

Pastor Jeremy M. Thomas
Fredericksburg Bible Church
107 East Austin
Fredericksburg, Texas 78624
830-997-8834 jthomas@fbgbible.org

C0912 – March 25, 2009 – Amos 2:4-5 – Judgment On Judah

All right, let's turn to Amos, the shepherd from Tekoa. We've worked our way through the Gentile nations. We want to outline briefly the first two chapters. These chapters are introductory to the main address which starts in chapter 3. Chapters 1-2 are entrapment chapters, Amos is setting a trap for the northern kingdom of Israel. In the bigger picture the Jewish kingdom has divided into two kingdoms, Israel in the north, Judah in the south and both kingdoms are in spiritual decline.

We just want to point out as we go through the outline one more interesting geographical feature as Amos sets the trap. Chapter 1:1-2 is the Prologue which tells us the human author is Amos, he's from the town of Tekoa, he's a sheepbreeder, the king of Israel was Jeroboam II, the king of Judah was Uzziah and this all happened two years before a great earthquake mentioned by Zechariah and Josephus. Verse 2 tells us it's basically a message of doom. From 1:3-2:16 we have War Oracles, that section can be divided in half. 1:3-2:3 are War Oracles against Gentile Nations. 2:4-16 are War Oracles against Jewish Nations. There are six Gentile nations: 1:3-5, the kingdom of Aram, modern day Syria was to the NE. Watch the distribution; this is the observation we want to make. In 1:6-8 we have the kingdom of Philistia, to the SW. Third, we have Phoenicia in 1:9-10, they're up to the NW. Fourth, we have Edom in 1:11-12, they are to the SE. If we draw a line between those two then you have an X. Ammon in 1:13-15 and Moab in 2:1-3 are also both more or less over to the SE. So we have what is called a geographical chiasmus. The Greek letter chi is symbolized by an X. Then we have Judah, they're just south of Israel.

Prologue (1:1-2)

I. War Oracles (1:3-2:16)

- A. Against Gentile Nations (1:3-2:3)
 - 1. Aram (1:3-5)
 - 2. Philistia (1:6-8)
 - 3. Phoenicia (1:9-10)
 - 4. Edom (1:11-12)
 - 5. Ammon (1:13-15)
 - 6. Moab (2:1-3)
- B. Against Jewish Nations (2:4-2:16)
 - 1. Judah (2:4-5)
 - 2. Israel (2:6-16)

Now remember, we're working out of a structure that's very apparent as you glance at Amos 1-2. Most publishers format the text so you can see there's a common structure in these oracles. Judah follows the same structure as the Gentile nations; we broke it down into three parts. First you have the Indictment, the nation is brought to trial, then the Charges are leveled and finally the Judgment which stems from the justice of God.

In verse 4 we have the indictment. Let's read it, **Thus says the LORD, For three transgressions of Judah and for four, I will not revoke its punishment,** the same as every other oracle it begins with the "messenger formula," **Thus says the Lord.** This formula, in the Hebrew is what is known as the "messenger formula" because Amos is not the source of the revelation; he's the messenger of the revelation. The prophet, in his role, functioned basically as a carrier of information, sort of like the postman, he's an in-between man. The postman is not the source of your mail. He just delivers your mail. And so one of the functions of the OT prophet was to deliver the Lord's mail. So let's read Judah's mail. **For three transgressions of Judah and for four, for three...and for four, for three...and for four,** the same formula we've seen over and over again, the $x/x+1$ formula, used of the pagan Gentile nations as well as this Jewish nation. It's also used elsewhere in the OT and in pagan literature as a formula, but Amos is its master in the OT. Notice the mathematical operator, it's $x/x+1$, not $x/x-1$, in other words we're involved in addition, not subtraction. Judah is involved in adding something up, there's an increase in the positive direction from three up to four, from three up to four in all of these oracles. The point of the addition, "Well I know you did three or four sins and now I'm going to get you." They did three or four sins alright, but the

point is their sin is adding up one on top of the other to a certain value. Say y is the full value that God has calculated and when the amount of sin reaches value y , then God has determined to judge. And this formula is there to show you y has been reached. So in our terminology what Judah enjoyed was grace before judgment. God just gives grace after grace after grace until one day He says, "All right, I've had it, I've given you every opportunity in the book to respond to My grace, you've rejected My grace, therefore it's time to judge." Grace before judgment is one of the most prominent themes in both testaments. It is a fundamental theme. Always remember, the Christian system says that grace has a beginning and grace comes to an end. It's not eternal. Its consequences are eternal, we're not denying that.

Now, the danger of having extended grace before judgment is that people like to think that because I'm enjoying grace right now it is just going to go on forever and ever and ever. This is the fallacy in American thinking right now. We've enjoyed as a country one of the greatest periods of prosperity the world has ever known. It's all grace; grace here and grace there, God bless America and all the rest of it. Yet we have left the DVP foundation of our country. Our founders recognized in the political arena the need for checks and balances so they set up the three branches of government: executive, judicial and legislative, and that decision was based on DVP principles, but now increasingly, in the 60's and 70's the judicial branch was elevated and took over legislative powers, legislating from the bench. In more recent years the executive branch has become stronger and stronger, the system is out of balance all because of a fundamental shift in the nations view of man. Anthropology is the problem because the liberal agenda basically sees man as good and the biblical agenda basically sees man as evil. In the area of economics we've shifted from God's economic wisdom, which is the gold standard, which makes it more difficult to manipulate the system, to Babylonian fractional reserve banking, which makes it very easy to steal. In the area of nationalism, God established nations, the importance of separate nations, and we've shifted to Persian globalism, let's all get together and implement international law, forget the US Constitution, a global constitution is the trend. In the area of authority we've shifted from God's revelation as the source of authority, truth and morals, to Greek rationalism, and once you do that you decay God's legal wisdom. A shift has occurred here and rather than basing our laws on God's laws we base our laws on human rationalism which is finite and fallen. So we've rejected the DVP foundation

for the prosperity we enjoyed. Yet people still want to enjoy it independent of the base. But it just doesn't work that way. Once you've removed the DVP foundation which gives man maximum freedom as a creature, you have to fill the void with something, and that something is a HVP foundation which enslaves. So the danger of prolonged grace in a nation is that the nation forgets it's base, we're very weak in history, and people don't know why we've enjoyed such freedoms. It goes back to our base, but when a country forgets its base and it no longer cares about history then when judgment is on the horizon people can't see it, they don't know what's wrong; they don't know why we can't fix the problem. But the problem is the HVP base that has been substituted for the DVP base. And now everyone is flipping out all over the place because the day of judgment is upon us and we're ignorant of basic trends in how God works with nations, basic trends that nations have gone through over and over and over in history.

So there are limits to grace and at this point in Judah's history grace was wearing thin and judgment was on the horizon. So, in v 4, these people have spurned grace and now it's time for judgment. In this case God has been gracious toward them despite their **transgressions**, that word we've said when it comes in the War Oracles of 1:3-2:3 can be translated "crimes," and certain war crimes were committed by the Gentile nations. But here we're dealing with a Jewish nation and the translation **transgression** is excellent because they didn't commit war crimes. They committed something else. So, let's see the something else. What **transgressions** means in its base raw form is "a line has been crossed, a standard has been violated." If I draw a line up here on the floor and I say, "All right, I want you to stand on that side of the line, don't cross it, stay over there." And you all line up. Now, what's the first thing you're going to try to do? Cross the line. Why? Because the sin nature, the flesh works against law. Imagine yourself out on a desert island, you're all alone, it's just you. Can you get a ticket? Can you break a law? Can you get arrested? Why not? Because there's no basis against which to work. If Adam and Eve had been put in the Garden and God didn't give them any law, could they get in trouble? Could they have fallen? Of course not. See, the flesh needs something to work against, it needs a base and that something is law, a standard, a line. What did Paul say in Rom 7? Paul had a little problem with coveting, that was his pet sin, yet he says, "I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, "YOU SHALL NOT COVET." ⁸But sin, taking opportunity

through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law sin *is* dead.” See, the law was a base against which his sin nature operated and then he saw the line; he had a standard, that’s the idea with **transgressions**. There was a line and that line was crossed and it was crossed and it was crossed to the point God said, “All right, that’s it, enough crossing of the line and He’s decided to lower the paddle.”

Now what is the line being crossed by Judah? Remember, Judah is the southern kingdom, the kingdom was united under three kings: Saul for 40 years, David for 40 years and Solomon for 40 years. Then came Rehoboam and he implemented a terrible administrative policy and in just five short years he had a civil war on his hands and the kingdom divided. Rehoboam was a Judahite so he stayed in Jerusalem to rule in the south over Judah and part of the tribe of Benjamin. The northern kingdom of ten tribes, Israel, was ruled by Jeroboam and tension grew between the two Jewish kingdoms.

So **Judah** is in the south; they had the Temple in their territory, which means they had the visible presence of Shechinah Glory dwelling in the Holy of Holies, they had the Ark of the Covenant and in the Ark the Laws of Moses, they had the Levitical priesthood, the whole nine yards all down in the south, immediate access to God, immediate access to the book of God, Torah. The north, having broken away from the south, did they have these things? They didn’t have the Temple, they didn’t have the Ark of the Covenant, they didn’t have the Levitical priesthood, they didn’t have the Book of God, the Torah, so they shifted the base, just like America has done, and they shifted rather quickly. The first thing they did to accommodate the religious citizens was set up a false worship system, they made it convenience store religion, you could worship up north in Dan or down south in Bethel, but there was no reason to go down as far as Jerusalem. That solidified the kingdom, but in cutting people off from Jerusalem it cut people off from the Lord their God such that they went into apostasy very rapidly. But both nations actually left their base - both left the Lord their God because both rejected the Torah. So with the subject of the Torah broached we want to review the three great covenants of Torah, and by Torah here we just mean the first five books of the OT; Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, that’s the first division of the OT.

To review these covenants we have to review what is a covenant? It's very hard to break with the religiousity. People get real religious about covenants, till it's some amorphous meaningless blah, blah thing, who knows what it is. In fact, I was reading recently a Christian website that said, "Marriage is not a contract, it's a covenant." Now can you please explain what you mean? What are you talking about? See, it's all religious words with no content. Contentless Christianity. Now it's very stupid to say Marriage is not a contract because the Hebrew word covenant means 'contract.' Marriage is a legal contract between two people before God. God is the divine witness of the contract; the people at your wedding are the human witnesses to the contract. The vows, those are the legal terms, what you're agreeing to do for your husband or wife, that's contractual information. So marriage is a covenant, but I like to avoid all the contentless jargon and just say, biblically speaking marriage is a contract. The sign, by the way in marriage, in our day, is the ring. It's a reminder you're in a legally binding contract, no fooling around. So all the basic elements of a biblical contract, apart from a blood sacrifice, are present in the modern marriage contract.

Now the first great contract of the Torah is the Noahic or New World Covenant, that's Gen 9. God made a promise to all flesh never to flood the earth again with a global flood, that covenant is made with all flesh, it's made with Jewish flesh, Chinese flesh, American flesh, dog flesh, bird flesh, fish flesh, anything with the breath of life, God said, I promise this to you, "no global flood." And this covenant, if you think through all the implications, you will find is the basis of all stability in the cosmos, it's the reason we can go out and do scientific experiments and see patterns and make predictions, because if God doesn't control the whole universe then God doesn't control any of the universe, and there might be some particles out there that get loose, accrete, form a massive meteor which flies by earth and causes a global tide that swamps the earth and then He would break His promise of no global flood. So it's this contract that gives us stability in nature. If nature isn't stable then we would have no basis for science. How could you ever go out and do an experiment if things were changing. One day you throw the ball up, it comes down, the next day you throw it up and it goes into outer space. There's no predictability in a system like that. Science couldn't move an inch. As it is we as Bible believing Christians are the only people with a worldview that can account for why science works. Everybody uses it of course, but only

we can account for why it works. It works because of the sovereign word of God in the Noahic Covenant.

The second great covenant in Torah is the Abrahamic Covenant. This covenant is made with Jewish flesh, starting with Abraham; this is not made with all flesh, but a subset of all flesh. And that subset began with Abram. Gen 12. God called Abraham out of a pagan city of Ur and made certain promises: I will give you a land, a certain piece of real estate, (just happened to be in the center of the world), I will give you a seed, (the seed of the woman is going to come through you who is going to be the Savior), and I will make you a worldwide blessing, (the blessing that the world receives will be mediated by the Jewish nation). Now this is an unconditional contract, so we have here certain guarantees. God doesn't require any kind of behavior out of the Jewish nation. He's just going to give them these promises because of who and what He is, not because of who and what they are. And therefore it is a covenant of grace. Grace because it's unmerited. They didn't do anything to receive it; they can't do anything to lose it. Just like your salvation, salvation is by grace, you didn't do anything to receive it; you can't do anything to lose it. It's all of grace. Therefore, the Abrahamic Covenant being solely of God's grace is what is called a Royal Grant. The Royal Grant structure is a contractual form used in the Ancient Near East. We find this between various nations when the greater king will simply make promises to the lesser king, normally among the pagan nations it's as a reward, but not in the Bible. God as the Great King just made Israel blanket promises. The way you detect a royal grant is to look at the language, look at the mood of the verbs. If it's in the indicative mood it's a grant. The indicative mood is the mood of fact. It's just a statement of fact. "I went to the store," that's indicative, it's simply a statement of fact and in the Abrahamic God says in the indicative, I will give you a land, a seed and a worldwide blessing. So the Abrahamic Covenant is a Royal Grant.

The third great covenant in Torah is the Mosaic or Sinaitic Covenant. Mosaic because it came through Moses; Sinaitic because it was given at Mt Sinai. Now this covenant is significantly different from the Noahic and Abrahamic in that it is not in the indicative mood. It's in the imperative mood which is the mood of command. "Go to the store" is the imperative mood. It's not a statement of fact; it's a statement of command. So intrinsic to the very verb mood in these covenants is a major difference. In the Abrahamic you read, "I

will give you this and that..." but in the Mosaic, "If you do this then I will do that..." And that is not royal grant language, that is the language of the suzerainty-vassal treaty.

And so what we want to do very quickly is show how Amos is using different principles of judgment now that he's shifted from pagan Gentile nations to the Jewish nations. Gentile and Jewish nations are not judged on the same basis. The differences come out of these two great covenants. To get the difference across we want to quote from a student of ancient documents, Dr. Weinfeld. What he's pointing out is when you look at ancient documents you find these two different formats in history. One we said is the royal grant and the other is the suzerainty-vassal treaty. The royal grant structure is simply an unconditional promise of a master to a servant. The royal grant structure fits with the Abrahamic Covenant, Gen 12, Gen 15, the wording "I will do this and I will do that," is all grant language. But when you look at the suzerainty-vassal treaty documents, they are like the Mt Sinai language, "if you do this then I will do that." So he's pointing out the differences and he says, "While the 'treaty' constitutes an obligation of the vassal to his master, the suzerain, the 'grant' constitutes an obligation of the master to his servant. In the 'grant' the curse is directed towards the one who will violate the rights of the king's vassal, while in the treaty the curse is directed toward the vassal who will violate the rights of his king." See the difference? That's a fundamental difference. What that difference amounts to is that the Abrahamic Covenant is a royal grant, and in that, God cursed anyone who cursed Israel. That's Amos 1:3-2:3. Those nations cursed Israel by hideous war crimes and therefore God is cursing them for touching his royal people. On the other hand, now that we've shifted to Israel in Amos 2:4-16, the base of judgment has shifted. According to Weinfeld, the judgments now are based not on the Abrahamic but on the Mosaic Covenant which is a suzerainty-vassal treaty, and under that treaty God cursed Israel for violating the Law. Both Israeli kingdoms we're studying in Amos were under that Mosaic Law and because of repeated transgressions of that Law were coming under divine cursing.

Now, a question. Did that invalidate the Abrahamic promises? See, most Christians confuse these covenants and it leads to a very common error you know as loss of salvation. If you don't get these two contracts differentiated you'll be all messed up. The question is if God chose Israel under the

Abrahamic Covenant, does Israel lose their chosen status by violating the Mosaic Covenant? The answer is no. Nothing can change their chosen status because it's a royal grant, God simply said you are my people and this is what I am going to do for you. The Mosaic came along after that and God said, now here's what I want you to do for Me. But it was the Abrahamic Covenant that set up that relationship to begin with. Remember, they had a Father-Son relationship with God. And once they were in that Father-Son relationship then God said in effect, Son, this is how I want you to behave. He never said, and if you don't behave I'm going to drop you off at the nearest Child Protective Services. No, He said, inside that Father-Son relationship, if you want to rebel, I'm going to discipline you as a Father disciplines a Son. So it was the Abrahamic Covenant which set up the Mosaic. The first establishes the relationship, the second the expected behavior inside that relationship. The first gave them their position under the Great King who would protect their existence and the second set up their experience full of obligations to the Great King. To see this, turn to Exod 20 and look at vv 1-2. This is pre-Ten Commandments, God hasn't told them a thing to do. What's the first thing he says? Then God spoke all these words, saying, "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery." Is that indicative or imperative? It's indicative, it's Royal Grant language. The great suzerain is saying, look at what I did for you. Now we have a motive for obeying and as you read on the mood goes imperative. So, these covenants are different, that's important to see, but they are not totally independent of one another because it's the Abrahamic that is the basis for the Mosaic. Position first, experience second. So, that's the difference and that's how they are related.

And if you carry that over to the Christian life in the NT you see the same thing. God says, "You're saved," that's indicative, you're saved at the moment of faith alone in Christ alone and at that point you're a son, He's your Father. After that it's all imperative, do this, be filled by means of the Spirit, abide in Me and so forth, but if you disobey does that change the fact that you're His son? Not in the least. Even if we are faithless He is faithful. So the truths hold in both the Old and New Testaments. In the old they can be diagrammed like this:

BASIS OF JUDGMENTS IN AMOS 1-2

| | | |
|----------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Verses | Amos 1:3-2:3 | Amos 2:4-16 |
| Basis | Abrahamic | Mosaic |
| Type | Royal Grant | Suzerainty-Vassal Treaty |
| Language | "I will..." | "If...then..." |
| Mood | Indicative | Imperative |
| Action | God curses Israel's enemies | God curses Israel |

The language we read in Amos 2:4 is clearly referring back to the Mosaic Covenant. It's God cursing Israel. Before in 1:3-2:3 it was God cursing Israel's enemies.

So, let's look now at the rest of verse 4. The rest of verse 4 are the charges. Two concepts, each in Hebrew parallelism:

**Because they rejected the law of the LORD
And have not kept His statutes;**

**Their lies also have led them astray,
Those after which their fathers walked.**

Let's take up the first parallelism/ This is synonymous parallelism which means that the two lines there are basically saying the same thing, **Because they rejected the law of the LORD**, means the same thing as **And have not kept His statutes**. There are two ideas here but they are related. The first idea is that they transgressed the law. The word **law** in the Hebrew is *torah*. Torah can be the first five books of the OT, but it can also be the 613 laws of Moses. Here it's talking about the 613 laws of Moses because it's in parallel with the word **statutes**. These are the imperative commands in Exodus-Deuteronomy (e.g. Exod 15:26). If you add them up you get 613. And therefore we immediately think of the consequences of breaking His law, the blessings and cursings of Lev 26 and Deut 28. We've been over this and over this. In Lev 26 and Deut 28 God says, if you obey here's what I'm going to do for you, but if you disobey then I'm going to curse you. And so the prophets are like God's prosecuting attorney's. Amos 2:4 is rooted back in the Torah, back in Exodus, back in Deuteronomy. It's all law code; they're calling the nation back to the Deuteronomic law code. They're not bringing in a new social

order; they're God's prosecuting attorney's. Court is in session and when we get into chapter 3 we will expand our understanding of the judicial proceedings of the ancient near east because that format is crucial to understanding the prophet's role as prosecuting attorneys. And one prophet comes along and says, "Stage one of Leviticus 26 cursings is starting in my day" and then another prophet will come along and say, you people have violated the treaty, now what I'm doing in my ministry is invoking stage two of Leviticus 26 and then another prophet would come along and he'd say I'm invoking stage three. So all these prophets that were raised up by God were actually His voice of prosecution. Stage five was exile which is what Amos is declaring. Already in his day, 175 years in advance, he predicts Judah will reach stage five and go into Exile. So, the prophets prosecute the nation on the basis of the Law. They are not people who were just raised up because the society was bad. Society was bad but why was society bad? Because the people were violating the Law treaty. So how is society going to get good? A return to the Law treaty.

The second idea is that they **rejected the law**. Notice how it says that in v 4, you rejected the law. It's one thing to break the law, it's another to reject the law. If you reject one law *ipso facto* you accept another law or standard. See the human heart is like a vacuum, it will be filled by something. And so when a person rejects God and His word as the standard, they immediately accept another standard. There's no in-between, there's no neutrality. You either come under God's authority or you reject His authority and come under another authority. If you reject one authority there's a vacuum created in the human heart and it just sucks in the world around you and the next synonymous parallelism describes what they sucked in.

**Their lies also have led them astray,
Those after which their fathers walked.**

Now, what is a **lie**? Something that's not true. What is truth? That which God says is truth. What is a lie? Something which contradicts what God says. Evolution. Is the grand theory of evolution a lie? Yes. The Bible says God created in six, 24 hour days not 14.6 billion years. The order is different, there's a conflict in the origin of matter, there's a conflict in the origin of evil, there are contradictions all over the place between those two views of origins. Evolution is a lie. But the interesting thing here is the word **lies** or "falsehoods" is in parallelism with something **after which they walked**.

Turn over to Deut 13 to get the idea of this word walked. We want to track down exactly what it is they were walking after. In Deut 13, verse 4, ⁴“You shall follow the LORD your God and fear Him; and you shall keep His commandments, listen to His voice, serve Him, and cling to Him.” Now flip back to Deut 4, verse 3. This is a reference back to an event in Numb 25 when they did not walk after the Lord. “Your eyes have seen what the LORD has done in the case of Baal-peor, for all the men who followed [there’s our word walked after, same word] they walked after Baal-peor, the LORD your God has destroyed them from among you.” Now who is Baal-peor? He’s an idol, a false god. Now flip over to chapter 11, verse 28, “and the curse, if you do not listen to the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside from the way which I am commanding you today, by following [there’s our word again for walked after] by walking after other gods which you have not known.” What’s Amos getting at? The concept of **walk after** means to subordinate yourself to a suzerain, a great king. If we look at a letter to a king of Mari we find the word used this way, “There is no king who is strong for himself. Ten to fifteen kings walk after Hammurabi, king of Babylon; likewise after Rim-Sin, king of Larsa; likewise after Ibalpil, king of Eshnunna.” What were the Judahites doing? Walking after another suzerain, another god, a false god, they had rejected YHWH as their suzerain. What did we say happens in the human heart? The human being is made to worship. If we reject one principle or standard we immediately suck in another principle or standard. This is why everyone either worships the Creator or the creature. It’s not that some people are religious and some people are not. All people are religious, atheist, agnostic, Christian Buddhist. It’s a matter of what they worship. And the Judahites had rejected YHWH and were worshipping false gods. If you turn to Hosea 2, vv 8 and 13, (Hosea was written about the same time), you can see one of the false gods they worshipped in Amos’ day, Baal. So the falsehoods, the lies they walked after are false gods. That’s why the ESV translates this, “This isn’t just “Oh yeah, we broke a few laws, no, this is we rejected the whole system presented in Torah and adopt another system.” What’s the very first law in the Ten Commandments? “Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.” What’s this? Violation of rule number one. It is the most fundamental rule.

One of the questions that’s raised at this point is, “Why did they get in this fix of following after false gods?” Anyone know the answer to that? From the OT text? Because they did not complete the Conquest. What was the big idea,

the very controversial idea we studied in the Conquest? The idea of Holy War. Were the rules of engagement the same in the land as they were outside the land? No, they differed didn't they. What was the rule outside the land? Turn over to Deut 20. Verse 10, "When you approach a city to fight against it, you shall offer it terms of peace." If you look at verse 15, you see these are the cities outside the land, "Thus you shall do to all the cities that are very far from you, which are not of the cities of these nations nearby." Verse 16-18 give a different set of procedures. ¹⁶"Only in the cities of these peoples that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance," now we're talking inside the Promised Land, "you shall not leave alive anything that breathes. ¹⁷"But you shall utterly destroy them, the Hittite and the Amorite, the Canaanite and the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite, as the LORD your God has commanded you," Why? Why such stiff procedures? ¹⁸so that they may not teach you to do according to all their detestable things which they have done for their gods, so that you would sin against the LORD your God." Idolatry, worship of false gods. We are so susceptible to idolatry that God says I want you to utterly wipe out anything that breathes. It's all corrupted in there. But they didn't complete the Conquest and so as they rejected the Lord, they sucked up to the pagan gods and goddesses and walked after them.

And so we come to the judgment in verse 5. We've seen the Indictment, the Charges, now the Judgment, "**So I will send fire upon Judah And it will consume the citadels of Jerusalem.**" Fire was a key instrument of destruction in ancient warfare. You can read volumes on the use of fire to destroy cities. **Fire will consume the citadels or fortresses of Jerusalem.** Jerusalem means "city of peace, so the city of peace will become a city of war. When did this happen? In 586BC. 150 years after Amos' prophecy Jerusalem was conquered by the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar. This was the 5th degree of cursing in Lev 26 and Deut 28. Babylon is the first of four Gentile kingdoms discussed in the Book of Daniel. Babylon was raised up as a nation to discipline Israel for covenant rebellion. Let's turn to Jer 39:8. Jeremiah was a contemporary of Daniel and he went into Exile to Babylon, Verse 8, "The Chaldeans [Babylonians] also burned with fire the king's palace and the houses of the people, and they broke down the walls of Jerusalem." And finally, 2 Kgs 25. Verse 8. "Now on the seventh day of the fifth month, which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. ⁹He burned the house of the LORD, the king's

house, and all the houses of Jerusalem; even every great house he burned with fire. ¹⁰So all the army of the Chaldeans who *were with* the captain of the guard broke down the walls around Jerusalem.

At that time Ezekiel tells us that the Lord would no longer put up with the iniquity of His people and after many warnings by the prophets, the Shechinah Glory departed from the Solomonic Temple (Ezek 7:20-22; 8:6; 11:22-23). And though the Lord disciplines His covenant people on the basis of the Mosaic Covenant, He will restore them on the basis of the Abrahamic Covenant. And at that time Jesus the Messiah will return and re-establish His Temple and the Shechinah Glory will return to indwell the Temple in the exact reverse route He departed (Ezek 40-46).

²⁰They transformed the beauty of His ornaments into pride, and they made the images of their abominations *and* their detestable things with it; therefore I will make it an abhorrent thing to them. ²¹I will give it into the hands of the foreigners as plunder and to the wicked of the earth as spoil, and they will profane it. ²²I will also turn My face from them, and they will profane My secret place; then robbers will enter and profane it.

⁶And He said to me, “Son of man, do you see what they are doing, the great abominations which the house of Israel are committing here, so that I would be far from My sanctuary? But yet you will see still greater abominations.”

²²Then the cherubim lifted up their wings with the wheels beside them, and the glory of the God of Israel hovered over them. ²³The glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city and stood over the mountain which is east of the city.

[Back To The Top](#)

Copyright (c) Fredericksburg Bible Church 2009