



# A Call to Justice & Righteousness

Amos, in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

# NT Chiasm

- **A** Love never ends
- **B** But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end
  - **C** For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end.
    - **X** When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child, when I became an adult I put aside childish ways
  - **C'** For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known
    - **B'** And now faith, hope and love abide, these three
- **A'** and the greatest of these is love



# Amos the Prophet

- Israel passed through 4 decades of crisis on the way to its destruction.
- Amos spoke the truth
- It is the main reason his writings were collected and written down.
- Amos brought the word of judgment upon the nation.

# The True & Living God

- Amos speaks, Jehovah is a God of Nations.
- He is the defender of the poor and needy, the righteous judge of all that is evil, and protector of good.
- “He sends punishing fire on every nation whose crimes oppose His authority...The world is subject to His command and serves His purpose even in disasters.”

*James Luther Mays*




# The Crux of the Matter

Matthew 15:7-9 (NIV)

You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you:

[8] " 'These people honor me with their lips,  
but their hearts are far from me.

[9] They worship me in vain;  
their teachings are but rules taught by men.'"






# Behind the Scenes

Amos 4:1, 2 (NIV)

Hear this word, you cows of Bashan on Mount Samaria,  
you women who oppress the poor and crush the  
needy and say to your husbands, "Bring us some  
drinks!"

The Sovereign Lord has sworn by his holiness:

"The time will surely come  
when you will be taken away with hooks, the last of you  
with fishhooks.



Amos 4:4-5 (NIV)

"Go to Bethel and sin;  
go to Gilgal and sin yet more.

Bring your sacrifices every morning,  
your tithes every three years.

[5] Burn leavened bread as a thank offering  
and brag about your freewill offerings--  
boast about them, you Israelites,  
for this is what you love to do,"  
declares the Sovereign Lord.



Ch. 5 opens the 3<sup>rd</sup> message of the 2<sup>nd</sup> section:

- Addresses Israel's crimes and resulting judgment.
- The 2 opening vs. speak directly to Israel's unwillingness to provide relief & justice to the oppressed and is in the form of a funeral dirge.
- Vs. 3 & 4 are in the messenger formula and speak to the nation's inability to discern between right and wrong, blinded by greed.
- As a result the poor and the needy are crushed.
- They reject Jehovah's call to purity by offering sacrifices with impure hearts.
- God chastens them with plagues and kills them with sword.
- Yet they would not repent. Result? Prepare to meet God!



# Seek Me & Live!

Amos 5:4 (NIV)

This is what the Lord says to the house of Israel:

"Seek me and live...You who turn justice to wormwood,  
and lay righteousness to rest in the earth!"

# Mishpat & Tsedhaqah

Amos 5:23-24 (NIV)

Away with the noise of your songs!

I will not listen to the music of your harps.

[24] But let *justice* roll on like a river,

*righteousness* like a never-failing stream!



# A Call to Active Righteousness

- Mishpat – *to judge*.

The locus in this case is the elders who oversee the legal matters of the community.

- Their responsibility:

- To ensure equality in the community.
- To ensure that proper relations prevail among community members.
- To defend by Law those who are too weak to defend themselves.



# Messages of Repentance to the Nations

Proverbs 14:34 (NIV)


Righteousness exalts a nation,  
but sin is a disgrace to any people.

# God is not Mocked

Amos 7:14-16 (NIV)

Amos answered Amaziah, "I was neither a prophet nor a prophet's son, but I was a shepherd, and I also took care of sycamore-fig trees. [15] But the Lord took me from tending the flock and said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.' [16] Now then, hear the word of the Lord. You say,

" 'Do not prophesy against Israel,  
and stop preaching against the house of Isaac.'



Amos 9:8-11 (NIV)

"Surely the eyes of the Sovereign Lord  
are on the sinful kingdom.

I will destroy it

from the face of the earth--

yet I will not totally destroy  
the house of Jacob,"

declares the Lord.

[9] "For I will give the command,

and I will shake the house of Israel  
among all the nations

as grain is shaken in a sieve,

and not a pebble will reach the ground.



# Restoration/Justice/Righteousness

[10] All the sinners among my people  
will die by the sword,  
all those who say,  
'Disaster will not overtake or meet us.'

[11] "In that day I will restore  
David's fallen tent.  
I will repair its broken places,  
restore its ruins,  
and build it as it used to be,



Isaiah 5:20-21 (NIV)

Woe to those who call evil good  
and good evil,  
who put darkness for light  
and light for darkness,  
who put bitter for sweet  
and sweet for bitter.

[21] Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes  
and clever in their own sight.

...Isaiah 5:23 (NIV)

who acquit the guilty for a bribe,  
but deny justice to the innocent.

# Restoration

Acts 15:15-18 (NIV)

The words of the prophets are in agreement with this, as it is written:

[16] " 'After this I will return and rebuild David's fallen tent. Its ruins I will rebuild, and I will restore it,

[17] that the remnant of men may seek the Lord,

and all the Gentiles who bear my name,

says the Lord, who does these things' [18] that have been known for ages.