

## INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF

# Amos and Obadiah

**What are they?** Minor prophets, between Hosea and Joel

**Who was Amos?** A herdsman from Tekoa in Judah (750 B.C.), he turned north to prophesy against the ten tribes and king of Israel just prior to their capture by Assyria. He was told to pack up and take his “drip” (or “spout”) back to Judah (1:1; 7:10-17).

**What is Obadiah?** Shortest Old Testament book, this single chapter is an oracle against Edom and the pride of her stronghold, Petra (vv. 1-4). The unknown prophet foretells about an old struggle: Jacob will recover lands from Esau before “the kingdom shall be the LORD’s” (vv. 15-21).

**“For three transgressions of Gaza, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment . . . I will send a fire . . .”:**

This formula is repeated eight times against Damascus, Gaza, Tyrus, Edom, Ammon, Moab, and Judah (Amos 1:1—2:6). More detailed critique, occupying most of the book, is reserved for Israel (2:7 ff.)—because of her sin against a privileged relation with God (3:2).

**Amos in a sentence:** The God who judges all nations judges His people Israel uniquely because of her sins of luxury, formality, and injustice, but He will someday replant the house of Israel in her land forever.

**Obadiah in a sentence:** While Edom (Esau) faces calamity (vv. 1-9) because of callous conduct toward Jerusalem and Judah (vv. 10-14), deliverance and holiness shall be to Mt. Zion and Israel (Jacob) shall possess their possessions (vv. 17ff).

**What were Israel’s sins?**

- economic oppression, injustice (2:6, 7; 3:10; 4:1; 5:11, 12; 6:12; 8:4-6)
- religious formalism (4:4, 5; 5:21-25; 8:5)
- luxury, pride, ease (3:15; 6:1-8)
- violence (3:10; 6:3)
- rejecting God (3:2)
- idolatry (5:26)
- incest (2:7)

**How had they been punished?**

- hunger, famine, crop failure (4:6, 9)
- drouth; thirst (4:7, 8)
- defeat by Egypt (4:10, 11)

**With what result?** “Yet you have not returned to Me” — 5 times (4:6-11)

**What to do next?**

- “Prepare to meet your God, O Israel!” (4:12).
- “Seek Me and live” (5:4-6).
- “Seek good and not evil” (5:14, 15).
- “Let justice run down like water, and righteousness like a mighty stream” (5:24).

**What was ahead?**

- day of the Lord (5:18-20)
- destruction in the city (3:11-15; 6:8-14)
- trembling/darkness in the land (8:8-10; 9:5)
- famine of God’s Word (8:11-13)
- captivity beyond Damascus (5:27)
- no escape for sinners (9:1-8)

**Visual predictions of punishment:**

locust swarms, fire/drought, plumb line, fruit basket, altar (7:1-9; 8:1-3; 9:1ff)

**Prophetic purpose:** When God reveals, then prophets must speak; people should not be surprised when all comes to pass (3:3-8).

## Remarkable Forecasts About God’s People

“I will destroy [the sinful kingdom] from the face of the earth; yet I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob,” says the LORD” (9:8).

“I will . . . sift the house of Israel among all nations, as grain is sifted in a sieve; yet not the smallest grain shall fall to the ground” (9:9).

“I will raise up the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down, and repair its damages; I will raise up its ruins, and rebuild it as in the days of old” (9:11).

“I will bring back the captives of My people Israel; they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them; they shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them” (9:14).

“I will plant them in their land, and no longer shall they be pulled up from the land I have given them,” says the LORD your God” (9:15).