

**Amos 6:1 Woe to them *that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, which are named chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came!***

As the prophet continues his message, he gives warning to those in Zion (Israel) who have erringly placed their trust in those entrusted with preserving the security of their nation, their military. In Hebrew Samaria is defined as a watch-station against approaching enemies and was the capital of the Northern Kingdom.

**Amos 6:2 Pass ye unto Calneh, and see; and from thence go ye to Hamath the great: then go down to Gath of the Philistines: *be they better than these kingdoms? or their border greater than your border?***

He then poses some questions to direct their thinking. Calneh was a prominent Assyrian city, Hamath was a Syrian capital that bordered Israel in the north, and Gath was one of the main Philistine cities. The question—Are the cities of Israel any greater than these? Is your kingdom any better than theirs?

Evidently, these cities had all been conquered by enemy forces. The implication is that they too had been proud and confident in their defenses, but that confidence didn't prove to be well placed. I couldn't help but think of a verse from Proverbs as I typed that sentence.

Prov. 16:18 ¶ Pride *goeth* before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.

**Amos 6:3 Ye that put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near;**

**Amos 6:4 That lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall;**

**Amos 6:5 That chant to the sound of the viol, *and* invent to themselves instruments of musick, like David;**

**Amos 6:6 That drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments: but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.**

The leaders and the elite of the Northern Kingdom refused to believe that they were vulnerable. They seemed to consider their affluence an indication of their power as one of the elite among the nations. They are pictured as living in the lap of luxury, dining on fine food and wine and pampering their bodies with fine lotions. They appreciated good music and took pride in their musical compositions. They even considered their music to be on par with the compositions of King David—highly regarded psalmist of Israel. They had no concern for the plight of the poor and unjustly treated of their people. Their focus was clearly on self.

As is often the case as I go through these books of the prophets, I can't help but make comparisons with God's rebellious people and America today. The description of these last few verses could easily be from a modern day prophet to America. The leaders of our nation seem to think we are invulnerable, and certainly in comparison to most nations on earth we live in the lap of luxury. We take great pleasure in various forms of entertainment that are totally secular and

spend little if any time on the things of the LORD. Still, we seem to think our good works to be comparable to those of our forefathers. How deluded we are! When attention is given to the poor and downtrodden, it is usually a result of personal motivation for personal, political or financial considerations.

**Amos 6:7 Therefore now shall they go captive with the first that go captive, and the banquet of them that stretched themselves shall be removed.**

This is God's declaration that those exhibiting the most pride and disbelief of the prophets' messages would be the first to be taken captive when judgment fell. Their luxurious lifestyle would come to a sudden end.

**Amos 6:8 The Lord GOD hath sworn by himself, saith the LORD the God of hosts, I abhor the excellency of Jacob, and hate his palaces: therefore will I deliver up the city with all that is therein.**

This verse begins with the prophet's declaration of the truth that he is proclaiming from YHWH. *Excellency* is a reference to pride, and scripture is very clear that God hates pride.

Prov. 6:16 These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him:

Prov. 6:17 A proud look....

Prov. 16:5 ¶ Every one *that is* proud in heart *is* an abomination to the LORD:

James 4:6 ...God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. God is very clear in identifying their pride as the root cause of their coming judgment.

**Amos 6:9 And it shall come to pass, if there remain ten men in one house, that they shall die.**

**Amos 6:10 And a man's uncle shall take him up, and he that burneth him, to bring out the bones out of the house, and shall say unto him that *is* by the sides of the house, *Is there yet any with thee?* and he shall say, No. Then shall he say, Hold thy tongue: for we may not make mention of the name of the LORD.**

These verses are very confusing. I can see that they picture great destruction as a result of the coming judgment. They also indicate that there will be few survivors. JFB made one comment that I thought was telling. Whereas the name of God had always been one representative of great blessing and protection to the Jew, it had now become a name to invoke terror. It seems to be picturing a scenario in which they are afraid to draw God's attention by mentioning His name, because they were sure that would result in death.

**Amos 6:11 For, behold, the LORD commandeth, and he will smite the great house with breaches, and the little house with clefts.**

I think this verse is basically reiterating that what the LORD declares will come to pass and that judgment will fall on rich and poor alike.

JFB made a different application. They understood the “great house” and the “little house” to be referencing the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah respectively. In retrospect, we know this to be a valid application.

**Amos 6:12 Shall horses run upon the rock? will *one* plow *there* with oxen? for ye have turned judgment into gall, and the fruit of righteousness into hemlock:**

**Amos 6:13 Ye which rejoice in a thing of nought, which say, Have we not taken to us horns by our own strength?**

Again, the prophet employs the use of questions to direct the thinking of his audience. The obvious answer to both questions is, “No.” The comparison-- Why can't you see the obvious danger of making a mockery of justice and righteousness? You have essentially treated true judgment and righteousness as poison—things to avoid at all cost. You take great pleasure in things with no eternal value and take great pride in your own accomplishments in the flesh—accomplishments of temporary worth at best.

**Amos 6:14 But, behold, I will raise up against you a nation, O house of Israel, saith the LORD the God of hosts; and they shall afflict you from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of the wilderness.**

The fearful warning from the LORD—I am going to judge you at the hands of a heathen nation. You will suffer from one end of the nation to the other—from Hamath on the northern border (as described in verse 2) to the southern border.