

# STUDIES IN THE MINOR PROPHETS

## *AMOS*

### OUTLINE OF THE BOOK

#### **Title and Preface - 1:1,2**

- I. The approaching judgment. The heathen's and Israel's sins, 1:3-2:16.
  - . Punishment of the nations bordering Judah and Israel, 1:3-2:3.
    1. Damascus - for their cruelty in war, 1:3-5.
    2. Gaza of Philistia - slave traffic, 1:6-8.
    3. Tyre - delivered up "brothers," 1:9,10.
    4. Edom - for implacable hatred for Israel, 1:11,12.
    5. Ammon - intense and uncalled for cruelty, 1:13-15.
    6. Moab - vengeance even on a king's carcass, 2:1-3.
  - . Punishment of Judah - her sin was religious apostasy, 2:4,5. Note the difference between the accusations against the nations and against Judah: cruelty vs. apostasy.
  - . Punishment of Israel - the theme of Amos' prophecy, 2:6-16.
    1. Sins of Israel: injustice and oppression, shameless immorality, contempt for the Lord, vv. 6-8.
    2. Scornful contempt of the divine benefits bestowed, vv. 9-12.
    3. Inevitable consequences, vv. 13-16. In the accusations against the nations they are pictured as cruel, barbarous, etc.; against Judah and Israel the accusations are civil, religious, and charges of oppressions. This accusation becomes the thesis of the book; the remainder of the book is an elaboration of these charges.
- II. Israel's crimes and her condemnation, Chapters 3-6.
  - . Condemnation of the wealthy ruling classes for civil and religious inequities, 3:1-4:5.
    1. Jehovah had known Israel, which makes her crime greater, 3:1-8.
      - a. Because chosen for Jehovah, her sins must be visited, vv. 1,2.
      - b. The prophet's right to speak: chosen of God, vv. 3-8.
    2. Civil oppression and inevitable judgment on the ruling class, 3:9-4:3.
      - a. The ruling class: their sins, 3:9-15.
      - b. The luxury-loving women: a special judgment against them, 4:1-3.
    3. Condemnation of their religious festivities - "which please you," not Jehovah, 4:4,5.
  - . Unheeded chastisements - the prophet turns to the nation, 4:6-13.

1. Chastisements from Jehovah, which have gone unheeded, vv. 6-11.
  - a. General famine, "cleanness of teeth," v.6.
  - b. Drought, vv. 7,8.
  - c. Blasting, mildew, locusts, v.9.
  - d. Pestilence, at the same time enemy attacks, v. 10.
  - e. Earthquake, burning, v. 11.
2. Final doom, for which prepare, vv. 12,13. They had looked upon God as a Being to be flattered; He looked upon them as children to be disciplined. Discipline had availed nothing; therefore, "Prepare to meet your God."

. Overthrow of the kingdom of the ten tribes, Chapters 5 & 6.

1. Lamentations, denunciations, exhortations, and threats, 5:1-17.
  - a. Lamentation - Israel is fallen, vv. 1-3.
  - b. Seek Jehovah, forsake idolatry, and live, vv. 4-6.
  - c. But Israel turns righteousness into unrighteousness, vv. 7-9.
  - d. This unrighteousness God must punish, unless they seek Jehovah, vv. 10-15.
  - e. The announcement of judgment, vv. 16,17.
2. First woe - terrors of the day of Jehovah, 5:18-27.
  - a. Terrors of the day, vv. 18-20.
  - b. Their heartless worship will not avert the day, vv. 21-24.
  - c. They have followed the steps of their fathers, vv. 25-27.
3. Second woe - upon the careless heads of the nation, Chapter 6.
  - a. The luxury-loving wealthy rulers, vv. 1-6.
  - b. Exile and destruction are certain, vv. 7-11.
  - c. Cannot be averted by their foolish trust in power, vv. 12-14.

III. Five visions, which the prophet explains, 7:1-9:10.

- . The vision of the locusts, in which the mercy of God averts the catastrophe, 7:1-3.
- . The vision of the devouring fire - a severer judgment than that of the locusts, again averted by mercy of Jehovah, 7:4-6.
- . The vision of the plumb line - destruction on the idolatrous nation of Israel, 7:7-9.
- . Amaziah warns Jeroboam of Amos' danger to the royal sanctuary, 7:10-17.

- . The vision of the basket of summer fruit - the ripeness of Israel for judgment, Chapter 8.
  1. The vision and its significance: the time of mercy is now past, destruction is at hand, vv. 1-3.
  2. The final eclipse of the nation - her sun sets at noon, vv. 4-14.
- . The vision of the smitten sanctuary - destruction of the sinful kingdom, 9:1-10.

IV. Promise of a bright future - the Messianic hope, 9:11-15. This conclusion is the **only** optimistic note in the book. Notice how each book directed to Judah or Israel has an optimistic note of future glory. Compare this passage with Acts 15:14-18. In what way can we say there is optimism in the context of this passage in Acts? \_\_\_\_\_

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## QUESTIONS ON THE BOOK OF AMOS

### Title and Preface - 1:1,2

1. What important facts does Amos tell us about himself that help us to place the time and circumstance of this prophetic book? 1:1 \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Please explain the significance of the "roaring" and the "withering" in 1:2. \_\_\_\_\_

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- I. The approaching judgment. The heathen's and Israel's sins, 1:3-2:16.
- . Punishment of the nations bordering Judah and Israel, 1:3-2:3.
    - 1. Damascus - for their cruelty in war, 1:3-5.
3. Which two cities were mentioned in 1:3 and what does Amos tell us about their interaction? \_\_\_\_\_  
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4. Who are Hazael and Ben Hadad and how do they relate to Damascus? 1:4 \_\_\_\_\_  
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5. What is meant by "breaking the bar of Damascus" and what are Aven and Kir? 1:5 \_\_\_\_\_  
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- 2. Gaza of Philistia - slave traffic, 1:6-8.
6. Of what was Gaza guilty? 1:6 \_\_\_\_\_  
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7. What does God say He will do with Gaza? 1:7 \_\_\_\_\_  
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8. Whom does the prophet say will perish as a result of God's outpouring of wrath? 1:8 \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. Tyre - delivered up "brothers," 1:9,10.

9. Of what two things does God accuse Tyre in 1:9? \_\_\_\_\_  
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10. What does God say He will do with Tyre? 1:10 \_\_\_\_\_  
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4. Edom - for implacable hatred for Israel, 1:11,12.

11. Of what evils does God accuse Edom? 1:11 \_\_\_\_\_  
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12. What does God say He will do with Edom? 1:12 \_\_\_\_\_  
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5. Ammon - intense and uncalled for cruelty, 1:13-15.

13. From whom did the Ammonites descend? 1:13; Genesis 19:30-38 \_\_\_\_\_  
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14. Of what atrocity does God accuse the Ammonites in 1:13? \_\_\_\_\_  
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Why does he say they did this? \_\_\_\_\_  
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15. What was Rabbah, and what does God say He will do to them? 1:14,15 \_\_\_\_\_  
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6. Moab - vengeance even on a king's carcass, 2:1-3.

16. What was the relationship between the ancestors of Moab and of Ammon? \_\_\_\_\_  
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17. Of what atrocity does God accuse the Moabites? 2:1 \_\_\_\_\_  
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18. What is Kerioth and what does God say He will cause to happen to the Moabites? 2:2,3 \_\_\_\_\_  
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. Punishment of Judah - her sin was religious apostasy, 2:4,5. Note the difference between the accusations against the nations and against Judah: cruelty vs. apostasy.

19. Whom did God say Judah was imitating, and in what way were they turning away from God? 2:4 \_\_\_\_\_  
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20. How does God say that He will punish Judah? 2:5 \_\_\_\_\_  
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. Punishment of Israel - the theme of Amos' prophecy, 2:6-16.

1. Sins of Israel: injustice and oppression, shameless immorality, contempt for the Lord, vv. 6-8.

21. What were the Israelites doing with the poor and the righteous, and why the distinction? 2:6 \_\_\_\_\_  
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22. Enumerate and explain the sins of Israel found in 2:7. \_\_\_\_\_  
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23. How had they further shown contempt for the Law of God, and what law had they violated concerning the "pledge?" 2:8; Deuteronomy 24:12,13 \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. Scornful contempt of the divine benefits bestowed, vv. 9-12.

24. Of what does God remind them in 2:9, and why was it that they needed to be so reminded? \_\_\_\_\_  
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25. Who does the prophet say brought Israel up out of the land of Egypt, and why is this important? 2:10  
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26. What are nazirites and prophets, and who raised them up? 2:11 \_\_\_\_\_  
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27. How did they treat the nazirites and prophets so raised up? 2:12 \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. Inevitable consequences, vv. 13-16. In the accusations against the nations they are pictured as cruel, barbarous, etc.; against Judah and Israel the accusations are civil, religious, and charges of oppressions. This accusation becomes the thesis of the book; the remainder of the book is an elaboration of these charges.

28. There are several different readings of 2:13. Consider all that you can find carefully, and draw a conclusion on the meaning which you can discuss in class. \_\_\_\_\_  
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29. In 2:14-16, Amos identifies the nature of the things which would come upon them as punishment for their sins. Enumerate and explain each of them. \_\_\_\_\_  
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II. Israel's crimes and her condemnation, Chapters 3-6.

A. Condemnation of the wealthy ruling classes for civil and religious inequities, 3:1-4:5.

1. Jehovah had known Israel, which makes her crime greater, 3:1-8.

a. Because chosen for Jehovah, her sins must be visited, vv. 1,2.

30. Who was speaking against Israel? 3:1 \_\_\_\_\_  
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31. What is the reasoning used in 3:1,2 for God's punishment of Israel? \_\_\_\_\_  
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b. The prophet's right to speak: chosen of God, vv. 3-8.

32. To whom does 3:3 apply in this context, and what is the general principle taught here? \_\_\_\_\_  
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33. In 3:4,5, what lesson is Amos trying to bring before the people? \_\_\_\_\_  
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34. What is the purpose of the trumpet sounding here, and what will it cause the people to do? 3:6 \_\_\_\_  
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35. Of what evil [KJV] does Amos say God is the cause? 3:6 \_\_\_\_\_  
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36. Please explain what it is that the Lord does, according to 3:7, and to whom does He do it? \_\_\_\_\_  
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37. What is the significance of the lion's roar and the speaking of God through the prophets? 3:8 \_\_\_\_  
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2. Civil oppression and inevitable judgment on the ruling class, 3:9-4:3.
- a. The ruling class: their sins, 3:9-15.
38. Amos mentions "tumults" and "the oppressed" in 3:9. What is the significance of these words, and what is he picturing in this verse? \_\_\_\_\_  
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39. What is it that they do not know how to do, and what do they store up in their palaces? 3:10 \_\_\_\_  
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40. Name the three things the "adversary" would do. 3:11 \_\_\_\_\_  
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41. What is Amos saying about the fate of Israel in the illustration of the lion and the shepherd, and give the thought being conveyed in the "bed" and "couch" illustration. 3:12 \_\_\_\_\_  
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42. Who is sending this prophecy to them, and with what words does He identify Himself? 3:13 \_\_\_\_  
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43. What was erected at Bethel, and what does Amos say will happen to it? 3:14; 1 Kings 12:25-33 \_  
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44. In the descriptive words used in 3:15, what is the prophet saying about the status of the people in Israel under indictment? \_\_\_\_\_  
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- b. The luxury-loving women: a special judgment against them, 4:1-3.
45. Who are the "cows [KJV kine] of Bashan, and what does the prophet say they do? 4:1 \_\_\_\_\_  
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46. What has the Lord sworn in His holiness concerning these people? 4:2 \_\_\_\_\_  
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47. How could they "go out at the breaches" and where would they go? 4:3 \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. Condemnation of their religious festivities - "which please you," not Jehovah, 4:4,5.

48. Where does the prophet tell them to bring their sacrifices, and why does he say they will sin in so doing? 4:4 \_\_\_\_\_

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49. Compare the words of the prophet in 4:5 with what Jesus says in Matthew 6:1-4 and discuss the condition of the Israelites in the time this prophecy was written. \_\_\_\_\_

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B. Unheeded chastisements - the prophet turns to the nation, 4:6-13.

1. Chastisements from Jehovah, which have gone unheeded, vv. 6-11.

a. General famine, "cleanness of teeth," v.6.

50. What is God saying through the prophet whenever he uses the phrase "cleanness of teeth" and "lack of break," and what did they do when this happened? 4:6 \_\_\_\_\_

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b. Drought, vv. 7,8.

51. In what way was God's handling of the drought designed to cause people to know that He was behind it and that they needed to repent? 4:7,8 \_\_\_\_\_

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c. Blasting, mildew, locusts, v.9.

52. What methods did God use against their crops to bring them to repentance? 4:9 \_\_\_\_\_

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d. Pestilence, at the same time enemy attacks, v. 10.

53. In what way was this chastisement against them like that of Egypt? 4:10 \_\_\_\_\_  
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e. Earthquake, burning, v. 11.

54. To what does He compare this punishment, and what is a "firebrand plucked from the fire?" 4:11  
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2. Final doom, for which prepare, vv. 12,13. They had looked upon God as a Being to be flattered; He looked upon them as children to be disciplined. Discipline had availed nothing; therefore, "Prepare to meet your God."

55. In what sense is the prophet declaring that they need to be prepared to meet their God, and how might this be properly applied today? 4:12 \_\_\_\_\_  
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56. Consider each of the descriptive terms used with regard to God in 4:13, and be prepared to discuss each of them in class. \_\_\_\_\_  
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C. Overthrow of the kingdom of the ten tribes, Chapters 5 & 6.

1. Lamentations, denunciations, exhortations, and threats, 5:1-17.

a. Lamentation - Israel is fallen, vv. 1-3.

57. What is a lamentation, and how is it used here? 5:1 \_\_\_\_\_  
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58. In what way does Amos describe the degree to which Israel would be destroyed? 5:2,3 \_\_\_\_\_  
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b. Seek Jehovah, forsake idolatry, and live, vv. 4-6.

59. God is offering something in 5:4,6. What is it and what does He warn them NOT to do in 5:5? \_\_  
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60. What does God threaten to do if they do NOT seek Him? 5:6 \_\_\_\_\_  
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c. But Israel turns righteousness into unrighteousness, vv. 7-9.

61. How are we to understand the use of "wormwood" here, and what does it mean to "leave off righteousness in the earth?" 5:7 \_\_\_\_\_  
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62. Please explain the connection between 5:8 & 9. \_\_\_\_\_  
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d. This unrighteousness God must punish, unless they seek Jehovah, vv. 10-15.

63. The gate of the city was a significant part of judicial life among the Israelites. What went on at the "gate" and what does Amos say about the way Israel looked at those who were sitting in the gate? 5:10; Deuteronomy 22:15; Proverbs 24:7; Isaiah 29:21 \_\_\_\_\_

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64. What did the affluent Israelites have that Amos said would be taken from them? 5:11 \_\_\_\_\_

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65. God says through the prophet that He KNOWS something about them. What is it? 5:12 \_\_\_\_\_

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66. How are we to understand 5:13 in this context? \_\_\_\_\_

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67. They are encouraged to seek something, and not another thing, and to love one thing and not another. What are these things, and how do they relate to each other? 5:14,15 \_\_\_\_\_

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e. The announcement of judgment, vv. 16,17.

68. In Egypt, God "passed over" the people of Israel and spared their firstborn. But here God says He will "pass through" them. What does He mean by this? 5:16,17 \_\_\_\_\_

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2. First woe - terrors of the day of Jehovah, 5:18-27.

a. Terrors of the day, vv. 18-20.

69. God pronounces woe on those who desired "the day of the Lord," and illustrated their predicament with a word picture in 5:19. What is the Lord telling them about the reality of "the day of the Lord?" 5:18-20 \_\_\_\_\_

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b. Their heartless worship will not avert the day, vv. 21-24.

70. What does God say about their attempts to worship Him? 5:21-23 \_\_\_\_\_

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71. There are **two** things having to do with water that God uses to illustrate what He desires. What are they, and how do they relate to this context? 5:24 \_\_\_\_\_

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c. They have followed the steps of their fathers, vv. 25-27.

72. In spite of the fact that their fathers had offered sacrifices to God in the wilderness, what does God accuse them of doing? 5:25,26 \_\_\_\_\_

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73. Where does God say He will send them into captivity? 5:27 \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Second woe - upon the careless heads of the nation, Chapter 6.

a. The luxury-loving wealthy rulers, vv. 1-6.

74. What was the condition of those in Zion and Samaria, and how might we relate to this problem today? 6:1 \_\_\_\_\_

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75. God compares them with other nations in 6:2. What is the purpose of this? \_\_\_\_\_

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76. Discuss the reasons for the "woes" pronounced in 6:3-6 and make any applications possible to us today. \_\_\_\_\_

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b. Exile and destruction are certain, vv. 7-11.

77. Who does Amos say will be taken captive **first**? 6:7 \_\_\_\_\_

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78. What does God say He abhors and why does He make this statement? 6:8 \_\_\_\_\_

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79. Under what circumstances might bodies be burned rather than buried, and what does this say about the calamity which was to come upon them? 6:9-11 \_\_\_\_\_

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c. Cannot be averted by their foolish trust in power, vv. 12-14.

80. In light of the obvious answer to the two questions asked in the first part of 6:12, what is the point being made about Israel in the latter part of verse 12 and in verse 13? \_\_\_\_\_

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81. How does God say He will react to their trust in human strength? 6:14 \_\_\_\_\_

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III. Five visions, which the prophet explains, 7:1-9:10.

A. The vision of the locusts, in which the mercy of God averts the catastrophe, 7:1-3.

82. In the vision of the locusts, what did the prophet see that caused him to plead with God, and what was the result of his plea? 7:1-3 \_\_\_\_\_

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B. The vision of the devouring fire - a severer judgment than that of the locusts, again averted by mercy of Jehovah, 7:4-6.

83. The second vision presented what type of destruction for Israel, and how did the prophet react to this threatened disaster? 7:4-6 \_\_\_\_\_

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C. The vision of the plumb line - destruction on the idolatrous nation of Israel, 7:7-9.

84. Explain the significance of the plumb line, and the fact that Amos did not see fit to plead with the Lord any further after this vision. 7:7-9 \_\_\_\_\_

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. Amaziah warns Jeroboam of Amos' danger to the royal sanctuary, 7:10-17.

85. What did Amaziah do about the prophesying done by Amos? 7:10-13 \_\_\_\_\_  
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86. How did Amos react to the response of Amaziah? 7:14-17 \_\_\_\_\_  
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. The vision of the basket of summer fruit - the ripeness of Israel for judgment, Chapter 8.

1. The vision and its significance: the time of mercy is now past, destruction is at hand, vv. 1-3.

87. Explain the significance of the basket of summer fruit as it is used here. 8:1,2 \_\_\_\_\_  
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88. In "that day," what does Amos say the situation would be in Israel? 8:3 \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. The final eclipse of the nation - her sun sets at noon, vv. 4-14.

89. What is Amos pointing out about the religion of the Israelites? 8:4-6 \_\_\_\_\_  
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90. Explain what is meant in 8:7 and what possible application might be made of this today? \_\_\_\_\_  
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91. By what word-pictures does God describe the fate of Israel, and what do they mean? 8:8-10 \_\_\_\_\_  
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92. What kind of a "famine" does the prophet say will come, and what will be the results of this famine? 8:11-14 \_\_\_\_\_  
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Could such a famine happen today? \_\_\_\_\_  
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. The vision of the smitten sanctuary - destruction of the sinful kingdom, 9:1-10.

93. Where did Amos see the Lord standing and what did He do in this vision? 9:1 \_\_\_\_\_  
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94. What does the Lord say through Amos about the various ways in which Israel might try to escape His wrath? 9:2-4 \_\_\_\_\_  
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95. Explain the significance of the descriptions of God's power in 9:5-7. \_\_\_\_\_  
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96. What ray of hope does the prophet record for those who might still be found righteous? 9:8,9 \_\_\_\_\_  
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97. How does Amos say the end will come to those who refuse to hear the warning of God and continue in their smug complacency? 9:10 \_\_\_\_\_  
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IV. Promise of a bright future - the Messianic hope, 9:11-15.

98. What is "that day" and what does Amos say will happen at that time? Relate this to the quotation of this passage found in Acts 15:16-18. 9:11-15 \_\_\_\_\_  
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