

# Amos: The Shepherd Prophet (Part III)

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 09 October 2013

Preacher: Don Coleman

[ 0 : 00 ] We're in that section of Amos that I have called What Amos Said.

! That kind of helps us divide the book into two parts, very neatly.! And God has set that guideline or that two-point outline, so to speak, when He said in verse 1 what He said and what He saw.

And so we have what He said, His words, here in chapters 1 through 6, and then when we get into chapter 7 we'll see His visions, what He saw. And so we're in that part of it, and we have looked at already the nations surrounding Israel and Judah, and God's judgment upon them, what He named as their sin, and His pronouncement of judgment.

And we tried to go a little step further and identify whether or not those judgments came to pass.

And in every case, they did. And none of the nations that surround Israel and Judah exist today.

And so God's judgment was final, and it could not be thwarted. So you see there all those nations that surround Israel and Judah. And so that's what we looked at last week.

[ 1 : 35 ] And the seventh one, the seventh nation to be judged is Judah. Now, Judah is Israel, right?

Well, it is in the general sense, the nation of Israel, the people of God, the people of Israel. But we're in a time period, again, in Israel's history where they were a divided kingdom.

And so we have Israel to the north and Judah to the south. And so Judah was the southern kingdom that was once called Israel.

And we can see the map here. And I get them again. And you notice all the surrounding nations or nations around Israel and Judah.

And so we've come all the way around. Now we're there in Judah, the southern kingdom. And it's kind of like we have come full circle.

[ 2 : 37 ] Now, I mentioned last week that Amos didn't take these nations in any particular kind of systematic order. He's kind of going from one corner to the other corner and then back up here and then back down there.

But ultimately, what he's doing is going all the way around. And he is eventually going to hit the bullseye in this kind of target that he's portraying for us.

And Israel is the target because this prophecy is against Israel, the northern kingdom, not Judah.

But Judah is included in those nations that God has pronounced judgment upon.

And so here we are with Judah. The charge against Judah, as we're going to see, is a little bit different than the other six nations.

Whereas God judged the other nations for basically, I think we could say, cruelty, inhumane acts against people in other countries, primarily inhumane and unjust acts against Israel and Judah, God's people.

[ 3 : 50 ] And so God judged them on that basis. But when we get to Judah, God judged Judah for breach of covenant. Covenant. God did not have a covenant with any of these other nations.

Alright? His covenant was with His people, the Jews. Even though they're now a divided kingdom, they are His covenant people. And by the way, it remains so today, even though God has set that covenant aside for a time.

But He's going to take up His dealings with Israel again in the end times. But in these days, of course, Judah and Israel were God's covenant people.

And so He's going to judge them based upon a breach of covenant. First of all, they had rejected the Lord's instructions.

The first thing that the Bible tells us here in the prophecy is that they had despised the law of the Lord. That's how Amos put it. It's kind of a three-fold kind of judgment or rather identification of their sin.

[ 5 : 03 ] Really, we're not to the judgment yet. But a kind of a three-fold thing. They despised the law of the Lord. That is, literally, they just rejected the Lord's instructions for how they were to live their lives as covenant people.

And God's people still do that today. We call that sin. God has given us His law, His instructions. And I use the word, and I think He's using the word law here in a broader sense. God has given us His word on what kind of people we're to be and how we are to live out our lives. How we're to respond properly to Him and all the various spiritual disciplines. I mean, just everything. God has given us His word, His instruction book. And we still struggle today, obviously, as God's people, God's covenant people. We struggle today in that we reject His instructions. Well, this is what Judah had done. They had despised. That's a very strong word for rejection.

[ 6 : 12 ] They had rejected God's instructions. Second, they did not keep His commandments. All right, now, that sounds like the same thing, doesn't it? And really, these are parallel thoughts.

Amos, certainly, and really all the prophets, in fact, many of the Old Testament writers used parallelism. And so, they would say what appears to be the same thing twice. But it's just a little bit different in the sense that to despise the law of the Lord is a more broad kind of rejection, again, of God's instructions.

It's kind of a broad view of that. Whereas, when we get to His commandments, that's a very specific thing that they were doing. They had violated the Decalogue, the Ten Commandments.

They were violating the commandments that He had given to them. And then third, their lies, the Bible says, he says, their lies led them astray. Lies which their fathers followed.

[ 7 : 24 ] Now, this is rather interesting. And what it means is they were just not only rejecting God's clear instructions, not only were they overtly disobedient to God's clear commands, His laws as covenant people, they were also believing in lies.

And the lies coming from the devil and from paganism and idolatry, which led them not only away from, but to idolatry and ultimately to destruction, because God's not going to put up with that. They were His covenant people. And so they had not only moved away from God and His word, that's bad enough, but the ultimate end of that moving away from God is always going to be led to some other God, or gods, or allegiance to anything and everything other than the one true God. And that was a breach of their covenant with God. And so this was very serious. And God is going to deal with them on that basis.

Now, history reveals, however, God's mercy and grace. We don't see that necessarily here in the prophecy of Amos. But when we look at the broader picture, the larger picture, then we're going to discover that God was merciful to Judah, specifically.

[ 9 : 11 ] Years later, after this prophecy, Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, would try to defeat Judah, try to conquer Judah. And yet, Judah repented.

And when they repented, then in 2 Kings, and this is a marvelous story. You can go back and read. In fact, 2 Kings is just a tremendous book. Chapters 18 through 19, that part of the book, you read the story about the angel of the Lord invading the Assyrian camp and killing 180,000 Assyrian soldiers to deliver Judah, the southern kingdom.

And all because God is merciful and gracious, they repented, and God delivered them. And so, what's the lesson there? The lesson is that God can, his judgment can be averted if the guilty will repent.

God responds to that. However, as you see in your notes, later, Judah's rebellion was more set. It was hardened and determined. And because of that, they would not repent. Because they did not repent, God allowed Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, to conquer Judah and carry away the survivors into captivity.

[ 10 : 37 ] You read about that in 2 Kings 24. And so, Judah, we could say, had crossed God's deadline, so to speak.

And I think I gave you there a, I don't know if I put it in my notes, a little poem about God's deadline. Do you see that there? Did I put that in your notes? I meant to. I'm not going to read it. You can read that for yourself. It's quite old. And it was written back in the, oh, early 1800s.

And so, the verbiage is, you know, the vernacular, sentence structure, you know, all that. It's kind of old and antiquated.

But it is a really interesting poem. And I'd recommend that you read it. All right. Now. So, that was Judah.

[11:36] So, now we're there to the bullseye. This is where God's been going all the time. And the bullseye, of course, is Israel.

Israel is the eighth nation addressed by the prophet Amos here. But again, like I said a moment ago, Israel has been the primary target, really audience.

The prophecy is to Israel. Been the primary audience throughout all of these judgments, all of what Amos has been saying. So, we've had six foreign nations, Aram, Philistia, Phoenicia, and Edom, and Ammon, and Moab, and then Judah, and now Israel.

And Israel, of course, as I've already said, is the northern kingdom. And there she is. Of course, you've been seeing that all along.

And Israel's now in the crosshairs in prophecy here. The lesson for Israel, and so we can make an application here.

[12:48] The lesson for all readers, modern-day readers, as well as those in Amos' day and the people living in Israel. The lesson is threefold. Before we get into the actual sin of Israel that God's going to reveal to us through this prophecy.

And before we get into the judgments, and it's quite involved, quite expansive. Because again, Israel's been the target all along. So, he's going to spend quite a bit of copy in the prophecy to deal with Israel.

Before we get into that, we need to consider what we can learn from it from the very beginning. And I would say that the lesson is threefold.

First of all, the sovereignty of God is the first lesson here that we should get. Now, it's pretty easy to see that lesson throughout Scripture.

I say it's easy. It seems like some people miss that lesson in Scripture, that God is absolutely sovereign. But that is clearly a lesson we need to get, Israel needs to get.

[13:54] And specifically, every nation on earth is accountable to God. Now, do you believe that? Every nation. Not just God's covenant people, Israel.

But every single nation on the face of the earth. And every empire that has ever existed. And I use the word empire in the sense that, you know, in the history of mankind, there have been some great empires that have dominated the world.

Like the Egyptians. A great empire in the days leading up to the exodus of Israel. Because God led Moses to deliver his people, Israel, from Egypt at a time in their history when they were the superpower of the world.

They were at the pinnacle of their greatness. And never did reach that height of greatness again after God judged Egypt and delivered his people.

So, God was sovereign over the Egyptians. The Assyrian was the next kind of identifiable major super empire in the world. And it too was eventually conquered and became no more.

[15:10] Replaced by Babylon or the Babylonians. God is sovereign. Showed himself to be sovereign over the Egyptians, over the Assyrians, over the Babylonians.

The Persians was the next great empire, nation that really controlled all of the civilized, known world of the day.

Whatever that means. And they were conquered though by the Greeks. And so, the Greek empire was the next great, great nation or empire that dominated the world.

But what happened to them? Well, then came the Romans. Then we know, now we're getting into more familiar history, aren't we? Because this is very much biblical New Testament history.

The Romans dominated the world in their day. But they, for all practical purposes, are no more. Now, I'll just list a couple more here on the end here.

[16:11] The Soviet Union was a great empire at one time. And now it's no more. And the Chinese, much as I love those people, is a huge nation and populace.

But God is sovereign over the Chinese. And then I add one more, the Americans. Is he sovereign over our country? Absolutely.

Should we, can we, learn from what God is saying through the prophet Amos to these nations that surrounded Israel and Judah, and said to Judah and said to Israel, can we learn that he is sovereign over every nation, including our own?

I think so. We can. We had better learn that. And hopefully pray for our nation so that we won't come under that kind of direct judgment of God.

Though I think, it seems like lately it's inevitable. The second thing that we can learn is the tolerance of God. We also learned that. I used the word tolerance, but we could easily use the word mercy, long suffering, perseverance.

[ 17 : 23 ] He is tolerant. Remember at the beginning of each of these prophecies concerning God's judgment upon the surrounding nations in Judah, including Israel, God always started with, for three sins and four.

Remember we talked about that last time. It's not that there are three specific sins that God has in mind, or a fourth specific sin, though he in every case names a specific sin before he judges.

The idea is symbolic of God's tolerance. And really the idea is that it's limited. It symbolizes God's limited tolerance for all sin.

I mean, there is just a limit. And each of these nations had crossed that line, including God's beloved people in Judah and in Israel. And so, the tolerance of God, we ought to keep that in mind as well.

Third, the judgment of God. All right, so these are three things that Israel should have learned, had the opportunity to learn. Even before the prophecy comes directly to them, and they become the subject, they hear the prophecies concerning Edom and Philistia and Phoenicia and all these other pagan nations.

[ 18 : 53 ] And then they ought to get the idea that if God is sovereign over these nations, and what he says is going to happen is going to happen, then they ought to see that that's the case with them.

And so, the sovereignty of God, the tolerance of God, but then also the judgment of God, and that it is impartial. The type of sins may vary, and they did vary somewhat with all of these nations in Judah and Israel, though there were some similarities.

The sins may vary, but God's judgment is still the same, and it is sure. All right, now we get to Israel's sin in particular.

And we find that in chapter 2 starting with verse 6, and really runs the sin as mentioned first, and then God's judgment upon that sin.

Israel is guilty of eight sins that are named here in the prophecy. So, this is quite different than what we've seen before, because with every one of the surrounding nations, there's been one mention, one sin.

[ 20 : 24 ] In Judah, you could say, though the sin really was one particular sin, a breach of covenant, it's described in a three-fold way.

But here Israel is guilty of eight sins. And there's a significance about the number eight, I think, though we don't need to make a whole lot out of this necessarily.

But you know, seven is the number, clearly in Scripture, the number for completion, perfection. And the number eight, then to add number eight to it, would be overflowing.

So the sin is not only complete sinfulness against God, but it's one more than complete. It means it's over the top, overflowing. Same idea, I think, with the three sins in four, God judges.

And so, eight sins are mentioned here. Sin number one, in the Scripture he says, because they sell the righteous for silver.

[ 21 : 34 ] They sell the righteous for silver. That's in verse 6. The word righteous here is not talking about righteous in a saving sense or relationship sense with God.

It just is a word that means innocent. Alright, so they're selling the innocent for silver. And the word sold here, or selling to sell, refers to selling human beings into slavery.

So here's the idea. And in fact, this is going to be a reoccurring theme throughout all of these sins that are mentioned here. And so, it's not just simply, I mean, it had slavery in this day.

There's no doubt about that. And slavery for different reasons. But we're talking here about unjust slavery. Where corrupt officials, judges, powers that be, very likely accepting bribes or getting in on the profitability of slavery.

And they're then deciding cases against innocent people. And the result is slavery. So there's a corruption within the government of Israel, the civil government of Israel, where people are being sold into slavery who should not be.

[ 23 : 08 ] And so, it's unjust. Sin number two, they sell the poor for a pair of sandals. Again, the theme is still slavery.

But now we're getting more specific here. And probably, they sell the poor for a pair of sandals. Probably, the pair of sandals refers here to some form of debt.

Very likely, a very small debt. An insignificant amount of debt is the idea. I mean, a pair of sandals. I mean, you're going to actually sell a person into slavery because they owe you the price of a pair of sandals, which would be insignificant.

And so, the idea is there's just absolutely no mercy, whatever. In fact, there is a desire to profit from slavery. And so, it just referred to this very small amount of money required to purchase a person into slavery, which was unjust.

A social injustice. Sin number three is an interesting one in the Scripture. Difficult to translate. They pant after the dust of the earth, which is on the head of the poor.

[ 24 : 31 ] Anybody want to venture a guess better what that means? I mean, just wording is difficult. And that's a very literal translation.

But, what does it mean? Well, the word pant, kind of an interesting word in Hebrew. And it means to trample or crush.

I never would have guessed that, would you? And I didn't go back and look at some of the other translations and see what they did with that word. But, both King James and New King James kind of keep it at this word pant.

But, it's an old word. And the Hebrew word generally is used to convey the idea of crushing. All right, so if that's the case, then the idea would be that certain ones, probably the wealthy, ones who are calling the shots, those who are in this unjust slavery business are trampling the head of the poor against the dust of the earth.

That would be a more, maybe possibly more literal translation. And so, the idea is that they're treating the poor like dirt. Now, we understand that expression, don't we?

[ 25 : 48 ] I mean, that's kind of more of an expression that we even use today. You know, treating people like dirt. And that's kind of the idea. So, you see, the social injustice of this and the minimizing of the value of a human life is what's going on here in Israel.

And this is their sin. Sin number four is also, I think, somewhat easier to understand.

They pervert the way of the humble. This is what Amos said, or God said through Amos. Pervert the way of the humble. But what does that mean? Well, the humble, again, just like the word righteous is not a reference to religious people or religious acts or righteous in any kind of spiritual way.

In the same way, humble is not used here in a religious sense or spiritual sense. It refers to needy people. Needy, poor, common.

You know, the lower tier in the strata of civil life. And they're just needy people. And so they pervert the way of the needy.

[ 27 : 10 ] Pervert is a word that literally means to push off the road. Push off the road. And it refers to being oppressed by the wealthy.

And this was the problem. The shakers and the movers. And not just simply people of wealth and prominence. But it's talking about a specific group of people in the society of Israel who were profiting by this growing slavery industry.

And where they were just treating the poor and needy and the common people with absolutely no respect at all.

Sin number five. A man and his father go in to the same girl to defile my holy name.

You know, I use a lot of imagination to figure out what that means. But specifically, the word girl there is a reference to a female slave. It's a slave.

[ 28 : 23 ] So it's, again, the overarching theme is slavery. And so, defile my holy name.

Well, I mean, you just figure this out, can't you? But they have slaves. And slavery is becoming such an injustice and such a minimizing of the value of human life inhumanity.

And it's even gravitated to the point where the slaves are of no value, no moral value. And so, here you have a father who owns a slave, a female slave.

And he commits immorality with her. And so does his son. Basically raping female slaves. And it's not, we know it's not an isolated type of occurrence.

Because I think that's happened down through history in every country that has had slavery. And we have slavery today. You know, we call it human trafficking. And where people are forced into

some kind of form of slavery.

[ 29 : 39 ] And kept there, kept in bondage to that. And used for immoral purposes. And so this is what was happening here.

But it wasn't isolated. It wasn't just, you know, one of those things, one of those negative things that happened. It's a national sin. And that's why God is judging them.

So it was a common practice for this kind of thing to carry on with female slaves. Sin number six.

Sin number six. They lie down by every altar on clothes taken in pledge. Alright.

Now, their sin of unjust slavery and minimizing of human life. It's now moved into the context even of their worship.

[ 30 : 37 ] And it's an abomination to God. Now, clothes refers to garments, of course. But very likely, given the context, garments that are unjustly seized by the wealthy in payment of a debt.

And so they're taking those clothes. And here's two possible meanings. They were lying down on these garments before the altar of God and eating a meal in His honor.

That's what some scholars think is meant here. But I don't think that's the case given context. They were committing immoral pagan worship because it had been brought into their worship.

It was a mixture, secretism of Yahweh worship, and pagan worship, worshiping of fertility gods, which involved immorality, acts of immorality in the name of worship.

And so these things were mixed together. And so the garments that they were actually confiscating as payment for debts were actually being used in the acts of immorality right there near the altar of God.

[ 32 : 00 ] And they said, sin number seven, and drink the wine of the condemned in the house of their God. And this is very similar to the other one with the garments.

Wine, too, was taken as unjust settlement for debts. And so they were using that in that sense. And I think probably would refer to drunken feasts that were taking place right in the shadow of God's altar.

All right. Sin number eight. You gave the Nazarites wine to drink and commanded the prophets saying, do not prophesy.

Now, this is kind of unusual. What were Nazarites? Do you remember that from Scripture? Can you name a very well-known Nazarite in the Bible?

Samson is probably the first one we always think about. And Nazarites, of course, were those who took certain vows to be wholly committed to God.

[ 33 : 10 ] Numbers chapter 6, 1 to 21 is where you can go to find out the rules of what a Nazarite must do, his commitment or her commitment.

Not cutting the hair was one of those things. Not drinking wine was another one. Not touching any dead thing or dead bodies was a part of the Nazarite vow. There were other things involved in that. And so they had Nazarites. And what were the people of Israel doing? They were giving them wine to drink, which was forbidden.

So, that means that they were tempting them or encouraging them to break their commitment to God.

And the underlying problem is total disregard for these specially committed people that God had called and set aside for his service.

[ 34 : 11 ] They were disregarding the importance of that in the nation. And not only that, but prophets. And the prophets here refers to God's preachers.

Not just simply prophets in the sense of Amos and Isaiah, some of those who were foretelling, but there are also prophets in the sense of foretelling God's word, preaching.

And so they were disregarding the prophets also and telling them to prophesy not, which means what?

Stop preaching the word. That sounds vaguely familiar. It really does. Though, as yet, we, well, at least in certain forums in our country, like the church and some other places, we can still preach, but there are many, many places in our nation that have been barred to the preaching of God's word.

And very soon, I don't know about soon, but it's quite possible that someday, you know, they'll be telling us not to preach the word right here in our own pulpits.

[ 35 : 28 ] In fact, in a sense, that's already being done because there is persecution to not preach certain subjects from the pulpits. And, you know, social issues.

And there'll be a day, and already in some of our cities in our nation where it's considered a hate crime, to preach the biblical word concerning homosexuality.

So this is what was going on in Israel. And they were telling all their prophets, all their preachers to stop preaching. Now, between the seventh and eighth sin, and you may have noticed if you were following along in the scripture, we kind of had something in between there.

There was, you know, we stopped at a certain point, then the eighth one is picked up in verse 12.

But in the interim, in between the seventh and eighth sin, Amos is reminding Israel of what God had done for them.

Just kind of midstream here. He's naming these sins. And though there's a consistent theme with all the sins, it's very pointed, each one of them pointed in certain specific directions.

[ 36 : 52 ] And then at the end of the seventh one, he breaks away from that and really is reminding them of what a great God their God is and what he has done for them.

Verses 9 through 10 are tied to the first seven sins. And in those verses, what Amos is doing, what God is doing, is providing a contrast, a very clear contrast, between God's gracious actions in behalf of Israel and Israel's oppression of the poor.

And so what you have in those verses, starting in verse 9, you know, you have what God graciously did to deliver them from the Ammonites.

He reminds them there of how he delivered them from Egypt, their bondage, from their bondage there, their slavery there. He reminds them of prophets that he has raised up and Nazarites that he has called.

He is just reminding them of all the wonderful things he has done for poor Israel. God's people and how they have been oppressed and been enslaved. And God has been merciful and gracious and delivered them and blessed them.

[ 38 : 11 ] And then what a contrast that is, you see, between how they were treating the poor in their own nation. The destitute, the needy, the common people. They had really turned many of them into slaves.

So here's a contrast. So in those verses, that's what he's doing before he's going to name that final sin. And verse 11 is tied to the eighth and final sin. It's really kind of a summation.

It puts it all together and prepares him for that eighth and final sin. Because in verse 11, he's talking about raising up the Nazarites and prophets.

And how that was as much a divine act as the destruction of the Amorites or the exodus from Egypt or the guidance through the wilderness or the placement of Israel in the promised land.

All these wonderful things God has done for them. These were great divine acts. And just as divine and gracious towards them as God's calling of certain Nazarites to live a life committed to him.

[ 39 : 18 ] And raising up prophets. The very same prophets that they were commanding not to preach anymore. And so in the interim there, he is preparing them for the eighth and final sin.

Israel's judgment. God's judgment of the other nations that we looked at last week. His judgment was described with a metaphor.

Remember, each time it was fire. Send a fire. And that fire was symbolic of military invasion.

Attack and ultimate destruction. And all of those prophecies eventually did come true. And so with the other nations, it's very simple. Very simple judgment.

Almost cryptic in a sense. Just using the word fire. But with Israel, the description of judgment is more detailed. Detailed.

[ 40 : 22 ] Here. And yet, it's the same method. Same method. Same outcome. For the judgment. All that's virtually the same.

They too are going to be attacked by an invading army. And be, for all practical purposes, destroyed. Their nation will end.

God's statement of judgment is in verse 13. He says, Behold, I am weighed down by you as a cart full of sheaves is weighed down.

Now, that's a translator's nightmare as well. That particular verse. And there are two possible meanings.

It depends on what version of the Bible you read. Because clearly in the New King James and King James, and really to an extent the New American Standard, they tend to support this first view that God is being deeply burdened over the sheer weight of Israel's sin.

[ 41 : 31 ] Like a cart weighed down. You know, the other day I was driving to Tulsa, and there was a truck in front of me pulling a wagon, or I guess kind of a trailer type thing.

It looked like a homemade type of trailer. You know, you've seen those. And it had so much in it. I don't know what it was. Junk or metal, scrap metal or something. That the wheels were, you know, they were kind of bent outward.

You've seen that. You know, just loaded down. And so, is that the picture here? That their sin is just so weighty. God is so burdened by the sheer weight of it. I really don't think that is the case.

The second possible meaning is that God is pressing down on Israel, His judgment, pressing down on Israel like a cart full of grain pressed down upon the earth.

Now, I know you don't necessarily get that from the translation that I put in your notes. That's from the New King James.

[ 42 : 39 ] Let me read the English Standard Version, which is a very literal translation. And it renders it this way, I will press you down in your place as a cart full of sheaves, that's grain, presses down.

Now, given the context, all the sins, the sins of Israel, and given that context, it seems clear that what we're talking about here is God's judgment.

Not God's burden, but God's judgment. And it's going to be pressing down upon them like a heavy cart does on the earth.

And so then when we get to verses 14 through 16, which take us through to the end of the chapter, these verses describe the result of the judgment.

Now, the judgment is very clearly an invading army that is going to attack and going to destroy them. And of course, eventually that does happen. In fact, you can write this down if you can spell it.

[ 43 : 45 ] It's Shaumaneser, the fifth. All right, did you get that? Shaumaneser.

S-H-A-L-M-A-N-E-S-E-R, if you're taking notes.

And that's the fifth. All right, make sure you get the fifth down. The king of Assyria. And he started the attack against Israel. And Sargon, the second, S-A-R-G-O-N, finished it up and took them all captive.

And that's in 2 Kings chapter 17 and 18. So clearly the judgment is going to be an invading army. And it's going to be the Assyrians. And they're going to conquer the northern kingdom, Israel, and defeat them and take them all away captive.

But the result of the judgment, that coming judgment, is panic. It's going to be panic. And it's described here in these verses as a panic that's going to take place among the military when they face this judgment, face God's judgment.

And it's really quite descriptive. And again, there are seven. Seven statements of panic. Clear statements. Some of them are parallels.

[ 45 : 05 ] I mean, they sound similar. But they are distinctive. Seven distinct statements of the panic that is going to overwhelm Israel's army when the Assyrians attack.

And that, again, is symbolic, I think, of a complete and total chaos or complete chaos and total defeat. Number one, flight shall perish from the swift.

That's number one. Number one. And clearly, he's talking about those who are fast runners. And so those among the soldiers in their armies that are really fast on foot, even the fastest of them are not going to be able to escape this invading army.

Number two, the strong shall not strengthen his power or force. And the idea is very clear. This isn't hard to figure out.

The strongest soldier, not only the fastest soldier, is not going to be able to run away from this battle and escape or find any kind of refuge. The strongest of the soldiers are not going to be able to muster up enough strength to defeat the enemy.

[ 46 : 27 ] Third, nor shall the mighty deliver himself. Not just the strongest, but the idea here is the fiercest. You know, there are some that are just fierce warriors, well trained in battle as warriors.

And the fiercest among them are not going to be able to escape. Well, I'm going to quit. Number four, he shall not stand who handles the bow.

Now, this is kind of an overview of the various soldiers that are part of Israel's army. And none of them are going to be able to stand against this defeat.

We're talking here about archers, of course. Archers that are skilled with the bow and arrow. And they will not be able to deliver, be delivered. The swift of foot shall not escape.

Now, that sounds like the same as the first one. And it is the same. It's interesting that the first one and the fifth one out of the seven really are focusing on those who are trying to get away.

[ 47 : 36 ] And so, kind of a double statement of the fact that no soldier is going to be able to escape defeat. Sixth, nor shall he who rides a horse deliver himself.

So, I guess, you know, if you're fortunate enough to have a horse, even a fast horse is not going to be able to escape. The experienced horsemen. And there is a possibility that charioteers are also included in this.

And they will not be able to escape the judgment of God. The most courageous men of might shall flee naked in that day, says the Lord.

And this is kind of the ultimate insult. The word naked is not talking about, you know, naked, no clothes. It's talking about naked of weapons.

It's the loss of weapons. And so, the idea is that the bravest soldier at some point is going to drop his weapon and run. And this is a statement of absolute total panic and a statement of complete defeat.

[ 48 : 48 ] And so, they will not outrun it, outmuscle it, outfight it, outskill it, outrun it, because it's two times in there, so there's no escape.

Or outsmart it. And outbrave it. And so, what are we talking about here? We're talking about total, absolute defeat.

And so, to punctuate this announcement of utter judgment, he adds, says the who?

The Lord. The Lord. So, this is going to come about and did come about. And so, every nation around Israel and Judah, because of their sin, and because God is sovereign, and holds every nation accountable for what they do.

Every nation is going to be defeated. Judah, God's covenant people, because of their sin, is going to be punished and taken into captivity. That's going to happen after Israel.

[ 49 : 52 ] But Israel, too, is under God's judgment. And God's judgment comes about in all cases, because he's sovereign over all nations.

The Lord. The Lord. The Lord. The Lord. The Lord. The Lord. The Lord. The Lord. The Lord.

The Lord. The Lord. The Lord. The Lord. The Lord. The Lord. The Lord. The Lord. The Lord. The Lord. The Lord.