

**God Reveals His Secrets to His Prophets**Lesson  
**35**  
Summary*Amos 3; The Lord revealeth his secrets unto his servants the prophets—Because of Israel's rejection of prophets, and espousal of evil, the nation is overwhelmed by an adversary.**Amos 7; Amos relates how he was called of God to be a prophet—He prophesies the captivity of Israel.**Amos 8; Amos prophesies the downfall of Israel—There will be a famine of hearing the word of the Lord.**Amos 9; Israel shall be sifted among all nations—In the last days, they will be gathered again into their own land, and it shall become productive.**Joel 2; War and desolation precede the Second Coming—The sun and the moon shall be darkened—The Lord will pour out his Spirit upon all flesh—There will be dreams and visions.**Joel 3; All nations shall be at war—Multitudes stand in the valley of decision as the Second Coming draws near—The Lord will dwell in Zion.***Supplemental  
Holy Land and  
Jewish  
insights:**

**More to a Word:** An oft repeated verse of Amos is the Lord's instruction that he needs his prophets to reveal his word and will. "Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." (*Amos 3:7*) Since the Biblical Hebrew has such a small vocabulary, it is fascinating to know that words with related meanings are placed in precise order for a rainbow of meanings. Secrets, counsel, advice, insight are all related in meaning!

**Relevant Today:** "AMOS, the shepherd, was called from following his flock to become a prophet of Israel. His prophecies began two years before the great earthquake in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah, and Jeroboam, king of Israel, in the eighth century B.C.E." "The third of the twelve Minor Prophets, Amos preached a powerful message that sounds as relevant in the Western world of the twentieth century as it did in Erez Israel in Amos' own day." (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

**Warning to Israel's Neighbors:** "The Book of Amos has three distinct parts. The first prophecy is a warning to Israel's neighbors -- Syria and others --- condemning their violence and aggression, especially against Israel. The exile and destruction foretold for the nations of the Near East were prophesied for Israel too, for similar sins against its own people." (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

**Selfishness of the Wealthy:** "The second section condemns the selfishness of the wealthy who regarded their affluence as a sign of God's favor. The idle rich oppressed and ignored the misery of the masses of poor people. Amos cried out against the careful observance of the Temple ritual when it ignored morality as an integral part of religion. Ritual alone does not please God, who demands that it go hand in hand with mercy and compassion." (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

**Fortelling Disasters:** "The third section foretells disaster --- earthquake, pestilence, famine, and the ultimate calamity of exile, with Israel scattered among the nations unless they would return to God. The book closes with the promise of reconciliation --- that God will rebuild the fallen Tabernacle of David, and that his people will inherit all the land (9:12-15): "And I will turn the captivity of my people Israel and they shall build the waste cities and they shall inhabit them . . . and they shall no more be plucked up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God." (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

**"How Odd of God to Choose the Jews:"** "Israel may not take for granted that God will never be angry with them, no matter what they do, just because they are the Chosen People. In fact, the prophet Amos pointed out that

it is precisely because Israel is special and has a responsibility towards God that they are often punished for their sins more severely than other nations. However, it is unimaginable that God will ever reject His people completely. "And yet, for all that . . . I will not cast them away . . . to destroy them utterly and to break My covenant with them, for I am with them, the Lord their God" (Leviticus 26:4)." (*Encyclopaedia Judaica Jr.*)

**Jewish Doctrine of the End of Days:** ". . . (or eschatology as it is known) teaches that at a certain point in time God will drastically change the nature of the world and establish His kingdom over mankind. Originally, the Jewish conception of the End of Days was that after a time of suffering, the "Day of the Lord" would usher in an era of strength and glory for the people of Israel. But in the period before the Babylonian exile, the prophets warned that unless Israel repented its evil ways, the "Day of the Lord" would be one of punishment, not reward. Thus, Amos wrote: "Woe to you that desire the day of the Lord! . . . the day of the Lord shall be darkness, not light, gloomy, devoid of brightness" (5:18, 20). Prophets of this period, most notably Isaiah, predicted that a remnant of Israel would survive this day of destruction, and would form a new covenant with God. Isaiah introduced the theme of the eventual arrival of an ideal king of Judah, laying the foundations for the messianism which characterized later Jewish conceptions of the End of Days." (*Encyclopaedia Judaica Jr.*)

**New Wine, Old Wine, Names of the Lord:** There is a verse in the Book of Joel that bridges his day when the Lord was known to the end of days when he would not be known. The Lord has many names, one of them being "Wine" and another one, "New Wine." "Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl, all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine, for it is cut off from your mouth." (*Joel 1:5*) In the Meridian of times, the Apostle Luke seems to amplify this metaphor of the Lord being "New Wine." "No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better." (*Luke 5:39*)

**Wine at a Wedding:** It is generally considered that aging makes wine better, hence old wine is better than the new. At a festivity, the oldest, best wine is given first and then the more recent wine is used. When wine ran out at a marriage feast in Cana, Jesus was asked by his mother for assistance. It might be considered that he referred to one of his names (New Wine) by indicating that his time (fulfillment of New Wine) had not yet come. (*John 2:3-4*) He graciously, turned water into wine (very new) and it was better than the old. The prophetic metaphor of New Wine was fulfilled when Jesus, at the Last Supper, instituted a new meaning for the old ordinance of "wine and bread." Jews still have a memory of that ritual as they pour, bless and sip wine followed by breaking, blessing and eating a piece of bread at the beginning of every Sabbath (Kiddush).

**New Meaning for Old Ordinance:** The "wine/bread" prayers anticipate a future redemption greater than being redeemed from Egypt at the first Passover. The only time Jews will break, bless and eat a piece of bread first, followed by pouring, blessing and sipping wine last is when children at the traditional Passover meal (Seder) find the "hidden piece of bread" (Afikomen). It was that piece of bread that Jesus was referring to as he blessed bread and wine, giving a new meaning to an old ordinance . . . hence, the New Wine. "And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." (*1 Corinthians 11:24-25*)

**Less Can Be More:** As minimal as some of the ancient prophet's writings were, they still show the deep recognition and symbolism of the Savior's mission. Short Biblical books are not a measure of the Prophet's visions and understandings.

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