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*God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.*

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## Amos 5.

(2014)

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The Bible not only reveals God's eternal plans purposes and promises

But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

***Teach it, don't demand it.***

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## Amos 5.

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### Topics.

- The LORD speaks against Israel (the ten tribes) in the land of Samaria.
- A key to understanding prophecy
- Israel is called to seek God.
- Israel is called to repent.
- Pleiades and Orion.
- The day of the LORD.
- God will send Israel into exile.

**NOTE:** for information of people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

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### The LORD speaks against Israel (the ten tribes) in the land of Samaria.

Amos 5:1-3 ----- <sup>1</sup>Hear this word that I take up over you in lamentation, O house of Israel: <sup>2</sup>"Fallen, no more to rise, is the virgin Israel; forsaken on her land, with none to raise her up." <sup>3</sup>For thus says the Lord GOD: "The city that went out a thousand shall have a hundred left, and that which went out a hundred shall have ten left to the house of Israel."

**O house of Israel:** refers to the Northern Kingdom (the ten tribes) in the land of Samaria.

**The virgin Israel:** refers to Israel, because they were called to be a nation who had only one God in contrast to the pagan nations who had many gods.

**NOTICE:** Amos speaks in the past tense, yet these events are still to happen.

**A key to understanding prophecy:** is to know that the verses are not always written in chronological order. It is almost as though the prophet is so inspired that he immediately speaks the words as they come to him. They are then recorded in the order that the prophet spoke them, but that does not always mean they are in the actual chronological order that they will unfold throughout history. Sometimes the latter verses of a chapter may actually be the first events to take place in God's foreordained plan of events. In the book of Revelation this principle applies not only to the individual verses of the chapters but also too many of the chapters themselves.

**Bible prophecy and present tense:** often a prophecy is spoken in the present tense as though the event has already happened when in actual reality the fulfilment of it may still be many years away. This is because the prophet is seeing the vision in the present moment and speaks it as he sees it in present time. The people the prophet is speaking to know when the prophecy is a future event, but sometimes it can be difficult for those reading it thousands of years later to realise, because of the tense it is written in.

When a prophet speaks he is often speaking as the voice of God, therefore the words he speaks are guaranteed to come to pass. This is another reason the prophet can speak the words of God in the present moment because they are certain to happen at the right time in the future. Another reason many future prophecies are spoken in the present tense, is because the prophet is speaking the words of God or the vision as they come to him in his time. The prophet himself may not always be aware of the echoes contained in his prophecy or that the

words he is speaking, actually have contained within them the ability to transcend time and travel thousands of years through history to a future age or a future person.

The following verses are a good example of this principal: -

- For a nation (Babylon) has come up against my land (Judah), powerful and beyond number; its teeth are lions' teeth, and it has the fangs of a lioness. <sup>7</sup>It has laid waste my vine and splintered my fig tree; it has stripped off their bark and thrown it down; their branches are made white (Joel 1:6-7).

This event has not taken place, yet Joel speaks it in the past tense as though it has already happened. This is simply because Joel is speaking what he is seeing happening in his vision. God is giving Joel a complete picture in his mind of what is about to take place. Joel in a sense is watching a movie being played out in his mind and is simply speaking it out as the events take place, thus the reason Joel's speaks in the past tense, in his mind the events have already taken place, but in real life they are still to be played out in the future.

### **Israel is called to seek God.**

Amos 5:4-5 ----- <sup>4</sup>For thus says the LORD to the house of Israel: "Seek me and live; <sup>5</sup>but do not seek Bethel, and do not enter into Gilgal or cross over to Beersheba; for Gilgal shall surely go into exile, and Bethel shall come to nothing."

**Bethel:** the LORD had told Jacob to build an altar at Bethel. This altar was not built as an altar for sacrifice, but to be a monument that God had appeared to Jacob there. Many years later Jeroboam built a worship center there containing a golden calf, and an altar to offer sacrifices to God on. Jeroboam established it to be a gathering place for the people of Israel (the ten tribes) so that they would not return to Jerusalem.

**Gilgal:** was near the northern border of Judah, the exact location is unknown, but it is certain that the twelve altar-memorial of stones that Joshua set up at Gilgal as a reminder to the people of Israel that God dried up the Jordan River so the people could cross on dry ground and enter the Promised Land became a pagan shrine of later years against which Hosea and Amos warned the people. (Hosea 4:15) (Amos 4:4) (The story is found in Joshua chapter 4).

**Beersheba:** was the most southerly town in the kingdom of Judah, the expression from Dan to Beersheba is employed to designate the northern and southern extremities of the nations of Israel. Amos was constrained to rebuke the idolatrous tendencies which he saw infiltrating into the religious life of Beersheba from Bethel and from Dan (Amos 8:14).

### **Israel is called to Repent.**

Amos 5:6-8 ----- <sup>6</sup>Seek the LORD and live, lest he break out like fire in the house of Joseph, and it devour, with none to quench it for Bethel, <sup>7</sup>O you who turn justice to wormwood and cast down righteousness to the earth! <sup>8</sup>He who made the Pleiades and Orion, and turns deep darkness into the morning and darkens the day into night, who calls for the waters of the sea and pours them out on the surface of the earth, the LORD is his name;

**Pleiades and Orion:** there is abundant evidence that many of the constellations were known to the writers as a number of individual stars are mentioned throughout the Old Testament. Israel is perverting justice for their own selfish gain and forsaking what is right, the Lord warns the people if they do not repent of their wicked ways they will be destroyed.

### **Israel is called to Repent continued: -**

Amos 5:9-13 ----- <sup>9</sup>who makes destruction flash forth against the strong, so that destruction comes upon the fortress. <sup>10</sup>They (Israel) hate him (the LORD) who reproves in the gate, and they abhor him (the prophets) who speaks the truth. <sup>11</sup>Therefore because you (Israel) trample on the

poor and you exact taxes of grain from him, you have built houses of hewn stone, but you shall not dwell in them; you have planted pleasant vineyards, but you shall not drink their wine. <sup>12</sup>For I know how many are your transgressions and how great are your sins—you who afflict the righteous, who take a bribe, and turn aside the needy in the gate. <sup>13</sup>Therefore he who is prudent will keep silent in such a time, for it is an evil time.

Amos is basically saying, by Israel's sinful actions of worshipping idols and pagan gods, afflicting the poor, and those who do right, taking bribes and refusing to help the less fortunate, charging the people high taxes for their own selfish gain and living in excessive luxurious houses, they are actually showing that even though they maybe keeping all the outward religious ceremonially rites, feast days, sacrifices and offerings they in reality hate the LORD.

#### **Israel is called to Repent continued: -**

Amos 5:14-17 ----- <sup>14</sup>Seek good, and not evil, that you may live; and so the LORD, the God of hosts, will be with you, as you have said. <sup>15</sup>Hate evil, and love good, and establish justice in the gate; it may be that the LORD, the God of hosts, will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph. <sup>16</sup>Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of hosts, the Lord: "In all the squares there shall be wailing, and in all the streets they shall say, 'Alas! Alas!' They shall call the farmers to mourning and to wailing those who are skilled in lamentation, <sup>17</sup>and in all vineyards there shall be wailing, for I will pass through your midst," says the LORD.

Israel is called to seek good, and not evil, and to hate evil, and love good. Sadly Israel at this time loves the things that are contrary to God's will. Amos tells them to stop perverting justice and return to what is right or there will be such devastation in the land that wailing and mourning will be heard in every street and every farm.

#### **The Day of the LORD.**

Amos 5:18-24 ----- <sup>18</sup>Woe to you who desire the day of the LORD! Why would you have the day of the LORD? It is darkness, and not light, <sup>19</sup>as if a man fled from a lion, and a bear met him, or went into the house and leaned his hand against the wall, and a serpent bit him. <sup>20</sup>Is not the day of the LORD darkness, and not light, and gloom with no brightness in it? <sup>21</sup>"I hate, I despise your feasts, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. <sup>22</sup>Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them; and the peace offerings of your fattened animals, I will not look upon them. <sup>23</sup>Take away from me the noise of your songs; to the melody of your harps I will not listen. <sup>24</sup>But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

In this context the Day of the LORD is not something to look forward too. Amos says, "Woe to everyone who desires the, Day of the LORD, it is a time of darkness, and not light a day of gloom with no brightness in it?"

**As if a man fled from a lion and a bear met him:** means the man fled something terrible but something even worse came upon him.

**As if a man went into the house and a serpent bit him:** means the man fled into a house for protection, but it did not save him.

Amos is basically saying if Israel does not turn from their wicked ways they will not escape the LORD'S judgment.

**NOTICE:** Israel is keeping the LORD'S feasts, the burnt, grain and peace offerings, and God's solemn assemblies. They are singing songs of worship and praise and making melody with their harps, but because they are perverting justice for their own selfish gain and doing what is wicked the LORD says, He will not look upon them, listen to them or even accept them.

#### **God will send Israel into Exile.**

Amos 5:25-27 ----- <sup>25</sup>"Did you bring to me sacrifices and offerings during the forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel? <sup>26</sup>You shall take up Sikkuth your king, and Kiyun your star-god—your

images that you made for yourselves,<sup>27</sup> and I will send you into exile beyond Damascus," says the LORD, whose name is the God of hosts.

**Sikkuth:** appears to be a star god that Israel (the ten tribes of the Northern Kingdom) worshipped (Amos 5:25-27) (It is not in the Bible Dictionary).

**Kiyyun:** appears to be a star god that Israel (the ten tribes of the Northern Kingdom) worshipped (Amos 5:25-27) (It is not in the Bible Dictionary).

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End.