

These are names of towns.

Have we not taken Karnaim by our own strength?

The people use a question to emphasize that they believe they captured a city because of their own power. Alternate translation: "We captured Karnaim by our own power!"

Amos 6:14

look

"listen" or "pay attention"

house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Israel's descendants. See how you translated this in [Amos 5:1]

this is the declaration of Yahweh, the God of hosts

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Amos 3:13]

from Lebo Hamath to the brook of the Arabah

Here "Lebo Hamath" represents the northern border of Israel, and "brook of the Arabah" represents the southern border. Alternate translation: "from the northern border of your nation to the southern border"

brook

a small river that flows only during the wet season

Chapter 7

¹ This is what the Lord Yahweh showed me. Look, he formed a locust swarm when the spring crop began to come up, and, look, it was the late crop after the king's harvest. ² When they finished eating the vegetation of the land, then I said, "Lord Yahweh, please forgive; how will Jacob stand? For he is so small." ³ Yahweh relented concerning this. "It will not happen," he said.

⁴ This is what the Lord Yahweh showed me: Look, the Lord Yahweh called on fire to judge. It dried the vast, deep water under the earth and would have devoured the land also. ⁵ But I said, "Lord Yahweh, please stop; how will Jacob stand? For he is so small." ⁶ Yahweh relented concerning this, "This also will not happen," said the Lord Yahweh.

⁷ This is what he showed me: Look, the Lord stood beside a wall, with a plumb line in his hand. ⁸ Yahweh said to me, "Amos, what do you see?" I said, "A plumb line." Then the Lord said, "Look, I will put a plumb line among my people Israel. I will spare them no longer.

⁹ The high places of Isaac will be destroyed,
the sanctuaries of Israel will be ruined,
and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword."

¹⁰ Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent a message to Jeroboam, king of Israel: "Amos has conspired against you in the middle of the house of Israel. The land cannot endure all his words. ¹¹ For this is what Amos said,

'Jeroboam will die by the sword,
and Israel will surely go into exile away from his land.'"

¹² Amaziah said to Amos, "Seer, go, flee back to the land of Judah, and there eat bread and prophesy. ¹³ But do not prophesy anymore here at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary and a royal house."

¹⁴ Then Amos said to Amaziah, "I am not a prophet nor a prophet's son. I am a herdsman, and I take care of sycamore fig trees. ¹⁵ But Yahweh took me from tending the flock and said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.' ¹⁶ Now hear the word of Yahweh. You say,

'Do not prophesy against Israel,
and do not speak against the house of Isaac.'

¹⁷ Therefore this is what Yahweh says,

'Your wife will be a prostitute in the city;
your sons and your daughters will fall by the sword;
your land will be measured and divided up;
you will die in an unclean land,
and Israel will surely go into exile from his land.'"

Amos 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is mainly written as a narrative about the prophet Amos interacting with Yahweh. Yahweh presents three different scenarios of judgment before Amos who pleads with God and he does not carry out his judgment. (See: prophet and judge)

Special concepts in this chapter

Reported speech

In the latter part of the chapter, it is important to follow the conversation carefully to understand who is speaking. There are some instances of "reported speech."

Amos 7:1

Look ... look

The writer is telling the reader that he is about to say something surprising. Your language may have a way of doing this.

locust

See how you translated this in Amos 4:9.

after the king's harvest

"after the king takes his share from the harvest"

Amos 7:2

please forgive

The words "your people" or "us" are understood. Alternate translation: "please forgive your people" or "please forgive us"

how will Jacob stand? For he is so small.

Here "Jacob" represents his descendants the Israelites. The word "stand" is a metonym for surviving. Alternate translation: "how will we Israelites survive? We are so small and weak!"

Amos 7:3

General Information:

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Amos 7:4

Look

The writer is telling the reader that something surprising is about to happen. Your language may have a way of doing this.

the Lord Yahweh called on fire to judge

"the Lord Yahweh used burning fire to punish the people"

Amos 7:5

how will Jacob stand? For he is so small.

Here "Jacob" represents his descendants the Israelites. See how you translated this in [Amos 7:2]

Amos 7:6

General Information:

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Amos 7:7

plumb line

thin rope with a weight at one end used in building to make sure walls stand straight up and down

Amos 7:8

what do you see?

Yahweh uses a question to teach Amos. Alternate translation: "tell me what you see."

I will put a plumb line among my people Israel

Judging the people and determining they are wicked is spoken of as if the Israelites were a wall, and Yahweh determines the wall is not straight by using a plumb line. Alternate translation: "my people Israel are wicked. They are like a wall that is not straight up and down"

Amos 7:9

The high places of Isaac will be destroyed, the sanctuaries of Israel will be ruined, and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword

Here "sword" represents an army. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will send an army to attack the house of Jeroboam, and the army will destroy the high places of Isaac and the sanctuaries of Israel"

Isaac ... Israel

Both of these represent the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "the descendants of Isaac ... the people of Israel"

the house of Jeroboam

Here "house" represents "family." Translate "Jeroboam" as you did in Amos 1:1, and see how you translated "house of" in Amos 1:4. Alternate translation: "Jeroboam and his family"

Amos 7:10

Amaziah, the priest of Bethel

Possible meanings: 1) Amaziah was the only priest at Bethel or 2) Amaziah was the leader of the priests at Bethel.

Amaziah

This is the name of a man.

Amos has conspired against you in the middle of the house of Israel

"Amos is right here among the Israelites, and he is planning to do bad things to you"

house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Israel's descendants. See how you translated this in [Amos 5:1]

The land cannot endure all his words

Here "land" represents "people." Disrupting the peace is spoken of as if Amos's words were a heavy object that the land could not carry. Alternate translation: "What he is saying disturbs the peace"

among the people" or "His message will cause trouble among the people"

Amos 7:11

Jeroboam will die by the sword

Here "sword" represents the enemies. Alternate translation: "Enemies will kill Jeroboam"

Amos 7:12

there eat bread and prophesy

Here "eat bread" is an idiom that means to earn money or make a living for doing something. Alternate translation: "see if you can get the people there to pay you for prophesying" or "prophesy there and let them provide you with food"

Amos 7:13

for it is the king's sanctuary and a royal house

Here "king's sanctuary" and "royal house" refer to the same place. Alternate translation: "this is where the national temple is, the place where the king worships"

Amos 7:14

herdsman

This here probably means "one who takes care of sheep" since he is called a "shepherd" in Amos 1:1.

sycamore fig trees

Sycamores are broad trees that grow up to 15 meters tall. Alternate translation: "fig trees"

Amos 7:15

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Amos 7:16

Now

Here the word "now" is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

do not speak against the house of Isaac

Here "house" represents the family or descendants of Isaac. Alternate translation: "do not speak against the descendants of Isaac"

Amos 7:17

your sons and your daughters will fall by the sword

Here "sword" represents enemies. Alternate translation: "enemies will kill your sons and daughters"

your land will be measured and divided up

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "other people will take your land and divide it up among themselves"

an unclean land

A land full of people that are unacceptable to God is spoken of as if the land were physically unclean. Here it means a land other than Israel. Alternate translation: "a foreign land"

Chapter 8

¹ This is what the Lord Yahweh showed me. Look, a basket of summer fruit! ² He said, "What do you see, Amos?" I said, "A basket of summer fruit." Then Yahweh said to me,

"The end has come for my people Israel;
I will spare them no longer.

³ The songs of the temple will become wailings in that day—
this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh—
many dead bodies, they are thrown everywhere!
Silence!"

⁴ Listen to this, you who trample the needy
and remove the poor of the land.

⁵ They say,

"When will the new moon be over,
so we can sell grain again?
When will the Sabbath day be over,
so that we can sell wheat?
We will make the measure small
and increase the price,
as we cheat with deceitful scales.

⁶ This is so we can sell bad wheat, buy the poor with silver,
and the needy for a pair of sandals."

⁷ Yahweh has sworn by the pride of Jacob, "Surely I will never forget any of their actions."

⁸ Will not the land quake for this,
and everyone who lives in it mourn?
All of it will rise up like the Nile River,
and it will be tossed about and sink again,
like the river of Egypt.

⁹ "It will come in that day—
this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh—
that I will make the sun set at noon,
and I will darken the earth at daylight.

¹⁰ I will turn your festivals into mourning
and all your songs into lamentation.
I put sackcloth on all loins
and have baldness on every head.
I will make it like mourning for an only son,
and a bitter day to its end.

¹¹ Look, the days are coming—
this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh—
when I will send a famine in the land,
not a famine for bread, nor of thirst for water,
but for hearing the words of Yahweh.

¹² They will stagger from sea to sea;
they will run from the north to the east
to seek the word of Yahweh,
but they will not find it.

¹³ In that day the beautiful virgins and the young men
will faint from thirst.

¹⁴ Those who swear by the sin of Samaria ^[1]
and say, 'As your god lives, Dan,'
and, 'As the way to Beersheba exists,' ^[2]
they will fall and never rise again."

Footnotes

8:14 ^[1]Instead of

8:14 ^[2]The copies of the ancient Hebrew text have,

Amos 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is written in poetic form and it shows the way Yahweh's people are sinning and how he is going to respond. (See: peopleofgod and sin)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

"This is the declaration of Yahweh"

This phrase is used to introduce prophecy. It highlights what God is proclaiming. (See: prophet)

Amos 8:1

Look, a basket of summer fruit!

The word "look" here shows that Amos saw something interesting. Alternate translation: "I saw a basket of summer fruit!"

summer fruit

"ripe fruit"

Amos 8:2

What do you see, Amos?

Yahweh uses a question to teach Amos. Alternate translation: "Tell me what you see, Amos."

Amos 8:3

in that day

"at that time"

Silence!

Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh is telling the people to be silent as they hear about the severity of his punishment or 2) the people will be silent because of their grief after Yahweh's punishment.

Amos 8:4

Listen to this

Amos is speaking to the wealthy merchants who harm those who are poor.

you who trample the needy and remove the poor of the land

This can be restated to remove the nominal adjectives "the needy" and "the poor." Alternate translation: "you who trample those who are in need and remove those in the land that are poor"

you who trample

Harming people is spoken of as if it were stomping on people. Alternate translation: "you who harm" or "you who oppress"

Amos 8:5

They say, "When will the new moon be over, so we can sell grain again? When will the Sabbath day be over, so that we can sell wheat?"

The merchants use these questions to emphasize that want to start selling their items again. This can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "They are always asking when the new moon will be over or when the Sabbath will be over so that can sell their grain and wheat again."

We will make the measure small and increase the price, as we cheat with deceitful scales

The merchants would use false scales that showed that the amount of grain they were giving was greater than it really was and that the weight of the payment was less than it really was.

Amos 8:6

the needy for a pair of sandals

The words "and buy" are understood. Alternate translation: "buy the needy for a pair of sandals"

Amos 8:7

Yahweh has sworn by the pride of Jacob

Here "pride of Jacob" is a title for Yahweh. Also "Jacob" represents his descendants, the Israelites. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has sworn by himself, saying" or "Yahweh, of whom the Israelites are so proud, has sworn"

Amos 8:8

Will not the land quake for this, and everyone who lives in it mourn?

Amos uses a question to emphasize that these things will certainly happen. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will cause the land to shake, and everyone who lives in it will mourn."

All of it will rise up like the Nile River ... like the river of Egypt

Amos compares the rising and sinking of the waters of the Nile River to how Yahweh will cause the land to shake when he judges the people.

river of Egypt

This is another name for the Nile River.

Amos 8:9

It will come in that day

"It will happen at that time"

Amos 8:10

have baldness on every head

A person shaves his head to show that he is grieving. Alternate translation: "cause you all to shave your heads"

like mourning for an only son

It is understood that the only son has died. Alternate translation: "like mourning for an only son who has died"

a bitter day to its end

Terrible and sad things happening during a day is spoken of as if the day had a bitter taste. Alternate translation: "everything that happens at that time will cause you great sorrow"

Amos 8:11

the days are coming

This speaks of a future time as if "days are coming." Alternate translation: "there will be a time" or "in the future"

when I will send a famine in the land ... but for hearing the words of Yahweh

Yahweh refusing to give messages when the people want to hear from him is spoken of as if there would be a famine of his words. Alternate

translation: "when I will cause something like a famine in the land ... but for hearing the words of Yahweh"

the words of Yahweh

This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "words from me, Yahweh" or "my messages"

Amos 8:12

They will stagger from sea to sea; they will run from the north to the east to seek the word of Yahweh

Here "sea to sea" and "the north to the east" represent all of the land of Israel. Alternate translation: "They will wander here and there and search all over for the word of Yahweh"

from sea to sea

This implies the Dead Sea in the south and the Mediterranean Sea in the west.

Amos 8:13

In that day

"At that time"

faint

to lose all strength

Amos 8:14

by the sin of Samaria

Here "sin" represents the false god the people worship in Samaria. Alternate translation: "by the false god of Samaria"

As your god lives, Dan

This is a way of making a solemn oath. The people declare that they believe the god of Dan is certainly alive to emphasize that they will certainly do what they promise to do.

As the way to Beersheba exists

This is probably a reference to the roads that pilgrims would take to Beersheba in order to worship idols there. Again, this is a way of making a solemn oath. They state that the way to Beersheba certainly exists in order to emphasize that they will certainly do what they promise to do.

they will fall

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "they will die"

Chapter 9

- ¹ I saw the Lord standing beside the altar, and he said,
 "Strike the tops of the pillars
 so that the thresholds will shake.
 Break them in pieces on all of their heads,
 and I will kill the last of them with the sword.
 Not one of them will get away;
 not one of them will escape.
- ² Though they dig into Sheol,
 there my hand will take them.
 Though they climb up to heaven,
 there I will bring them down.
- ³ Though they hide on the top of Carmel,
 there I will search and take them.
 Though they are hidden from my sight in the bottom of the sea,
 there will I command the serpent, and it will bite them.
- ⁴ Though they go into captivity, driven by their enemies before them,
 there will I give orders to the sword, and it will kill them.
 I will keep my eyes on them
 for harm and not for good."
- ⁵ The Lord Yahweh of hosts
 touches the land and it melts;
 all who live in it mourn;
 all of it will rise up like the River,
 and sink again like the river of Egypt.
- ⁶ It is he who builds his steps in the heavens,
 and has established his vault over the earth.
 He calls for the waters of the sea,
 and pours them out on the surface of the earth,
 Yahweh is his name.
- ⁷ "Are you not like the people of Cush to me,
 people of Israel—
 this is Yahweh's declaration—
 did I not bring up Israel out of the land of Egypt,
 the Philistines from Crete,
 and the Arameans from Kir?
- ⁸ Look, the eyes of the Lord Yahweh
 are on the sinful kingdom,
 and I will destroy it
 from the face of the earth,
 except that I will not totally destroy
 the house of Jacob—
 this is Yahweh's declaration.
- ⁹ Look, I will give a command,
 and I will shake the house of Israel
 among all the nations,
 as one shakes grain in a sieve,
 so that not the smallest stone will fall to the ground.
- ¹⁰ All the sinners of my people
 will die by the sword,
 those who say,
 'Disaster will not overtake or meet us.'
- ¹¹ In that day
 I will raise up the tent of David that has fallen,
 and close up its breaches.
 I will raise up its ruins,
 and rebuild it as in the days of old,
- ¹² That they may possess the remnant of Edom,
 and all the nations that are called by my name—

- this is Yahweh's declaration—he does this.
- 13** Look, the days will come—
this is Yahweh's declaration—
when the plowman will overtake the reaper,
and the treader of grapes will overtake him who plants seed.
The mountains will drip sweet wine,
and all the hills will flow with it.
- 14** I will bring back from captivity my people Israel.
They will build the ruined cities and inhabit them,
they will plant vineyards and drink their wine,
and they will make gardens and eat their fruit.
- 15** I will plant them upon their land,
and they will never again be uprooted from the land
that I have given them,"
says Yahweh your God.

Amos 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is written in poetic form and continues to show the awesome and terrible judgment of Yahweh on his people. In verse 11, the writer writes about the forgiveness and mercy of God on the kingdom of Israel. (See: judge, people of God and forgive and mercy)

Special concepts in this chapter

"The declaration of Yahweh"

This phrase is used to introduce prophecy. It highlights what God is proclaiming. Try to remain consistent in translating this phrase throughout the book. (See: prophet)

Amos 9:1

General Information:

Yahweh shows Amos another vision.

Strike the tops ... Break them

It is uncertain to whom Yahweh is speaking these commands.

Strike the tops of the pillars so that the thresholds will shake

It is implied that Yahweh is speaking about the pillars and thresholds of a temple.

tops of the pillars ... thresholds

This merism implies that the whole temple will be destroyed.

Break them in pieces on all of their heads

Here "heads" represents the whole person.
Alternate translation: "Break the pillars so that the temple falls on all of the people and kills them"

I will kill the last of them with the sword

Here "sword" represents an army attacking with their weapons. Alternate translation: "I will send an enemy army to kill the rest of them"

Amos 9:2

Though they dig into Sheol, there my hand will take them. Though they climb up to heaven, there I will bring them down

Yahweh uses an exaggerated image of people fleeing to Sheol or heaven to try to escape being killed. Here "Sheol" and "heaven" are a merism that represents all places. Alternate translation: "Even if they were to flee to Sheol or to heaven, they would not be able to escape me"

there my hand will take them

Here "hand" represents Yahweh's power. Alternate translation: "I will pull them up from there"

Amos 9:3

Though they hide on the top of Carmel ... Though they are hidden from my sight in the bottom of the sea

Yahweh gives an exaggerated image of the people fleeing to the top of mount Carmel or to the bottom of the sea to escape being killed. Here "top of Carmel" and "bottom of the sea" are a merism that represents all places. Alternate translation: "Even if they were to hide on the top of Carmel ... Even if they tried to go the bottom sea, thinking that I could not see them"

serpent

an unknown fierce sea animal, not the snake in the garden of Eden and not a common snake

Amos 9:4

Though they go into captivity, driven by their enemies before them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Though enemies capture them and force them to go to a foreign land"

there will I give orders to the sword, and it will kill them

Here "sword" represents their enemies. Alternate translation: "there I will cause their enemies to kill them"

I will keep my eyes on them for harm and not for good

Here "eyes" represents seeing. The phrase "keep my eyes on them" is an idiom that means to watch closely. Alternate translation: "I will watch closely and make sure only bad things happen to them and not good things"

Amos 9:5

all of it will rise up like the River, and sink again like the river of Egypt

Here "the River" and "river of Egypt" both refer to the Nile river. Yahweh causing the land to shake violently is compared to the waters of the Nile river rising and sinking.

Amos 9:6

he who builds his steps in the heavens

These are probably the steps that ancient people imagined led up to God's palace in the heavens. However, some modern versions understand the word translated as "steps" here to mean "upper rooms." In either case, "his steps" or "his upper rooms" is probably a metonym for God's palace.

has established his vault over the earth

Here "vault" refers to the sky which biblical writers described as being a dome over the earth. Alternate translation: "he sets the sky over the earth"

He calls for the waters of the sea ... on the surface of the earth

This represents God causing the sea water to fall on the earth as rain. See how you translated this in [Amos 5:8]

Yahweh is his name

By declaring his name, Yahweh is declaring his power and authority to do these things. See how you translated this in Amos 5:8.

Amos 9:7

Are you not like the people of Cush to me, ... Israel—this ... declaration—did I not bring up Israel ... the Philistines ... the Arameans from Kir?

Yahweh uses a question to emphasize that the people of Israel are no more special to him than the people of Cush, the Philistines, and the Arameans. Alternate translation: "You people of Israel, you are certainly no more important to me than the people of Cush—this ... declaration—I brought up Israel ... the Philistines ... the Arameans from Kir."

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated these words in [Amos 2:11]

Kir

See how you translated the name of this place in Amos 1:5.

Amos 9:8

the eyes of the Lord Yahweh are on the sinful kingdom

Here "eyes" represents seeing. Also, Yahweh speaks of himself in third person. Alternate translation: "I, the Lord Yahweh, see that the people of this kingdom are very sinful"

I will destroy it from the face of the earth

The idiom "from the face of the earth" means "completely." Alternate translation: "I will completely destroy this kingdom"

the house of Jacob

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Jacob's descendants. They were the people of Israel. See how you translated this in [Amos 3:13]

Amos 9:9

house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Israel's descendants. See how you translated this in [Amos 5:1]

I will shake the house of Israel ... as one shakes grain in a sieve, so that not the smallest stone will fall to the ground

The picture here is of grain falling through the sieve and stones being kept out. The idea is that Yahweh will remove all of the sinful people from Israel.

sieve

a surface with many small holes that allow small things to pass through and keep larger things from passing through

Amos 9:10

All the sinners of my people will die by the sword

Here "sword" represents their enemies. Alternate translation: "Enemies will kill all the sinners of my people"

Disaster will not overtake or meet us

Experiencing disaster is spoken of as disaster could overtake or meet someone. Alternate translation: "We will not experience disaster" or "Bad things will not happen to us"

Amos 9:11

In that day

"At that time"

I will raise up the tent of David that has fallen

Causing the people of Israel to be great again is spoken of as if David's kingdom were a tent that fell down and Yahweh will set it back up. Alternate translation: "David's kingdom will be like tent that has fallen down, but I will raise it back up again"

close up its breaches

"I will repair its walls"

I will raise up its ruins, and rebuild it as in the days of old

"I will rebuild its ruins and make it strong like it was long ago"

breaches

parts of a wall that have fallen down

Amos 9:12

the remnant of Edom

"the remaining part of Edom's territory"

all the nations that are called by my name

Here "name" represents Yahweh. The idiom "called by my name" means they once belonged to Yahweh. This means that in the past the people had conquered and taken control of these territories. Alternate translation: "all the nations that once belonged to me" or "all the nations that I caused the people of Israel to conquer in the past"

Amos 9:13

Look

The writer is telling the reader that he is going to say something surprising. Your language may have a way of doing this.

the days will come ... when the plowman

A future time is spoken of as if "days will come." Alternate translation: "there will be a time ... when the plowman" or "in the future ... the plowman"

when the plowman ... him who plants seed

These are two images of Yahweh restoring prosperity in Israel. This means grain will grow faster than the people can harvest it, and there will be so many grapes, those crushing the grapes will still be working when farmers start planting more vineyards.

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Amos 2:11]

The mountains will drip sweet wine, and all the hills will flow with it

These two lines mean basically the same thing. The huge amount of grapes and wine in Israel is spoken of as if wine flows down the hills and mountains.

Amos 9:14

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Amos 9:15

I will plant them upon their land, and they will never again be uprooted from the land

Bringing the people back to their land and keeping them safe from enemies is spoken of as if Israel were a plant that Yahweh would put in the ground and not let anyone pull the plant up from the ground. Alternate translation: "I will cause them to live in the land forever like a plant that is never uprooted"

they will never again be uprooted from the land

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will ever again uproot them from the land"

uprooted

for a plant and its roots to be pulled out of the ground

Language: (Chinese)

Book: Amos

Amos

Chapter 1

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Amos 4:4

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Amos 4:6

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Footnotes

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Amos 5:1

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Amos 5:4

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Amos 5:6

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Amos 7:1

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Amos 7:16

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Amos 8:13

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Chapter 9

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Amos 9:14

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