

Amos 3

- A. Judgment on the Chosen People (ch. 3)
 - 1. God's punishment announced (3:1-2)
 - 2. The announcement vindicated (3:3-8)
 - 3. The punishment vindicated (3:9-15)

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The Condemnation of Samaria

¹ Hear this word that the LORD has spoken against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying:

² "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."

Have I known: יָדַעְתִּי *yadatiy* known I. Not in the cognitive sense, as God knows all, but in the familial sense, intimacy or relationship.

¹⁵ "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶ You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor *can* a bad tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Therefore by their fruits you will know them.

²¹ "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²² Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' ²³ And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

Why does God pick out Israel for punishment, if Israel alone was 'known' by God?

Sh'mot (Exodus) 19.6

⁶ And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

Kefa alef (1 Peter) 4.17

¹⁷ For the time *has come* for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if *it begins* with us first, what will *be* the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?

Luke 12.47-48

⁴⁷ And that servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare *himself* or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*. ⁴⁸ But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.

3 Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?

Walk: הֵלְכֶם יַחַד *ha-yel'khu* (the) walk/going you-all. The root from which we get the word *haLakhah*, the walk, or the system of living God's

How can we faithfully walk in the commands of God if we do not agree He is our Lord and His commandments are worthy of our following?

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

Will a young lion cry out of his den, if he has caught nothing?

5 Will a bird fall into a snare on the earth, where there is no trap for it?

Will a snare spring up from the earth, if it has caught nothing at all?

6 If a trumpet is blown in a city, will not the people be afraid?

If there is calamity in a city, will not the LORD have done *it*?

Will not the Lord have done it? Another example of God's actions sometimes explained as evil.

אִם-תְּהִיָּה רָעָה בְּעִיר, וַיְהִי לָא עֲשֵׂה *im tih'yeh ra'a b'iyir va-[y]hvh] lo asah* if will-be evil in a city and the [Lord] not done [her] (the evil)?

7 Surely the Lord GOD does nothing,

Unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.

8 A lion has roared!

Who will not fear?

The Lord GOD has spoken!

Who can but prophesy?

Punishment of Israel's Sins

9 "Proclaim in the palaces at Ashdod, ^[fn1]

And in the palaces in the land of Egypt, and say:

'Assemble on the mountains of Samaria;

See great tumults in her midst,

And the oppressed within her.

10 For they do not know to do right,'

Says the LORD,

'Who store up violence and robbery in their palaces.' "

Ashdod: אַשְׁדּוֹד *b'ashdod* in Ashdod.

Some translations read:

3:9 Following Masoretic Text; Septuagint reads *Assyria*.

Why Assyria instead of the plain meaning of the text? History is that Israel, the northern tribes, were taken away by Assyria. Thus, some translators want to correct the text to match history.

However, this portion of the prophecy is not about the dispersion of Israel, but the bad testimony Israel is presenting, even before such evil kingdoms as Egypt and Palestine.

11 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD:

"An adversary *shall be* all around the land;
He shall sap your strength from you,
And your palaces shall be plundered."

Adversary: צַר *tsar* adversary, foe, enemy, oppressor.

Sounds like the Russian word for Ceasar, a king of depravity and anti-Godliness.

¹² Thus says the LORD:

"As a shepherd takes from the mouth of a lion
Two legs or a piece of an ear,
So shall the children of Israel be taken out
Who dwell in Samaria—
In the corner of a bed and on the edge ^[fn2] of a couch!

As a shepherd...: this is a 'Don't try this at home' picture.

On a practical level, unless a shepherd provided proof a wild animal took the sheep, the shepherd is charged for the loss.

As a picture of the extent to which Israel will be captured and carried away, the Assyrians will search out, even to the private places and bedrooms, to take all of Israel they can find.

Edge: וּבֵדְמֶשֶׁק עָרֵשׁ *uvid'meshek ares* and in silk couch. Even the elite of Israel will be taken.

¹³ Hear and testify against the house of Jacob,"
Says the Lord GOD, the God of hosts,
¹⁴ "That in the day I punish Israel for their transgressions,
I will also visit *destruction* on the altars of Bethel;
And the horns of the altar shall be cut off
And fall to the ground.
¹⁵ I will destroy the winter house along with the summer house;
The houses of ivory shall perish,
And the great houses shall have an end,"
Says the LORD.

Just as God promised a long time ago. D'varim (Deuteronomy) 6.10-15

¹⁰ "So it shall be, when the LORD your God brings you into the land of which He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give you large and beautiful cities which you did not build, ¹¹ houses full of all good things, which you did not fill, hewn-out wells which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant— when you have eaten and are full— ¹² *then* beware, lest you forget the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. ¹³ You shall fear the LORD your God and serve Him, and shall take oaths in His name. ¹⁴ You shall not go after other gods, the gods of the peoples who *are* all around you ¹⁵ (for the LORD your God *is* a jealous God among you), lest the anger of the LORD your God be aroused against you and destroy you from the face of the earth.