

# Haftarah Helper 5781: Acharei Mot-Kedoshim (Ashkenazim)

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## Amos 9:7-15

As He did for Judah in the south, God sent prophets to the Northern Kingdom of Israel. They identified the failings of its leadership and people, chastised them, recounted visions of destruction, and voiced powerful hope for the future. Amos, an early contemporary of Isaiah, was such a prophet, under the rule of the wicked Jeroboam II. At the peak of Israel's expansion, wealth, power, and ease, he lambasted its corruption, its treatment of society's weakest, its hypocritical Divine service, and more; as a result, destruction was imminent. Among the most rhetorically powerful prophets, Amos's words, "Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream" (5:24), still shake societies thousands of years later.

The Haftarah is the end of Amos's eponymous book. He declares that the Northern Kingdom's relationship with God, as reflected in the Exodus (as well as the Parashah, Lev. 20:26), will not prevent Him from punishing it for its sins, as He has relationships with, and punished and redeemed, other nations, too. After the forthcoming destruction, God will reward the righteous. Together with Judah under a Davidic king, they will rebuild a new kingdom of those who follow God and will, in turn, be richly rewarded forever.

## Haftarah Breakdown

Verses 7: Israel's relationship with God is not unique, nor is His redemption of them during the Exodus.

Amos 9:7	עמוס ט:ז
"Are you not like the Ethiopians unto Me, O children of Israel?" declares the Lord. "Have I not brought Israel up from the land of Egypt- [But also] the Philistines from Caphtor, and [the nation of] Aram from Kir?"	הֲלוֹא כְּכִנְיָ כְּשֵׂיִם אַתֶּם לִי בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל נְאֻם־ה' הֲלוֹא אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל הֶעֱלִיתִי מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וּפְלִשְׁתִּיִּים מִכַּפְתּוֹר וְאַרְם מִקִּיר:

Verses 8-10: God will punish the Northern kingdom's corrupt government and exile its people- especially those who think that His relationship with Israel prevents Him from doing so.

Amos 9:8	עמוס ט:ח
"Behold, the Lord God's eyes are upon the sinful [Northern] kingdom. I [God] will destroy it from the face of the earth- except that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob," says the Lord.	הִנֵּה עֵינַי אֲדַגֵּי ה' בַּמַּמְלָכָה הַחַטָּאָה וְהַשְׂמֵדְתִּי אֹתָהּ מֵעַל פְּנֵי הָאָדָמָה אֲפֹס כִּי לֹא הַשְׂמִיד אֶשְׂמִיד אֶת־בַּיִת יַעֲקֹב נְאֻם־ה':

Verses 11-12: Later, God will reconstitute a unified government under Davidic rule.

Amos 9:11	עמוס ט:יא
On that day, I [God] will raise up David's fallen tabernacle, repair its breaches, raise up its ruins, and build it as in ancient days.	בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא אֶקִּים אֶת־סֹכֶת דָּוִד הַנִּפְלֹת וְגִדְרֹתֶיהָ אֶת־פְּרֻצֵיהֶן וְהִרְסֹתֶיהֶן אֶקְוֶה וְבִנִּיתֶיהָ בַּיָּמִי עוֹלָם:

Verses 13-15: God will return His people to their land which they will rebuild, blessed with bountiful produce and security, for eternity.

Amos 9:14	עמוס ט:י"ד
I [God] will bring back the captivity of My people, Israel. They shall build wasted cities and inhabit them. They shall plant vineyards and drink their wine. They shall make gardens and eat their fruit.	וְשָׁבְתִי אֶת־שְׁבוּת עַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּבָנוּ עָרִים נְשָׁמוֹת וְלָשְׁבוּ וְנָטְעוּ כְרָמִים וְשָׁתוּ וְשָׂתוּ אֶת־יַיְנָם וְעָשׂוּ גִזְוֹת וְאָקְלוּ אֶת־פְּרִיָהֶם:

### Connections

Verse 11 (above) is the basis of the **special addition to Birkat Hamazon** for the holiday of **Sukkot**.

Grace After Meals	ברכת המזון
May the Merciful One raise up David's fallen tabernacle.	הרחמן הוא יקים לנו את סוכת דוד הנופלת

Verse 14 (above) promises a return of the Ten Tribes of Israel which has not yet occurred; Biblical promises of redemption are sometimes partial or delayed. This point caps the reasoning of the **Mishnah permitting certain converts to marry native-born Jews** despite Biblical verses suggesting otherwise.

Mishnah Yadayim 4:4	משנה ידים ד:ד
<p>On that day Judah, an Ammonite convert, came and stood before them in the house of study. He said to them: “May I enter [by marriage] into the assembly [i.e., the Jewish people]?”</p> <p>Rabban Gamaliel said to him, “You are forbidden.” Rabbi Joshua replied, “You are permitted.”</p> <p>R. Gamaliel replied [to R. Joshua], “Scripture (Deut. 23:4) states, ‘An Ammonite or a Moabite shall not enter into the assembly of the Lord even to the tenth generation.’”</p> <p>R. Joshua replied [to R. Gamaliel], “Are the Ammonites and Moabites in their own territory? Sennacherib, king of Assyria, arose already and mingled all the nations, as Scripture (Isa. 10:1) states, ‘I have removed the borders of peoples, plundered their treasures, and, as a mighty one, humbled [their] inhabitants.’”</p> <p>R. Gamaliel replied, “Scripture (Jer. 49:6) states, ‘Afterward, I will bring back the captivity of the children of Ammon,’ and they have already returned.”</p> <p>R. Joshua replied, “Scripture (Amos 9:14) states, ‘I will bring back the captivity of my people Israel and Judah’ yet they [Israel] have not yet returned.”</p> <p>They permitted [the Ammonite convert] to enter the assembly.</p>	<p>בו ביום בא יהודה, גר עמוני, ועמד לפניהן בבית המדרש. אמר להם, מה אני לבא בקהל.</p> <p>אמר לו רבן גמליאל, אסור אֵתָהּ. אמר לו רבי יהושע, מֵתָר אֵתָהּ.</p> <p>אמר לו רבן גמליאל, הַכְּתוּב אֹמֵר (דברים כג), לֹא יבֹא עַמּוֹנִי וּמוֹאָבִי בְּקֹהֶל ה' גַּם דּוֹר עֲשִׂירִי וְגו'.</p> <p>אמר לו רבי יהושע, וְכִי עַמּוֹנִים וּמוֹאָבִים בְּמִקְוֵן הֵן. כִּבְרַעְלָה סְנַחֲרִיב מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר וּבִלְבָל אֵת כָּל הָאֲמוֹת, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (ישעיה י), וְאָסִיר גְּבוּלוֹת עַמִּים וְעִתּוֹדוֹתֵיהֶם שׁוֹשְׁתִי וְאוֹרִיד כַּאֲבִיר יוֹשְׁבִים.</p> <p>אמר לו רבן גמליאל, הַכְּתוּב אֹמֵר (ירמיה מט), וְאַחֲרַי כֵּן אָשִׁיב אֶת שְׁבוּת בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן, וּכְבָר חֲזֹרוּ.</p> <p>אמר לו רבי יהושע, הַכְּתוּב אֹמֵר (עמוס ט), וְשָׁבְתִי אֶת שְׁבוּת עַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיְהוּדָה, וְעַדְיִן לֹא שָׁבוּ.</p> <p>הִתִּירוּהוּ לְבֹא בְּקֹהֶל:</p>

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<sup>1</sup> The Mishnah adds the phrase “and Judah” that is absent in the standard text of the Bible.