



Kedoshim (Ashkenazim): Amos 9:7-15¹²

An early contemporary of Isaiah, Amos prophesied in the Northern Kingdom during the rule of its wicked king, Jeroboam II. At the peak of Israel's expansion, wealth, power, and ease, Amos lambasted its corruption, its treatment of society's weakest, its hypocritical Divine service, and more; as a result, destruction was imminent.

The Haftarah is Amos's final prophecy. God declares that He has relationships with, and punishes and redeems, other nations in addition to Israel. God's closeness to His people, as reflected in His redeeming them from Egypt (as well as in the Parashah's holiness laws which are rooted in the Exodus; Lev. 19:34,36) will not prevent Him from punishing the Northern Kingdom for its sins. Amos's words in the [Haftarah for Parashat Vayeishev](#) (3:2), explain why: God's covenant with Israel means He is more, not less, exacting in His demands and punishments of it. Indeed, God will especially punish those who misunderstand this in the Northern Kingdom's forthcoming destruction. Later, He will restore the Davidic dynasty, which will conquer neighboring lands. God will irrevocably restore Israel to the Land, which it will rebuild and which will yield bounteous produce.

Haftarah Breakdown

Verse 7: God controls the history of all nations, including Israel's enemies, moving them from place to place according to His will. Israel's relationship with God and the Exodus are not unique in this regard.

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, the Philistines from Caphtor ³ , and [the nation of] Aram from Kir ⁴ ?”	הֲלוֹא כַּבְּנֵי כְּשִׁיִּים אַתֶּם לִי בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל נְאֻם־ה' הֲלוֹא אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל הֶעֱלִיתִי מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וּפְלִשְׁתִּיִּים מִכַּפְתּוֹר וְאַרָּם מִקִּיר:

Verses 8-10: Although God will never destroy the entire Jewish people, He will punish the Northern Kingdom's corrupt government and exile and kill 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 עֵינָי וְאֶדְכִּי ה' בַּמַּמְלָכָה הַחַטָּאָה וְהַשְּׂמֵדָתִי אֲתָהּ מֵעַל פְּנֵי הָאָדָמָה אֲפֹס כִּי לֹא הַשְּׂמִיד אֲשַׁמֵּד אֶת־בַּיִת יַעֲקֹב נְאֻם־ה':

Verses 11-12: The Southern Kingdom's Davidic dynasty is now weak but God will eventually restore its ancient strength. Connected to God, it will then conquer Edom and other neighboring nations.

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 אֶקְוֶה אֶקְוֶה אֶת־סֹכֶת דָּוִד הַנִּפְלֶטֶת וְגִדְרֹתֶיהָ אֶת־פְּרֻצֵיהֶן וְהִרְסֹתֶיהָ אֶקְוֶה וּבְנִיתֶיהָ כִּימֵי עוֹלָם:

¹ In most years, this text is the Haftarah for Parashiyot Acharei Mot or Acharei Mot-Kedoshim. According to Rabbi Moshe Isserlis (SA OC 428:8), Ashkenazim recite it even when Parashat Kedoshim is recited alone.

² At nine verses, this is the shortest Haftarah of the year. Megillah 23a-b rules that the usual minimum length of a Haftarah is 21 verses but also rules that a Haftarah which is a “complete topic”, such as this one, can be any length.

³ According to Daat Mikra, Caphtor is the island of Crete in the Aegean Archipelago.

⁴ Prof. Yoel Elitzur [argues](#) that the nation of Aram originated in the ancient city of Kir, near the modern town of Hit (Heet) in the Al-Anbar province of Iraq. Our verse references the Arameans' departure from there as they conquered and ruled Damascus, Syria. The Assyrian king, Tiglath-Pileser III, later conquered Damascus in 733, exiling the Arameans back to their point of origin. God's use of Aram was over.

Verses 13-15: God will end His people's exile, planting them in the Land which they will rebuild and plant. God will bless them with bountiful produce and security for eternity and never banish them again.

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

Connections

Verse 11 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 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 ידיים 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 Judah⁵’ 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, מֵה אֲנִי לְבֹא בַקְהֵל.</p> <p>אמר לו רבן גמליאל, אסור אֵתָהּ. אמר לו רבי יהושע, מִתֵּר אֵתָהּ.</p> <p>אמר לו רבן גמליאל, הַכְּתוּב אוֹמֵר (דברים כג), לֹא יָבֹא עַמּוֹנִי וּמוֹאָבִי בַקְהֵל ה' גַּם דּוֹר עֲשִׂירֵי וָגו'.</p> <p>אמר לו רבי יהושע, וְכִי עַמּוֹנִים וּמוֹאָבִים בְּמִקּוֹמָן הָיוּ. כִּבְרַר עָלֶיהָ סַנְחֶרִיב מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר וּבִלְבָל אֵת כָּל הָאֲמּוֹת, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (ישעיה י'), וְאַסִּיר גְּבוּלוֹת עַמִּים וְעִתּוֹדוֹתֵיהֶם שׁוֹשְׁתִי וְאוֹרִיד כְּאֲבִיר יוֹשְׁבֵיהֶם.</p> <p>אמר לו רבן גמליאל, הַכְּתוּב אוֹמֵר (ירמיה מט), וְאַחֲרָי כֵּן אָשִׁיב אֶת שְׁבוּת בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן, וְכִבְרַר חֲזָרוּ.</p> <p>אמר לו רבי יהושע, הַכְּתוּב אוֹמֵר (עמוס ט), וְשָׁבְתִי אֶת שְׁבוּת עַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיְהוּדָה, וְעַדְיָו לֹא שָׁבוּ.</p> <p>הִתְירוּהוּ לְבֹא בַקְהֵל:</p>

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⁵ The Mishnah adds the phrase “and Judah” that is absent in the standard text of the Bible.