

**What the Prophet Meant to Say Was....  
The Real Housewives of Samaria  
Amos 4**

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We now come to the second of three chapters that begin with the command to hear.

The first was directed to Israel and Judah but ultimately narrowed to Israel alone.

Who is this second one directed to and is there anything we need to know to prepare us for what Amos is going to say?

Before we go into the who, we need to think like a Jew would think and see the world in 750 BC. We also need to understand a bit about figures of speech.

The Bible makes use of all various types of speech and yes, someone made a study of them all. “We have catalogued over 200 distinct figures, several of them with from 30 to 40 varieties. Many figures have duplicate names which brings up the total number of names to more than 500.” (Bullinger 1898, ix)

As we study the Bible, there those times where we must take a step back and ask, “Is this a figure of speech being used.”

For example, does the Bible make use of sarcasm? Yes, it does.

SARCASM is a strong form of IRONY. SARCASTIC comments are always negative and intended to ridicule or reprove the person or subject to which they are directed. For example, “Some king you are!” really means “You are a worthless king!” Sarcasm, like irony, is often marked by special intonation, but in written form sarcasm must be recognized from the context. (Slager 2008, 1043)

SARCASMOS, sar-cas´-mos. Greek, σαρκασμός; (Latin, sarcasmos), from σαρκάζω (sarkazō), to tear flesh as dogs do; hence, a rending or tearing or wounding with cutting words; sarcasm. Irony is so called when it is used as a taunt or in ridicule. (Bullinger 1898, 807)

Is it also possible for a term to have multiple meanings and communicate more than one idea? Again, yes. At times, a term may be used with the intent to bring up in our minds, everything connected with that term or location.

I am mentioning that because this section of Amos will show us the use of all of this. Amos is a plain talking southern Judean farmer and herder who has ventured north at the command of YAHWEH to provide prophetic insight to the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Because he has an agricultural background and is not a professional, his speech is filled with color and at times, rather plain politically incorrect talk. He obviously is from the sticks because we are going to learn he can really be rather plain talking in communicating his ideas. But his speech also has layers in it, like any southerner, and we must look at it.

Amos is in Bethel, just across the border from Judah in Israel. Both kingdoms are at peace, are economically rich, militarily powerful and control territory close to that which Solomon ruled over. As we have already learned, there are deep problems in both kingdoms. So, in the King’s personal chapel, in Bethel, in front of a golden calf and non-Levitical priests who have integrated fertility cults, YAHWEH worship, and idolatry, Amos is presenting the message from YAHWEH. Oh, and the ruling elite has no problem oppressing anyone or killing anyone. Internal departments in Israel have been weaponized to be used against the people.

And here is the thing, Amos, because he is serving YAHWEH, has no problem causing a kerfuffle in Bethel. None at all.

Amos 4:1–5

“Hear this word, you cows of Bashan who are on the mountain of Samaria, Who exploit the poor, who oppress the needy, And say to their husbands, “Bring now, that we may drink!” The Lord GOD has sworn by His holiness, For behold, the days are coming upon you When they will take you away with meat hooks, And the last of you with fish hooks. You will go out through holes in the walls, One in front of the other, And you will be hurled to Harmon,” declares the LORD. “Enter Bethel and do wrong; In Gilgal multiply wrongdoing! Bring your sacrifices every morning, Your tithes every three days. Offer a thanksgiving offering also from that which is leavened, And proclaim voluntary offerings, make them known. For so you love to do, you sons of Israel,” Declares the Lord GOD.” (NASB 2020)

Ok, we get the command to hear, but is Amos talking to livestock? Or is he condemning the women of Israel and starting off by insulting them? Or is something else behind this?

Fortunately, we have a picture of the cows of Bashan.

## Cows of Bashan?



(Bolen, Cows of Bashan 2012, Used with Permission)

This is not about the livestock, not really. There is serious baggage attached to the area of Israel known as Bashan. Yes, it is a great area for cattle, sheep and livestock. Yes, livestock does really well there.

But there is more embedded in this word – Bashan בָּשָׁן.

From Ugaritic texts we read this: “Now may Rāpi’u, king of eternity, drink, May he drink, the god mighty and noble’ The god who dwells in ‘Aṭtartu, The god who rules in Hadra’yi, Who sings and makes music...” (24.252 2002, 193-194)

Deuteronomy 3:13

“The rest of Gilead and all of Bashan, the kingdom of Og, I gave to half the tribe of Manasseh. (All the region of Argob, that is, all Bashan, is called the land of Rephaim.” (NET 2nd ed.)

For the ‘Canaanites’ of Ugarit, the Bashan region, or a part of it, clearly represented ‘Hell’, the celestial and infernal abode of their deified dead kings, Olympus and Hades at the same time. It is possible that this localization of the Canaanite Hell is linked to the ancient tradition of the place as the ancestral home of their dynasty, the rpum. The Biblical text also recalls that “all Bashan used to be called the land/earth of the Rephaim” (Deut 3:13 [NEB]), an ambiguous wording that could equally be translated as “the ‘hell’ of the Rephaim”. In any case, the link between Bashan and the rpum/Rephaim in both traditions speaks in favour of a very old use of the two meanings of this last denomination: ancient dwellers of Northern Transjordan / inhabitants of ‘Hell’. (Lete 1999, 162)

And we were wondering about the Amorite / Nephilim connection in chapter 3. Amos has not dropped that, and he is alluding that what Israel is engaged in, is really much worse.

It was the Old Testament version of the gates of hell, the gateway to the underworld realm of the dead. It was known as “the place of the serpent” outside the Bible. It’s associated with Mount Hermon, the place where Jews believed the rebellious sons of God from Genesis 6:1–4 descended. Simply put, if you wanted to conjure up images of the demonic and death, you’d refer to Bashan. (Heiser 2015, 289-290)

When Jeroboam I set up his two alternative worship locations, he set one up in Bethel, where Amos is prophesying; and the other in Dan, located in the north in the area of Bashan.

Bashan also included the are we call the Golan Heights, Mount Hermon and Caesarea Philippi.

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(Bolen, Mount Hermon and Caesarea Philippi aerial 2012, Used with Permission)

Matthew 16:13–18

“Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” (ESV)

When Jesus did this, it was intentional. He was about to confront the enemy and clearly show them who He is. A few days later He and three of His disciples went up Mount Hermon and it was there He showed Himself to them in His glory talking to Elijah and Moses.

Jesus went into demon central, specifically right into their turf and called them out.

Just down the road was the other location Amos is referring to.



(Bolen, Dan aerial from east 2012, Used with Permission)

Mount Hermon, as we have discussed in our study of chapter 3, is where the fallen divine beings came down to earth per the book of Enoch and began the corruption of mankind by cohabiting with women they took. Enoch also explains that demons, the spirits of the Nephilim killed in the flood, are all around this area since it was the area of the first incursion. In the book of Enoch, Enoch is asked by the imprisoned watchers to appeal on their behalf to the Lord. The Lord explains this to Enoch per Enoch 15:1 – 10.

Enoch 15:1–10

“And answering, he said to me, “The true human, a human of the truth, the scribe.” Then I heard his voice say, “Don’t be afraid, Enoch, a true human and scribe of the truth. Come here and hear my voice. Go and say to those who sent you, ‘It was necessary for you to ask about the humans, and not the humans about you. On what account did you abandon the high, holy heavens of eternity, and sleep with the women and be defiled with the daughters of humans, and take women for yourselves? You acted just like the sons of the earth, and you fathered children for yourselves, giant sons. And you were holy, living, eternal spirits. But then you were defiled with the blood of the women, and with the blood of the flesh you brought forth children and you desired the blood of humans, just as any of those of flesh and blood do, those who die and are destroyed.’ “Because of this I gave women to them in order to be impregnated and procreate children by them this way, and so that not every work comes to an end for them upon the earth. You were living eternal spirits and not dying into all the generations of eternity. And because of this I did not make wives available for you; but the spirits of heaven, their dwelling is in heaven. And now the giants who are born from the spirits, even the strong spirits of flesh upon the earth, their dwelling will be on the earth. Evil spirits went out from their body, for they came from the higher places, and the beginning of their creation and foundation is from the watchful holy ones. They will be called evil spirits. And so for the spirits of heaven, their dwelling will be in heaven, and the spirits that are born upon the earth, their dwelling will be upon the earth.” (Brannan, et al. 2020, Enoch 15:1-10)

Bashan is demon central, and the ruling elite would know that.

The angels had intercourse with women, thus violating their order (τάξις; cf. 1 Enoch 15:3–7), and they begat demons (1 Enoch 15:9–16:1). Moreover, they (the demons) revealed magic to humans (cf. 1 Enoch 7:1) and became the cause of all manner of sin (cf. 10:8). (Nickelsburg 2001, 88)

Enoch 8:1–4

“Azael taught the humans to make swords, weapons, shields, and breastplates—the lessons of the angels; and they showed them their mining and craftsmanship, anklets and adornment, powders and painted eyes, and all kinds of choice stones and dying. Much ungodliness and prostitution happened, and they were led astray and ruined in all their ways. Semiaza taught enchantments and cutting of roots; Armaros, spells of healing; Rhakiel, astrology; Chochiel, the science of symptoms; Sathiel, watching the

stars; Seriel, the course of the moon. Therefore the cry of the utterly destroyed people went up unto heaven.” (Brannan, et al. 2020, Enoch 8:1-4)

Amos 4:1

“Hear this word, you cows of Bashan who are on the mountain of Samaria, Who exploit the poor, who oppress the needy, And say to their husbands, “Bring now, that we may drink!”” (NASB 2020)

Is Amos derogatorily targeting the upper-class women, the wives of the ruling elites? The ones who were busy worshipping demons and fallen angels at Bethel and Dan? Yes, he is.

But this is fertility worship, not YAHWEH worship. Remember what we learned from Hosea, the priests are not all male, there are also priestesses and prostitutes, male and female, at both locations.

Amos could be targeting temple priestesses who served the gods along with male priests. It is also quite possible that the cows of Bashan are the deities themselves in the form of the idols. This possibility is strengthened by noticing their crimes: “oppressing the poor [dallim]” and “crushing the needy [ebyonim].” These same two Hebrew words are used in Psalm 82, where the corrupt elohim are accused of exactly these same crimes (Psa 82:3–4). (Heiser 2015, 290)

Psalm 82 is YAHWEH’s condemnation of these fallen ones.

Psalm 82

“A PSALM OF ASAPH. God has taken his place in the divine council; in the midst of the gods he holds judgment: “How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked? Selah Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.” They have neither knowledge nor understanding, they walk about in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are shaken. I said, “You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you; nevertheless, like men you shall die, and fall like any prince.” Arise, O God, judge the earth; for you shall inherit all the nations!” (ESV)

There is additional irony in Amos’s words as the “cows of Bashan” command their husbands, or literally, their “masters” or “lords” (’adonim), to bring wine that they may drink. Elsewhere, Amos describes these women as “drink[ing] wine by the bowlful” (6:6), so excess is certainly in view, but the irony of fattened cattle commanding their masters is a powerful picture. (Fuhr and Yates 2016, 125)

The terms being used are loaded.

Bashan was ground zero for Old Testament demonic activity. With one statement, Amos has:

1. intentionally called out the real housewives of Samaria, the elite, and accused them of being demon worshippers and prostitutes who worship other gods as well as allowing themselves to be serviced by any bull coming by,
2. connected their sin to the sin of the fallen members of the divine council as well as the watchers,
3. condemned the fallen ones and the demons associated with them,
4. and called these women drunk and rebellious wives who control their husbands.

The term may also be illustrative of their physical size, i.e. able to withstand an extended fast with no issue.

Amos 4:1–3

“Hear this word, you cows of Bashan who are on the mountain of Samaria, Who exploit the poor, who oppress the needy, And say to their husbands, “Bring now, that we may drink!” The Lord GOD has sworn by His holiness, “For behold, the days are coming upon you When they will take you away with meat hooks, And the last of you with fish hooks. You will go out through holes in the walls, One in front of the other, And you will be hurled to Harmon,” declares the LORD.” (NASB 2020)

Amos points out the future these women will have.

As we move to verse 2, Amos wants to clearly differentiate between the god these women are serving versus YAHWEH. The God he serves and the one who is about to describe their future is one who is holy. "Holiness therefore both makes the Lord what He is (God) and also what He distinctively is (the God of utter moral perfection). In both these ways, and in every way, it is His inmost, utmost and uppermost being. It is what makes Him uniquely distinct from man, and what marks Him out from all other claimants to be God." (Motyer 1984, 91-92)

YAHWEH is swearing by His holiness. His very nature is brought to bear. In other words, "the oath is irrevocable because it is based on God's divine holiness." (Smith 1998, 176)

These women have been involved, along with their husbands, in the exploitation and trafficking of their brothers and sisters, all for profit. The judgement being pronounced on them is that they will be treated much worse than they ever considered doing to anyone else.

We are given a picture of the result of war with Assyria, although Assyria is not named. This picture continues the satire seen in the first verse and the comparison to cows for the female elites of Israel. The reference is to a fishhook. Hook or rings placed into the nose of livestock is a control that is routinely used with cattle, a ring or hook put in their nose to control them. These women are so out of control they are commanding their husbands, the rich and powerful of the Northern Kingdom, to keep them drunk and happy. But now we see the Lord referring to the control devices being used on them by the conquering army.

We know from the victory stele of Esarhaddon that the Assyrians routinely placed rings or hooks into the noses of those they wished to humiliate and control, such as conquered kings or elites, and connected them to each other. Prior to his repenting, the Assyrians did this to King Manasseh.

2 Chronicles 33:11

"So the LORD brought against them the commanders of the army of the king of Assyria. They seized Manasseh, put hooks in his nose, bound him with bronze chains, and carried him away to Babylon." (NET 2nd ed.)

That was not hyperbole.

The reference to holes in the wall one in front of another is also a reference to this. The walls are damaged by the army as they capture the city and the picture is one of prisoners, all with hooks in them to control them connected to one another with a line or chain of some sort between them. Walking out single file.

The reference also points to a complete exile of every elite. "Each of you" pointing to a total and complete exile of those remaining post battle.

Completing his satire, the out-of-control cows of Bashan will be finally controlled and hurled to Harmon (Hermon?) "the feminine segment of the capital's elite social class is here singled out for accusation and threat. The women, no less than the men, are held accountable for their attitudes and actions towards the poor. Women are here explicitly placed under the judgment of Yahweh; their responsibility for the future of Israel is thus taken in deadly earnest, which reflects an attitude by no means commonplace in the world of the ancient Near East." (Wolff 1977, 207)

Mt. Hermon was to the north of Bashan, so these "cows" of Bashan would end up near Bashan. This is, in fact, the direction the Assyrians took the Israelite captives as they deported them to Assyria. (Constable 2003, Amos 4:2)

There is one other way to look at this. Hooks are a reference to those tools used to clear dead carcasses of livestock or other animals out of the way. This could also be a reference to how the bodies of the elites who are killed are thrown out of the city and then spread out on the sides of Mount Hermon.

Time for some satire.

Amos 4:4–5

“Enter Bethel and do wrong; In Gilgal multiply wrongdoing! Bring your sacrifices every morning, Your tithes every three days. Offer a thanksgiving offering also from that which is leavened, And proclaim voluntary offerings, make them known. For so you love to do, you sons of Israel,” Declares the Lord GOD. (NASB 2020)

Turning away from the wives of the elite, Amos now speaks to the entire nation of Israel, and does so satirically.

YAHWEH tells them to go to Bethel and rebel. They were going to anyway, but this is a parody of the priests there in Bethel, the same ones Amos has been talking to. Amos making friends and building bridges.

The priests would call the people to come to Bethel and worship, God is pointing out to them that is not worship, not at all.

God sarcastically calls to the people to come to Bethel and sin and then sin some more. The offerings were a joke not meant to worship YAHWEH at all. Worse, their offerings were stolen from others due to the oppression they were engaged in.

Some of the produce they tithed came from stolen land. Some animals they sacrificed had been fattened on unjustly seized fields. Their very worship was an offense to God as it hypocritically offered the fruits of their rebellion against His covenant (cf. Isa. 1:10–20; Micah 6:6–8). (Sunukjian 1985, 1436)

What they were doing at Bethel and Gilgal was not only sin and rebellion, because none of it was directed towards YAHWEH, but it was all being done for show. They would make sure there was no doubt who was making the offering, there would be no doubt about the size of the tithe and who was giving it.

Maybe there was even a plaque on the golden calf’s rear quarter memorializing just who it was that gave to build it. When he invites them to burn bread with yeast in it, he is again pointing out that what they are doing is millions of miles away from what true worship in the Levitical system truly is. Yeast, leaven, is always a type of sin.

Have the practices which Amos is making fun of, all ended? Not hardly. In churches all over the world there are those showing up every week because it is politically correct in their circle of friends to do so. I have always had a problem with the “campaigns” connected with building projects where the larger gifts are focused on and those making them are provided praise and a plaque for their gift. As you walk into the restroom there is a plaque letting you know that as you sit in comfort, the toilet seat was provided to you by Itzhak the plumber. Then there is the naming of buildings, or pews, or whatever you want to put a plaque on.

Welcome to Bethel and Gilgal.

So now that their hypocrisy and sin have been exposed to all, Amos reminds those listening to him about the judgements they have already experienced and conveniently forgotten about.

What, judgement has already occurred? Yes, it has, there have also been prophets connected to them as well and the response has been crickets. Since that is the case, Amos goes through the list to remind them. Essentially, he has googled recent events and is now relating the search findings.



### Amos 4:6–13

“But I gave you also cleanness of teeth in all your cities, And lack of bread in all your places; Yet you have not returned to Me,” declares the LORD. “Furthermore, I withheld the rain from you While there were still three months until harvest. Then I would send rain on one city, But on another city I would not send rain; One part would be rained on, While the part not rained on would dry up. So the people of two or three cities would stagger to another city to drink water, But would not be satisfied; Yet you have not returned to Me,” declares the LORD. “I struck you with scorching wind and mildew; The caterpillar was devouring Your many gardens and vineyards, fig trees and olive trees; Yet you have not returned to Me,” declares the LORD. “I sent a plague among you as in Egypt; I killed your young men with the sword, along with your captured horses, And I made the stench of your camp rise up in your nostrils; Yet you have not returned to Me,” declares the LORD. “I overthrew you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, And you were like a log snatched from a fire; Yet you have not returned to Me,” declares the LORD. Therefore so I will do to you, Israel; Because I will do this to you, Prepare to meet your God, Israel.” For behold, He who forms mountains and creates the wind, And declares to a person what are His thoughts, He who makes dawn into darkness And treads on the high places of the earth, The LORD God of armies is His name.” (NASB 2020)

In Leviticus 26 as well in Moses’ third sermon part of which we see in Deuteronomy 28 & 29, God made crystal clear what the benefits were for obedience to the covenant and what the Lord would use to bring His people back to Himself. YAHWEH now outlines those curses He has already done starting in verse 6. The list used by YAHWEH lists seven plagues. Each one intended to bring Israel back to Him in repentance, but we will read “Yet, you have not returned to Me.” Maybe they did like we do and attributed it to natural forces or bad luck. Surely it isn’t the Lord trying to get our attention.

Just because we have seen a drought in those states favoring abortion, crime and drugs is only a coincidence. It must be man caused climate change. In my opinion, the conditions are indeed man caused (Romans 3:23).

Just because there has been an outbreak of Mormon crickets exceeding the 2021 damage of 10 million acres of Oregon farmland is simply a result of the drought, right? From the Modern Farmer website, “Populations bolstered by years of ongoing drought coupled with mild winters in the western United States have allowed for an abundance of the insect’s eggs to thrive and hatch.” (Swenson 2022)

The only state in the nation to legalize gambling everywhere and prostitution in certain locations is reliant on one source of water as are several western states, Lake Mead is now at the lowest level since April 1937. This shrinkage has been ongoing for 22 years. (My Water Earth & Sky 2022)

Wildfires have been epidemic as well throughout the west. Again, laid at the feet of drought and so-called climate change.

What is needed to turn the tide? Revival. God’s people repenting of their sin and seeking mercy His mercy. Any overlay with Amos’ list?

### List of Plagues

1. Famine – Amos 4:6 – Localized and specific
2. Drought – Amos 4:7 – 8 – Localized and specific
3. Blight – Amos 4:9 – Localized and specific
4. Locusts – Amos 4:9 – See Joel, Judah repented, Israel didn’t
5. Epidemic – Amos 4:10 – Human
6. War – Amos 4:11 - Local and specific with no one to bury the dead
7. Natural disaster (earthquake) and fire – Amos 4:12

Earlier this year, the Hunga Tonga volcano erupted in Tonga. Tsunamis impacted Japan, Peru and the United States and have a global impact.

- The ash reached an altitude of 180,000 feet.
- The explosion pressure wave circled the globe at least three times.
- Temperature fluctuations were measured in the troposphere in the Pacific.
- Over 400,000 lightning strikes around the eruption.
- Clouds were produced 3,000 miles away and cleared the fog in Seattle.
- Meteotsunami, caused by the pressure wave, was measured near Puerto Rico. (Belles 2022)

Israel, like Lot and his family, was like a brand snatched from the fire, fortunate to be alive. But even Israel's narrow escape did not turn them toward God. Secular society sees only natural phenomena when various calamities adversely affect people. God's people correctly inquire about the possible purpose of God in such calamities. (Smith and Page 1995, 92)

The problem is this, YAHWEH was working to get the attention of Israel so they would repent and return to Him. Each subsequent event was worse.

Repentance did not take place. Rhetorically, by going through a list such as this, those listening would be cringing at what might come next. They liked their false gods. They allowed them to wink at sin and participate in activities that YAHWEH said no to. The people had fallen into the same trap King Ahab had, surrounding themselves with prophets and voices that always told them happy thoughts and happy things. We see much of the west doing the same thing today.

In the church we have bought into the lie that the gospel message is always and only positive, that God is always happy and jovial, that He's never grieved or angry and never speaks rebuke or correction, that the days of judgment are past, that "negative" prophetic messages were for the Old Testament only. (Brown 2019, 131-132)

Hebrews 12:5–10

"And have you forgotten the exhortation addressed to you as sons? My son, do not scorn the Lord's discipline or give up when he corrects you. For the Lord disciplines the one he loves and chastises every son he accepts. Endure your suffering as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is there that a father does not discipline? But if you do not experience discipline, something all sons have shared in, then you are illegitimate and are not sons. Besides, we have experienced discipline from our earthly fathers and we respected them; shall we not submit ourselves all the more to the Father of spirits and receive life? For they disciplined us for a little while as seemed good to them, but he does so for our benefit, that we may share his holiness." (NET 2nd ed.)

If we are in Christ, then we are indeed part of the royal family. There are certain expectations that go along with being a royal to include how we live and how we do life. When we stray from that, He disciplines us to bring us back to where He wants us to be.

He loves us and wants us to be just like His Son and He knows that takes time. But we are His no matter what.

The Jews in Israel were still His people, but those expectations had been forgotten and many had gone over to the other side. That must be dealt with and that is why Amos is in Bethel.

Since His people have ignored the warnings, and Amos has outlined them for Israel, there is a simple message for His people.

Amos 4:12

"Therefore so I will do to you, Israel; Because I will do this to you, Prepare to meet your God, Israel." (NASB 2020)

The last time His people were told to prepare to meet their God was in Exodus.

Exodus 19:10–11

“Then the LORD said to Moses, “Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes. And let them be ready for the third day. For on the third day the LORD will come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.” (NKJV)

That was the establishment of the covenant with His people, but here in Amos, the need to prepare is for judgment.

Amos wanted his audience to reflect upon the implications of encounter with God, especially in light of their steadfast refusal to return to God. The calamities God had brought upon them in the past (4:6–11) would appear as mere warm-up drills when compared to the catastrophic encounter with God they faced now. The prophet’s exhortation, “Prepare to meet your God, O Israel,” was neither a call to repentance nor an invitation to covenant renewal; rather, it was a summons to judgment. (Smith and Page 1995, 93)

God has given His people the opportunity to return to Him in repentance, faith and obedience. We saw how down in Judah, Joel saw that take place. Amos has carefully outline the numerous opportunities given to the Northern Kingdom to include that same locust invasion that Judah repented in. The difference in Israel, they didn’t repent.

So, God is telling them to prepare. They have been playing at meeting with God for 200 years, now they must prepare because things are about to get real. YAHWEH is telling them an authentic encounter with the living God is on tap.

The prophet reaches the climax of his catalogus calamitatum with a culminating catastrophe, which resounds even the more intimidating and terrifying because of its indefinite and unspecified nature. This is another example of how Amos heightens the awesome suspense of his audience by alluding to some enigmatic horror yet to come. (Paul and Cross 1991, 149-150)

Everything else didn’t work, what is coming, to be attended to by YAHWEH, will.

Amos 4:13

“For behold, He who forms mountains and creates the wind, And declares to a person what are His thoughts, He who makes dawn into darkness And treads on the high places of the earth, The LORD God of armies is His name.” (NASB 2020)

Which God is that? YAHWEH makes it crystal clear who He is and who it is they are about to encounter in judgement. He is the creator, He is the one who truly knows you, He is the one who causes night and day to take place and He is the one who walks on the high places. Not Baal, or any other pretender. YAHWEH. You know Him.

The LORD God of armies is His name.

And with the use of that title, especially after the emphasis on Him being the creator, YAHWEH wraps up the thought that He is the one who is judging not only the people of Israel who have strayed away, but also those who they have chosen to worship in His place.

Note again that the coming judgment was a surety. It was ensured ...

- by the God of creation, He who had made the mountains and the wind
- by the God of revelation, He who so lovingly revealed His thoughts to man through His Holy Word
- by the omnipotent God, the LORD of all power who has established the laws of nature that control day and night
- by the omnipresent God, the LORD who dwells above all the mountains of the earth

- by the LORD God of hosts, the LORD who rules over all the hosts (beings) of heaven and earth (Leadership Ministries Worldwide 2008, 100)

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