

Amos 1:3-15

1. The general format of each oracle:
 - a. The messenger introduction – “This is what Yahweh said”...
 - i. **Aram** (Damascus) – “Thus says the LORD”
 - ii. **Philistia** (Gaza) – “Thus says the LORD”
 - iii. **Phoenicia** (Tyre) – “Thus says the LORD”
 - iv. **Edom** (Teman, Bozrah) – “Thus says the LORD”
 - v. **Ammon** (Rabbah) – “Thus says the LORD”
 - vi. **Moab** (Kerioth) – “Thus says the LORD”
 - vii. **Judah** (Jerusalem)
 - b. The certainty of a well-earned punishment
 - i. **Aram** (Damascus) – “For three transgressions of Damascus, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment.”
 - ii. **Philistia** (Gaza) – “For three transgressions of Gaza, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment.”
 - iii. **Phoenicia** (Tyre) – “For three transgressions of Tyre, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment.”
 - iv. **Edom** (Teman, Bozrah) – “For three transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment.”
 - v. **Ammon** (Rabbah) – “For three transgressions of Ammonites, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment.”
 - vi. **Moab** (Kerioth) – “For three transgressions of Moab, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment.”
 - vii. **Judah** (Jerusalem) – “For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment.”
 - c. Presentation of evidence of specific crimes committed against humanity.
 - i. **Aram** (Damascus) – “because they have threshed Gilead with threshing sledges of iron.”
 - ii. **Philistia** (Gaza) – “because they carried into exile a whole people to deliver them up to Edom.”
 - iii. **Phoenicia** (Tyre) – “because they delivered up a whole people to Edom, and did not remember the covenant of brotherhood.”
 - iv. **Edom** (Teman, Bozrah) – “because he pursued his brother with the sword and cast off all pity, and his anger tore perpetually, and he kept his wrath forever.”
 - v. **Ammon** (Rabbah) - “because they have ripped open pregnant women in Gilead, that they might enlarge their border.”
 - vi. **Moab** (Kerioth) – because he burned to lime the bones of the king of Edom.”
 - vii. **Judah** (Jerusalem) – “because they have rejected the law of the LORD, and have not kept his statutes, but their lies have led them astray, those after which their fathers walked.”
 - d. The announcement of the curse/punishment
 - i. **Aram** (Damascus) – “So I will:
 1. send a fire upon the house of Hazael, and
 2. it shall devour the strongholds of Ben-hadad.
 3. I will break the gate-bar of Damascus, and
 4. cut off the inhabitants from the Valley of Aven,
 5. and him who holds the scepter from Beth-eden; and
 6. the people of Syria shall go into exile to Kir.”
 - ii. **Philistia** (Gaza) – “So I will:

1. send a fire upon the wall of Gaza, and
 2. it shall devour her strongholds.
 3. I will cut off the inhabitants from Ashdod, and
 4. him who holds the scepter from Ashkelon;
 5. I will turn my hand against Ekron, and
 6. the remnant of the Philistines shall perish,”
- iii. **Phoenicia** (Tyre) – “So I will:
1. send a fire upon the wall of Tyre, and
 2. it shall devour her strongholds.”
- iv. **Edom** (Teman, Bozrah) – “So I will:
1. send a fire upon Teman, and
 2. it shall devour the strongholds of Bozrah.”
- v. **Ammon** (Rabbah) – “So I will:
1. kindle a fire in the wall of Rabbah, and
 2. it shall devour her strongholds,
 - a. with shouting on the day of battle,
 - b. with a tempest in the day of the whirlwind; and
 3. their king shall go into exile,
 - a. he and
 - b. his princes together.”
- vi. **Moab** (Kerioth) – “So I will:
1. send fire upon Moab, and
 2. it shall devour the strongholds of Kerioth, and
 3. Moab shall die
 - a. Amid uproar
 - b. Amid shouting and
 - c. The sound of the trumpet;
 4. I will cut off the ruler from its midst, and
 5. will kill all its princes with him
- vii. **Judah** (Jerusalem) – “So I will:
1. send fire upon Judah, and
 2. it shall devour the strongholds of Jerusalem.”
- e. The concluding formula which is basically “Yahweh has said” or “oracle of Yahweh.” (but, this is not used in Phoenicia, Edom or Judah)
- i. **Aram** (Damascus) – “says the LORD.”
 - ii. **Philistia** (Gaza) – “says the Lord God.”
 - iii. **Phoenicia** (Tyre) - _____
 - iv. **Edom** (Teman, Bozrah) - _____
 - v. **Ammon** (Rabbah) – “says the LORD”
 - vi. **Moab** (Kerioth) – “says the LORD.”
 - vii. **Judah** (Jerusalem) - _____

OBSERVATIONS:

1. God is quoted verbatim in the first person.
2. All oracles have assume this theological position:
 - a. There is one God, YHWH (LORD)
 - b. YHWH has power and authority over the whol earth and all the nations.
 - c. YHWH’s righteous standards are known by the nations and the nations are held accountable for these revealed standards.

- d. YHWH's righteous standards by which he judges the nations are known by the nations some other way than through the Law of Moses, the Scriptures, the prophets, etc. They are revealed to all mankind. And, all mankind is accountable to YHWH for their actions concerning those standards.
 - e. YHWH has a covenant with all the nations, but Judah has a special covenant that includes revealed knowledge and standards.
3. The nations have committed atrocities against other nations or people for which they will be judged and their society/culture/nation will be removed from history. (Except Judah has a special covenant.)
 4. These atrocities or transgressions against humanity are not merely a single incident or a onetime mistake (NOTE: "for three transgressions...and for four" reveals there have been multiple transgressions of God's international law). The violations listed would then seem to be the point of no return or the final straw that revealed there was no turning this nation back.
 5. Assyria is not mentioned. If Amos was speaking in 762 and Jonah went to Nineveh in 759 then Assyria was still ready and able to respond to a prophetic message from God. These nations did not respond to Amos.
 6. The word translated "transgression" is used 10x in Amos (1:3, 6, 9, 11, 13; 2:1, 4, 6; 3:14; 5:12 and as a verb 2x in 4:4)
 - a. "transgression" includes:
 - i. Crimes of one nation against another
 - ii. Crimes of a nation against God (2:4)
 - iii. People of Israel against one another (2:6)
 - b. In the context of Amos it is not related to the Law of Moses but to the language of politics meaning "to revolt, rebel, cast off allegiance to authority".
 - c. These "transgressions" indicate Amos is aware that YHWH is the universal God whose authority extends over all nations. Not only Israel, but all mankind is considered a vassal of YHWH.
 7. Nations violate divine authority whenever they commit acts of barbarity and atrocity against fellow nations. Judgment will eventually come.
 8. The announcement of punishment by fire opens YHWH's response to all seven of the nations mentioned. "Fire" will not be mentioned against Israel.
 - a. This fire is part of the theophany as the Divine Warrior brings it as his all-devouring weapon of war.
 - b. This fire should first be seen as supernatural, and then only secondary as a manifested physical fire.
 - c. This fire is a portrayal of a Holy War brought to these nations by YHWH. The fire is the judgment of YHWH directed at these nations.
 - d. The truth of this can be seen by the fact that before anything happens to the nations physically they are first burnt with fire. Before the physical judgment comes the spiritual judgment decree. This fire is more than the physical fire of a military siege.