

A Vision of Blessing for Israel

Amos 9:11-15

Amos 9:11-15 - *“On that day 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, ¹² that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and all the Gentiles who are called by My name,” says the Lord who does this thing.*

¹³ *“Behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord, “when the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him who sows seed. The mountains shall drip with sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it. ¹⁴ 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. ¹⁵ 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.”*

Background Notes

In our outline of Amos, chapters 7-9 consist of six visions. The sixth and final vision is the vision of blessing in Amos 9:11-15. Some commentaries on Amos say there are five visions, and that verses 11-15 are an epilogue or closing to the book. That’s a possibility, because if you outline the book in that way, all eight prophecies (chapters 1-2), all three sermons (chapters 3-6), and all five visions (chapters 7-9) are prophecies, sermons, and visions of judgment.

If verses 11-15 are the record of another vision, it was not a vision of judgment like the rest. It was rather a vision of blessing. Furthermore, the other five visions began with the words *“the Lord showed me”* or *“I saw,”* whereas verse 11 began with the words *“on that day.”* However, for our simple outline, we’ve chosen to call this a sixth vision - even though it is a vision of blessing! In any case, it is a prophetic vision of the future.

Doctrinal Points

1. In the future, the throne of David will be re-established.

That the throne of David will be re-established is the point of verses 11-12. The “tabernacle” or “tent” of David is a reference to the dynasty of David. That dynasty was damaged when the United Kingdom split apart after the reign of Solomon. But that fallen dynasty will be repaired and rebuilt in the future. Notice verse 11: *“as in the days of old”* - the days when Judah and Israel were united under a king in the royal bloodline of David.

Is this prophecy being fulfilled now? No, we believe the fulfillment is future. Let’s be careful not to “spiritualize” this passage and say it is a reference to the kingdom of God now. It’s true that the Lord is King now, and He is seated on His

throne in Heaven, but in the future the Lord will return to earth and set up His millennial kingdom. At that time the Davidic throne will literally be re-established. Jesus Christ is a literal descendant in the bloodline of David, and He will literally reign on the earth and over the earth for 1000 years. (Read Revelation 20.) The kingdom will be centered in the New Jerusalem, but its scope will reach over the Gentile nations around the world (v12).

At the first Church Council in Jerusalem, in Acts 15:17 the apostle James quoted Amos 9:11-12. *“And after they had become silent, James answered, saying, “Men and brethren, listen to me: ¹⁴ Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. ¹⁵ And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written: ¹⁶ ‘After this I will return and will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins. And I will set it up; ¹⁷ so that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, even all the Gentiles who are called by My name, says the Lord who does all these things.”*

The Jerusalem Church Council was discussing the status of Gentiles in the Church. James' point was **not** that the Amos prophecy was being fulfilled at that time. His point was that believing Gentiles should be included in the Church **as Gentiles**, without going through the regulations of becoming Jews. Why? Because the prophecy of Amos indicated that God's program for the future included Gentiles. In the future, the throne of David will be re-established.

2. In the future, the Land of Israel will be replenished. Verse 13,

“Behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord, “when the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him who sows seed. The mountains shall drip with sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it” (v13).

The land of Israel today is very productive. It's absolutely phenomenal how productive even the most barren land can be when it is irrigated and properly cultivated. So does the amazing productivity of modern Israel mean that verse 13 is being fulfilled today? No! It's only a foretaste of what's to come! When the Lord returns to earth to set up His kingdom, the land of Israel will be so replenished that farmers will literally begin planting a new crop as soon as the former crop is harvested. In that future time the prophecy of Isaiah 35 will be fulfilled, and the desert will blossom like a rose.

This is the blessing that God promised His people long ago, in Leviticus 26:3-6, if they would follow Him. The prophet Joel also prophesied of this time of great blessing upon the Land in the future. *“And it will come to pass in that day that the mountains shall drip with new wine. The hills shall flow with milk, and all the brooks of Judah shall be flooded with water. A fountain shall flow from the house of the Lord. And water the Valley of Acacias” (Joel 3:18).*

This time of great blessing will be fulfilled **literally** in the Land of Israel. In the future, the Land of Israel will be replenished.

3. In the future, the people of Israel will be restored.

“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. 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” (v14-15).

Has this part of the prophetic vision of Amos already been fulfilled? Was it fulfilled when the Jews returned from their captivity in Babylon? No, it certainly wasn't fulfilled then, because in verse 15 God promised, *“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.”*

The Jewish people certainly were not *planted permanently* in the Land after they returned from their captivity in Babylon. Maybe this prophecy is being partially fulfilled today, with the Jewish people returning to their homeland after so many years - from countries all over the world. Once again, however, what we see today is only a foretaste of what's to come! Jewish people are returning to the Land, and the nation of Israel is once again a reality, but the peace that is prophesied here has not yet come.

Furthermore, Scripture indicates that hard times are ahead for the nation of Israel, especially during the Tribulation period. However, in spite of the difficulties during that time, the Jewish people will continue to return to the Land – and many of them will return to the Lord! When the Lord returns to earth to set up His earthly kingdom, there will be peace and security and prosperity for this restored remnant of the Jewish people. Those people are the “all Israel” that will be saved, according to Romans 11:26.

Romans 11 speaks of a great spiritual revival among the Jewish people in the future. We don't have time to read the whole chapter, but here's the conclusion to the apostle Paul's argument that God still has a plan for the Jewish people: Romans 11:25-27, *“For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. ²⁶ And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: “The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob, ²⁷ for this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins”(Romans 11:25-27).*

Let's be very careful not spiritualize away the Israel of Romans 11 and say that the Romans 11 prediction is being fulfilled in the Church. ***The Church is not “the New Israel.”*** In the future, the people of Israel will be restored.

Practical Application

Don't confuse “figurative language” and the “spiritualization” of Scripture!

This may not be the most exciting practical application, as we come to the end of our studies on Amos. However, it's very important not to confuse "figurative language" and the "spiritualization" of Scripture. It's a very practical point for properly interpreting Scripture. ***Don't confuse figurative language and the spiritualization of Scripture.***

Suppose you were to ask me what we're going to do for vacation this summer, and I told you that our family is meeting at a Christian camp "where the sun always shines, and every meal is a banquet, and the speaker is out of this world!" Obviously I've used some descriptive "figurative language." You've recognized that, and you understand why I've used it. You understand that I intended to convey to you that it's a wonderful Christian camp, and we're looking forward to a great family vacation.

But now suppose you decide to "spiritualize" my statement about the camp. You decide that I didn't mean a literal Christian camp here on earth. No, I actually meant Heaven, where the whole family of God will meet someday for a wonderful everlasting vacation from our labors here on earth.

When you spiritualized my statement, you did more than (correctly) understand that I used "figurative language" in my statement about the camp. You ***wrongly*** "spiritualized" my statement – to make it mean something that I did not at all intend to say.

How does this relate to Amos 9:11-15? Be careful not to confuse the "figurative language" with "spiritualization." Is it figurative language? Yes. Should it be spiritualized? No! Look at verse 13 again: "*Behold, the days are coming,*" says the Lord, "*when the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him who sows seed. The mountains shall drip with sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it.*"

Obviously Amos used figurative language here. The plowman is not literally going to drive his tractor over the grain that's ready to be harvested, and wine is not going to literally flow down the mountainside. This is *figurative language*. We understand that Amos intended to say that a great time was coming when the Land will be very productive. But to spiritualize this verse (as some do), and say the land of blessing is the Church, the so-called "New Israel," and to spiritualize the people to all believers with no future restoration of the Jewish people, and to spiritualize the restored Davidic dynasty on earth to Christ's heavenly kingdom - that's certainly ***not*** what Amos intended!

Some spiritualization of Scripture is legitimate, such as the use of "types" in the Old Testament and parables in the New Testament. But ***be careful not to spiritualize predictive prophecy***, as here in Amos 9:11-15.

Don't confuse figurative language and the spiritualization of Scripture!