

Chapter 4

Amos 4: [1] Hear this word, ye kine of Bashan, that are in the mountain of Samaria, which oppress the poor, which crush the needy, which say to their masters, Bring, and let us drink.

[2] The Lord GOD hath sworn by his holiness, that, lo, the days shall come upon you, that he will take you away with hooks, and your posterity with fishhooks.

[3] And ye shall go out at the breaches, every cow at that which is before her; and ye shall cast them into the palace, saith the LORD.

1. The Company at Samaria

1-3

Amos was a herdsman of the sheepfold and a gatherer of sycamore fruit.

Amos did not call himself a shepherd or a farmer, much less calling himself a prophet.

But God called Amos to stand before a nation and declare the truth of God's Word.

Amos says "*hear this word*", which indicates he has been given a message from God to deliver.

God is speaking directly to those who "*oppress the poor and crush the needy.*"

In other words, they have gained their wealth and possessions dishonestly.

This devious crowd is called the "*kine of Bashan, that are in the mountain of Samaria.*"

Bashan was a fertile land of pasture and rolling hills.

"*Kine*" is a plural of cow.

Cattle are placed in a field and they expect to eat everything they see.

Often times cattle grow fat on the land.

In other words, these people have a hunger and appetite for pleasure and luxury.

They are part of a good breed but they are preoccupied with physical pleasure and are indifferent to others needs.

In **Psalm 22:12**, David spoke of the strong bulls of Bashan.

Here Amos is speaking of the "*kine of Bashan*" and probably is speaking to the prominent women of society.

The women were saying to their husbands "*bring, and let us drink.*"

In other words the women of society had plenty but were demanding more in order to pursue pleasures.

The women's demands for luxuries drove the husbands to practice injustice to satisfy the appetite at home.

In verse 2, God makes a sure promise.

God swears by His own holiness, for He can swear by no greater, Hebrews 6:13.

God promises that judgment will come upon the "*kine of Bashan*" and the nation of Israel.

When cattle are fattened oftentimes they are led to the slaughter.

God says that He will deliver Israel into captivity by an enemy with hooks and their children with fishhooks.

Many times an enemy would siege the city, strip naked the captives and attach them together by hooks.

Then they would journey hundreds of miles tied together by poles, ropes and hooks.

* Like a fish taken out of water and put on a stringer, Israel will be delivered into captivity.

Israel will be stripped of her wealth, clothing and possessions and taken away into captivity.

Israel will be led out through the broken down walls of their conquered cities.

Like a cow leaving their pasture through a breach in the fence.

God was once the protector of Israel now He is their judge.

* There was a young boy who was trapped in his car stuck on a railroad track. A train was approaching. A man came to the crossing and freed the boy from the car saving his life. Years later the same boy was found guilty of murder and was being sentenced to death. The young man said to the judge, "Don't you remember me? You saved my life on the railroad tracks ten years ago." The judge said, "Yes, I remember you, but then I was your savior--now I am your judge."

Amos 4: [4] Come to Bethel, and transgress; at Gilgal multiply transgression; and bring your sacrifices every morning, and your tithes after three years: [5] And offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven, and proclaim and publish the free offerings: for this liketh you, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord GOD.

2. The Corruption of Service

4-5

God says "*come to Bethel, and transgress.*" God is mocking Israel's corruption.

"*Bethel*" means "*the house of God.*"

It was at Bethel where God renewed His covenant previously made to Abraham unto Jacob, **Gen 28:15**. Jacob was so impacted that he established an altar and called it Bethel.

Hundreds of years later, King Jeroboam would not allow the people to go to Jerusalem.

The kingdom of Israel had divided and Jeroboam set up golden calves for Israel to serve, **1K 12:27-30**.

This was a transgression against God.

God also mockingly says "*at Gilgal multiply transgression.*"

Gilgal is where Israel crossed over the Jordan into the promised land.

It was at Gilgal that Israel set up stones for a memorial of what God had done for them.

Now Israel has forgotten what the Lord had done and is serving false gods.

Remember, God kicked the former inhabitants out of the Promised land, because they served false gods.

Now God's own people are doing the same as the wicked Canaanites that God had removed.

The church should not be serving as the world does.

In most people's minds, some form of religion is a very good thing.

They believe that God is pleased with all religious practices.

But that is not true, **Amos 5:21-27**.

The only thing that is pleasing to God is a genuine, thankful and obedient response to God.

God says you have not tithed or given to me, but you faithfully serve gods that are counterfeit.

The tithe was to be given to God of the first 10% of income.

Then every 3 years, Israel would also tithe to God of their increase, **Deut 14:28**.

But Israel's heart is in building, giving and serving false gods.

In verse 5, Israel's offerings and sacrifices were to be pure but they were offered with "*leaven.*"

"*Leaven*" represents sin.

God knew that Israel's heart was not in serving Him, **Matt 15:8-9**.

Israel is disobedient from their heart, in their actions and they like it.

* We often measure worship by what is pleasing to us or how it makes us feel.

* But worship should be measured by how it honors God.

Please notice all of these sacrifices and offerings but the sin offering was never mentioned.

Any religious practice without a sense of sin is an offense to God.

We should never feel good about grace until we have first felt bad about our sin.

Amos 4: [6] And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD. [7] And also I have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest: and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered. [8] So two or three cities wandered unto one city, to drink water; but they were not satisfied: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD. [9] I have smitten you with blasting and mildew: when your gardens and your vineyards and your fig trees and your olive trees increased, the palmerworm devoured them: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD. [10] I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt: your young men have I slain with the sword, and have taken away your horses; and I have made the stink of your camps to come up unto your nostrils: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD. [11] I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD. [12] Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel. [13] For, lo, he that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is his thought, that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth, The LORD, The God of hosts, is his name.

3. The Chastening By a Sovereign God 6-13 *Hebrews 12:6 "whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth."*

In Amos' day, Israel has long been enjoying times of prosperity, and thus they don't think they need God. As a result of the sin of Israel, God begins to bring judgment and weaken the nation of Israel. God allows disaster to come in order to get Israel's attention. Anything that comes to God's people Israel, must first come through the hand of God.

In verse 6, we learn that God "also" gave Israel "cleanness of teeth."
This is not the blessings of good dental hygiene.
This is God allowing a famine to come to Israel and causing there to be no bread in all the cities. Though this time of famine came to Israel, they did not stop to see that God sent it and they continued right on. Thus God says "*yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.*"

In verses 7 and 8, God says that He withheld the rain from Israel. Within 3 months of the harvest God allowed a drought and the harvest of the crops decimated. But Israel continued right on.

Then God sent one city got rain and other cities got no rain and those cities withered away. Again Israel did not consider that God sent the drought's. Thus God says "*yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.*"

In verse 9, God says that He sent both blasting and mildew. The blasting was from excessive scorching sun and mighty eastern winds that dried up the land. The mildew then was from excessive times of dampness and fungus killed the crops. But Israel continued right on.

Just when it looked like their gardens, vineyards, fig trees and olive trees would increase, God sent locusts. Again Israel did not take into account that God was allowing these things to happen to get their attention. What Israel was calling the results of "Global Warming" was actually "God's Warning." Thus God says "*yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.*"

In verse 10, God sent "*pestilence*" or plagues unto the people of Israel. God allowed events to happen to cause Israel to go into times of battle and war and their young men were slain.

The horses or their strength and economy were severely impacted.

The camps of their soldiers were made to "stink" of corruption in leadership and of dead corpses.

Again Israel did not judge that God was allowing these events to cause them to repent of turning away from Him.

Thus God says "*yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.*"

In verse 11, God allowed some of Israel's cities to be overthrown as Sodom and Gomorrah.

God allowed a remnant to be like a firebrand glowing and plucked out of the midst of the fire of judgment.

Yet Israel did not appreciate God's preservation.

God says for the 5th time, which is the number of grace, "*yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.*"

God had warned Israel in *Deut 11: 13 And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, [14] That I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil. [15] And I will send grass in thy fields for thy cattle, that thou mayest eat and be full. [16] Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them; [17] And then the LORD's wrath be kindled against you, and he shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit; and lest ye perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD giveth you.*

But Israel would no longer believe God's Word nor His Prophets.

Deut 28: [21] The LORD shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee, until he have consumed thee from off the land, whither thou goest to possess it. [22] The LORD shall smite thee with a consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning, and with the sword, and with blasting, and with mildew; and they shall pursue thee until thou perish.[23] And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron.[24] The LORD shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed. [25] The LORD shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies: thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them: and shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth.[26] And thy carcase shall be meat unto all fowls of the air, and unto the beasts of the earth, and no man shall fray them away. [27] The LORD will smite thee with the botch of Egypt, and with the emerods, and with the scab, and with the itch, whereof thou canst not be healed. [28] The LORD shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart: [29] And thou shalt grope at noonday, as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways: and thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore, and no man shall save thee. [30] Thou shalt betroth a wife, and another man shall lie with her: thou shalt build an house, and thou shalt not dwell therein: thou shalt plant a vineyard, and shalt not gather the grapes thereof. [31] Thine ox shall be slain before thine eyes, and thou shalt not eat thereof: thine ass shall be violently taken away from before thy face, and shall not be restored to thee: thy sheep shall be given unto thine enemies, and thou shalt have none to rescue them. [32] Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another people, and thine eyes shall look, and fail with longing for them all the day long: and there shall be no might in thine hand. [33] The fruit of thy land, and all thy labours, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed alway: [34] So that thou shalt be mad for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.[35] The LORD shall smite thee in the knees, and in the legs, with a sore botch that cannot be healed, from the sole of thy foot unto the top of thy head. [36] The LORD shall bring thee, and thy king which thou shalt set over thee, unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known; and there shalt thou serve other gods, wood and stone. [37] And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword, among all nations whither the LORD shall lead thee. [38] Thou shalt carry much seed out into the field, and shalt gather but little in; for the locust shall consume it. [39] Thou shalt plant vineyards, and dress them, but shalt neither drink of the wine, nor gather the grapes; for the worms shall eat them. [40] Thou shalt have olive trees throughout all thy coasts, but thou shalt not anoint thyself with the oil; for thine olive shall cast his fruit. [41] Thou shalt beget sons and daughters, but thou shalt not enjoy them; for they shall go into captivity. [42] All thy trees and fruit of thy land shall the locust consume.

[60] Moreover he will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt, which thou wast afraid of; and they shall cleave unto thee. [61] Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written in the book of this law, them will the LORD bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed. [62] And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude; because thou wouldest not obey the voice of the LORD thy God. [63] And it shall come to pass, that as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it.

God help!

Israel has rejected the truth. God was once their Savior now He is their Judge.

Look at verse 12, God says because of your sin and unwillingness to repent, "***prepare to meet thy God.***"

This is a serious challenge. Israel thinks she can stand without God.

What will Israel do, when the golden calves of Bethel and Dan cannot deliver Israel?

This is also a summons. Israel has an appointment to stand trial and is found guilty.

In verse 13, God is Omnipotent. He is the all powerful Creator of all.

God is Omniscient, as He knows all things.

God is Omnipresent, as He is Sovereignly ruling over all things.

"The Lord, The God of hosts, is his name."

If only people would repent, they would find that God is a loving and forgiving God.

But they have ignored Him and once when He stood as their Savior, now He stands as their judge!