

NOVEMBER - 14-20, 2022

Amos; Obadiah

“SEEK THE LORD”, AND YE SHALL LIVE

Summary: *Amos 1. Amos shows the Lord’s judgments upon Syria, the Philistines, Tyre, Edom, and Ammon.*

Amos 2. The Lord will pour out judgments upon Moab, Judah, and Israel for their unrighteousness.

Amos 3. The Lord reveals His secrets unto His servants the prophets—Because Israel rejects the prophets and follows evil, the nation is overwhelmed by an adversary.

Amos 4. The Lord withholds rain, sends famine and pestilence, and destroys gardens and vineyards as judgments upon His people, yet they do not return unto the Lord.

Amos 5. The people of Israel are exhorted to seek the Lord and do good so that they may live—Their sacrifices to false gods are abhorrent.

Amos 6. Woe to them who are at ease in Zion—Israel will be plagued with desolation.

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 will be sifted among all nations—In the last days, the people of Israel will be gathered again into their own land, and it will become productive.

Obadiah 1. Obadiah prophesies the downfall of Edom—Saviors will stand upon Mount Zion.

Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

What other meanings does “secret” have in Hebrew?

Probably the most
repeated verse of Amos is

the Lord’s instruction that he uses 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 biblical Hebrew has such a small vocabulary, it is fascinating to know that words with related meanings are placed in precise order to create a rainbow of meanings. Hence, secret, counsel, advice, and insight are all related in meaning!

What themes, even applicable nowadays, did Amos give us?

“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* (land of) Israel in Amos’ own day.” “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.” “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.” “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 (**Amos 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.” “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**).” (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**)

How will the “end of days” be recognized?

“The 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” (**Amos 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.” (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**) You see, that even the Jews have a tradition of a future “new covenant.” It is the one Jeremiah prophesizes about, “Behold, the days come,

saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD:” (**Jeremiah 31-32**)

What did Amos teach about ritual and modesty?

“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.” “Judaism encourages modesty as one of the means to chastity. Thus, the Jewish woman is enjoined to dress and act modestly at all times. Furthermore, a man is forbidden to be alone with a woman with whom he is not permitted to have sexual relations from considerations of both chastity and modesty.” (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**)

Who do I know as an “Obadiah?”

Transliterated, the name Obadiah is likely derived from two Hebrew words, *Obed* and *Yah*. The word, *Obed*, has the verb meaning of work or serve, and in the origin and historical study of the word Obed is a “servant.” Similarly, the word *Yah* is a short form of *YHWH*, the four letters that form the spelling of the personal name of God. Since the ancient Israelites and today’s Jews consider that name so holy, *Yahweh* is not pronounced or spoken, instead, the expression, *YAH* is used. Combining the two words in a name is *Obed-Yah* or as we have it in English, *Obadiah*. It denotes “Servant of the Lord,” God’s worker, or God’s slave. On a personal note, one of my tour guests was a General Authority in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and told me that the affectionate nickname for Gordon B. Hinckley (1910-2008) the President of the Church at that time, was “God’s Slave!” In Hebrew that would be a modern-day Obadiah. The ancient prophet Obadiah was the steward of King Ahab (935 BC-852 BC) who protected the prophets, the leading “General Authorities” of God (at that time) from Jezebel (died 842 BC), “For it was so, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a

cave . . .” (1 Kings 18:4). You can surmise that this (and every) Prophet understands the plan of salvation and the ordinances of the true gospel as he refers to the worthy saints of all ages. “And saviours shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the LORD’s.” (Obadiah 1:21) The latter-day scriptures describe the “saviours . . . on mount Zion,” “These are they who are come unto

Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly place, the holiest of all.” (Doctrine and Covenants 76:66, see verses 51-66) “Mount Zion” and “City of the Lord” are descriptions of the temple city of Jerusalem capped with the Holy Place for the presence of the Lord on Mount Moriah, the Temple Mount, and ultimately, all of the temples of the Most High.