

Dr. Marv Wilson, Prophets, Session 12

Amos, Part 2

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This is Dr. Marv Wilson in his teaching on the Prophets. This is session 12, Amos, Part 2.

Alright, it's time to begin. Let me pray for your day, for our class.

Lord, every time we open your word, we are challenged anew. We recognize that you give us a lifetime for growth. Even your people of old had an awful lot of growing to do.

We thank you that you stay with us in our ups and downs of life. Thank you that your word becomes a guide for our life. We confess that human philosophies and passing fads are ephemeral, they're temporal, they're heuristic, they're rapidly disappearing and new things emerging.

We thank you that we stand on a rock. We thank you for being our fortress. We thank you that the imagery we have in scripture is that you are enduring, and indeed, you are eternal. For that, we thank you. We pray that our confidence then today will be in you, not in us. We thank you for the faith that you've given to us. We pray that you would increase our faith and we pray that your word will have an important part to do with that. We ask for your guidance hour through Christ our Lord. Amen.

All right, we have shortly after the midterm break, the week, we have a Passover Seder coming up, an interfaith Passover Seder. This year, it should be a great event because it will be in one of the fastest-growing synagogues in America, which has a wonderful rabbi who gave an exposition of one of the Psalms a year ago last October. You may have heard him, Baruch HaLevi.

He is very dynamic, and he has asked the Assembly of God musicians from a church here in the North Shore, their worship team, to work with him on the music of the Seder. So that should be great. The last Seder we did at North Shore Community College was not only a great celebration of freedom and release from bondage with all of the foods and all of the liturgy appertaining thereto, but the rabbi said, time to dance, we're free.

So, it's one of the biggest celebratory dances. I've been to over 50 of these Seders over the years. So, it should be a good musical Seder in a beautiful new synagogue in Swampscott.

If you want to bring friends, you're welcome to do that. I'll pass out the sheet in another class or two. There'll be a special rate for students that will include the evening meal as part of the Seder.

All right, back to where we left off. Amos, the prophet of social justice. Amos speaks out against crimes against humanity.

Amos, the guy who chaperoned sheep all day long and was very disgusted with the rich becoming richer and all kinds of religious activity going on around him, and yet society was corrupt. For Amos, there was a difference between outward religion and ceremonial ritual and people who lived life in the inward spiritual capacity, caring for others around them, living indeed godly lives that were outward looking rather than it's all about me, and padding my nest, decorating it with ivory. Now, his words then sting the Northern Kingdom as he's delivering these messages a number of decades before the Northern Kingdom is to fall in 722-721.

I left off the class last time indicating that these eight judgments, six upon foreign nations, the last two on Judah and Israel, are how he begins the book. This material dealing with foreign nations is quite typical of prophetic literature. You can look at Ezekiel, you can look at Isaiah, and several other of the prophets that have special sections delivered to foreign nations.

Again, one of the themes we already picked up in Jonah is that God has an international morality, and it's not just his own covenant people who are to live ethically and responsibly, but God desires those in the whole region in which Israel lived to live the same way. So, as he calls out these nations, I indicated last time he does so with a climactic effect for three transgressions, yes for four, to indicate the bubble is ready to burst. Crime upon crime, saturation, the increase to indicate for so many crimes, so many of these acts of inhumanity will result in, and the second thing for each of these nations, fire, which is a symbol of judgment, probably a symbol of war.

God says I will send fire upon the walls of Gaza. I'll send fire on the walls of Tyre. I'll send fire to the walls of Rabah, which is in Amman, directly east of the Jordan Valley.

I'll send fire upon Moab. And, 2.5, I will send fire upon Judah and consume the fortresses of Jerusalem. Of course, here he seems to project out several centuries to 586 when, eventually, the southern kingdom will be taken captive.

The third thing that's true of each of these is that the arraignment deals with cruelties against other people, inhumanity, civil rights violations, insensitivity toward other people, and, indeed, cruelty to other people. One of the main themes here is what we're hearing more and more on international news: human trafficking, which

is one of the great concerns. Let's look then at just briefly a few of the emphases in this opening section, chapters one through two, prophecies against the nations.

And the first concerns Damascus, the world's oldest continually inhabited city. Damascus, the place from which Abraham's trusted servant, Eleazar, came from. Damascus, the place where Paul was later let down the wall in a basket.

Damascus, up here to the northeast of the land of Israel. And the sin against Damascus is they threshed the people of Gilead. And you can see the word Gilead written right here.

One of the things the prophet Jeremiah talks about is the balm, which is a kind of resin that was used for medicinal purposes that came from Gilead. Gilead also, of course, is the place where Jacob had his name changed to Israel because the Jabbok is right smack in the middle of Gilead, east of the Jordan Valley. So, coming down from Damascus, what is the crime? They threshed Gilead with threshing sledges of iron.

Jerome, who renamed the salt sea of the Bible to be the Dead Sea, said that the threshing sledges of those days were carts. And those carts had spiked wheels. And those could, of course, have been driven over a threshing floor that would have mashed up the grain and prepared it for threshing.

But there's a different kind of threshing that's going on here. The threshing of people. So these studded iron teeth, which would have chopped up the grain so it could be released so that the winnowing process, throwing it up in the air, could begin.

This, instead, was used to rip open the bodies of captives. A very, very cruel practice. And so, civil rights violations in humanity seem to be the theme here.

This barbarous practice, we don't know when it took place except it is tied in with the names of several kings. Ben-Chadad. Chadad means to thunder.

In fact, the word is used in the Prophets for the waves that crash into the shores of the Mediterranean coast in Israel. Hadad is also the name of one of the deities in that northern part of the land. So, the name was apparently picked up and is used for the leaders of that territory.

The fortresses of Ben-Chadad, who was a son of Hazael. So, I'll break down the gates of Damascus, is the word. The second concerns Gaza, which is verses 6 through 8. If you do some research into the origin of the word Gaza, apparently, our word gauze in English comes from Gaza, which grew there along the coast down in Philistine territory.

There was a city of Gaza right along Route 95, hugging the sea, coming out of Egypt along the Via Maris. But this whole region, of course, which recently was taken over by a terrorist organization and the final Jewish settlements left, and the shells have continued to come from Gaza to various towns in southern Israel. And that's why Israel went in in January to deal with Hamas, which is the Hebrew word for violence, a word found in the Prophets of Israel.

These people that lived astride the Mediterranean, which in Bible times is where the Philistines settled. The Philistines came from the sea. They are often referred to as the sea people.

And what is the crime against the Gazans? This was a commercial city, a major commercial city, on the way to Egypt and facing the Mediterranean. They apparently engaged in wholesale traffic in slavery. Men, women, young children.

And that seems to be the crime for the Gazans. There's a ring of Philistine cities mentioned in the text here. Gaza, Ashkelon, which has a wonderful beach in Israel today, and one of the most remarkable cemeteries from late Bible times, the largest dog cemetery ever found from the Biblical period, where 700 greyhound looking dogs have been buried in one cemetery.

And people wonder why were dogs all buried in that cemetery? Some archaeologists surmise, and that's how discovery has to lead eventually to suggestions on how do we interpret the data after we observe it and analyze it, classify it. Some scholars believe that in the ancient world, the saliva of dogs had medicinal value. There's a story in Luke's Gospel, a rich man and Lazarus speaking about wanting the dogs to come and lick his sores.

We don't know exactly, but all these dogs were all buried in the Gazan cemetery there at Ashkelon. There's a whole story on that in Biblical archaeology review. North of there is the largest port in Israel today, Ashdod.

Again, another Philistine city in Ekron. So, all along these coastal cities, the word is these cities are going to be destroyed because of engaging in wholesale traffic and slavery. They did not spare the helpless.

They were just interested in the revenues from slavery. And they were sold to Edom as a middle man, directly to the southeast. The next emphasis in verses 9-10 concerns the Tyrians.

You go directly north of Mount Carmel. You come to Akko, a great port city that, particularly during the Turkish period, had some terrific archaeological remains. Paul

sailed on one of his missionary journeys from Akko, sometimes spelled Akra or Ptolemaeus.

After King Ptolemy settled down in Egypt, one of the generals of Alexander the Great, that name Ptolemy was important because the land of Israel was controlled by the Ptolemies until one of the greatest battles that most Christians are not aware of, happened in 198, right smack up here near the border. There's a place called Banias today. Caesarea Philippi, according to the New Testament.

And at that 198 battle, the Seleucids, the Syrian Greeks, whipped the butts of the Ptolemies who were controlling the land of Israel from Egypt. These are the guys who gave us the Septuagint because they needed a Bible in Greek. So, after 198, the land is controlled by the Syrian Greeks and 30 years later, you have the event that gives rise to Hanukkah, 168.

And the attempt by the Maccabean family to throw off the Grecianizing, Hellenizing, Zeus-centered emphasis in the land. Alright, so Tyre. Tyre famous for its Baal worship.

How do we know? Because Queen Jezebel was the daughter of the King of Tyre and she brought her Baal worship with her big time into the Northern Kingdom. And that was one of the corrupting influences that earlier, Elijah had to deal with. So this Phoenician city on the coast is cited for delivering captives.

Becoming a middleman for slave trading. The fourth nation mentioned is Edom. In verses 11 and 12.

Edom, directly southeast of the Dead Sea. Edom gets its name from a word that sounds like the word red. And there's a pun: Esau comes out of the womb, he's the first child, and he comes out admoni, ruddy, reddish, as well as hairy.

And so, the Edomites, the word Edom and red, there's a connection there. And Esau, of course, is the eponymous ancestor of the Edomites. And the Edomites and the Jacobites, or Israelites as we now know them, were in constant conflict.

And he is charged here in verses 11 and 12 for pursuing his brother, that is Israel, without pity. And, of course, that conflict starts all the way back in Genesis 25. Two nations are in your womb, is the word.

And the hand of one will be against the other. Later when Israel was coming into the promised land, you remember the Edomites refused passage of Israel to go through their land. And so, they sort of had to make an end run of Edom in order to get into the promised land.

And obviously, several centuries later, the whole book of Obadiah, which we will look at in this course, centers around that spirit of inhumanity and lack of brotherliness. The next is the Ammonites, verses 13 to 15. When you see the word Ammon in verse 13, the crime is declaring war on the unborn.

Ammon, who rips up the wombs of women who are pregnant in order to extend its borders. Territorial greed resorts to extreme cruelty, which was not unknown in the ancient world. There are a number of texts from the prophets that speak of either women having children taken from their wombs or babies being cooked and eaten.

In this particular case, the cruelty is to the Gileadites. When you think of Jordan today, you think of the capital of Jordan. Ammon, Jordan gets its name for this word we're dealing with here in verse 13.

The Ammonites. Again, sins of crime against, in this case, the unborn. The next is Moab.

And as you look directly east of the Dead Sea, you have roughly the area of Moab, where you recall Jacob's first child settled. He got that name, look, a son, Reuben. That's what Reuben means.

And so Reuben got to settle in this area, one of the three tribes settling east of the Jordan Valley, which involved some of the territory of Moab. Why are the Moabites cited here in chapter 2, verses 1-3? Because they burned the bones of the king of Edom to lime. Now, that may come across to you as ho-hum, but what's the big deal? Cremation? Burning an enemy? In the ancient world, this was considered to be a desecration of the body.

Have you ever watched television newsreels when a period of time in Israel there were suicide bombers going on buses and blowing people up? And then you see people from the orthodox and ultra-orthodox community out in the streets picking up hair follicles, pieces of skin, things that are up in a tree, collecting all of the human remains. Traditionally, in Jewish circles from Bible times to the present day, the human body is considered to be sacred and is not even to be hacked up for an autopsy. We have stories in modern Israel of people undergoing autopsies and black-coated Hasidic Jews coming in, grabbing the body from off the table, and running out the door with it because they forbid destruction in any way or defacing in any way of the body.

Now, modern, secular, reformed Jews have a much different attitude about that. They believe in progressive thinking, they believe in medical advancement, donating organs to improve the human condition. But traditionally, burning reflected the desecration of a body.

It was a great sacrilege in the ancient world. Something a little bit more difficult for us to get our hands around. Let me give you one example.

Under the streets of Rome, we have 550 miles of underground passageways. We call those today the catacombs. In the origin of the catacombs, where they dug under the streets of Rome, the particular kind of lava was soft and it was diggable.

Pagan Rome burned its dead. Early Christian believers and Jews historically did not burn their dead. They wanted respectable burials.

And so, they put these niches in the side of these galleries underground so in both the Christian and the Jewish galleries, Christians could have respectful burials. All of that reflects this early tradition that we read of in Amos, which was part of the ancient Near Eastern general. After Moab, we come to Judah, verses 4 and 5. Now, the other nations were those nations that surrounded Israel.

The Philistines, the Edomites, the Moabites, the Ammonites, the Syrians, and the Tyrians. Now, the prophet builds to his climax talking about the final two nations, namely his own nation. Amos was the guy from Tekoa, remember, that little town just 12 miles south of Jerusalem.

So now he's talking about the people from the land he comes from. Notice the Torah-centricity of his concern. He says his own people have rejected the Torah or Torah Adonai, the law of the Lord.

They have not kept its decrees, and they have gone after false gods, the gods that their ancestors followed. And so, he says Jerusalem is going to know fire on its walls. And of course, if you've ever studied the history of the city of Jerusalem, how many times it's been built and destroyed and built and destroyed.

Other times, it's been attacked or surrounded and not destroyed. Like in 701 under Sennacherib, when Hezekiah was preparing for the siege, but it never happened. So, they are not keeping the commandments.

The sin then for Judah was religious apostasy. Again, the prophets call people not to march to a new drumbeat, and this illustrates this perfectly.

They simply call Israel and Judah and all of those people within the covenantal family really back to the lofty spiritual and ethical teachings of Moses, to the Torah. The indictment for Israel is a little more detailed. And that's our 8th nation in verses 6-16.

For three sins of Yisrael, the one who wrestles with struggles with God, the northern kingdom. Again, keep in mind we are dealing here with Amos' message to the northern tribes.

We begin to see very carefully that the indictment is for selling the righteous for silver. Probably, the righteous people are being sold as slaves to the needy for a pair of sandals. Again, there's a particular concern for the economic have-nots of Old Testament society.

And people here, in their greed, are trampling upon the poor. That's a powerful metaphor, 2-7. The people in the northern kingdom, only self-centered, trample on the heads of the poor.

They deny justice to the oppressed, which essentially means justice goes to the highest bidder. The law code of Moses has a commandment: justice, justice you shall pursue. And so the poor are being denied justice.

And being here either sold into slavery for very, very little because of the greed of the rich, where a poor man could sell himself to another to get out of some kind of debt. It shows you what a human being would be worth, very, very little. And so, trampling on the heads of the poor, that's self-aggrandizement.

Not humble or meek, but people who are power-hungry. And this is what the prophet speaks out against. He touches in verse 7 on temple prostitution.

Has this happened before? Well, you remember Eli had two sons who did not follow in Eli's ways. He was the priest at the time of little Samuel. During that time, prostitution was carried on with women right at the entrance to the Tabernacle.

Says the book of 1 Samuel. And in this particular case, whether this is temple prostitution or family prostitution, it talks about father and son using the same girl. Now, prostitution was big time in the Northern Kingdom.

Read Hosea, which we'll be studying next. Adultery, whoredom, and all kinds of words are used for the Northern Kingdom because of Baal worship, which was sacred prostitution. It was a fertility religion.

So, the language here seems to reflect what Amos goes into in much greater detail. I'm interested in verse 8. It says They lie down beside every altar on garments taken in pledge. Here's how if people knew the law of Moses and really sought to apply it.

Let me read Exodus 22:26 and 27. These are the pajamas of the Old Testament as close as it comes.

If you take your neighbor's cloak as a pledge, that is, it's a form of collateral. If you take your neighbor's cloak as a pledge, return it to him by sunset because his cloak is

the only covering he has for his body. What else will he sleep in? When he cries out to me, I will hear, for I am compassionate.

Exodus 22:26 and 27. Apparently, what was happening here, garments were taken in pledge of an obligation and they were supposed to be returned at sundown. Even in the middle of the summer, if you're in the hill country of Judah, it cools down every night and you have to sleep on an average night unless there's a hot khamsin coming in off the desert.

You have to sleep with two blankets. And so, that would be inconsiderate even for a poor man if he did not have a covering for the night. And so, it was supposed to be returned by sundown for protection.

You consider the poor man. Give him his cloak back for protection during the night. Also in verse 8, it indicates they were drinking wine bought by money, probably gotten illegally by the sale of justice by the judges.

They drink wine taken as fines. So, Amos touches on the corruption of the leadership and the wealthy on that day. And he turns to history.

This is his main push to recall God's work in history for the Israelite people. You should never treat your neighbor this way because God has been very gracious to you, and you better never forget His gifts. And then Amos lets it fly on what gifts God gave to Israel should cause you to be a blessing to your neighbor, not a curse in the despicable way you treat, particularly the poor.

He cites God's mercy toward Israel in several places, particularly from the Torah. In verse 10, God says, I brought you up out of Egypt. Referred to 125 times in the Hebrew Bible.

Deliverance is the greatest miracle God effected. He brought them out. They were slaves.

You should have been thankful for this great gift of deliverance. I then led you 40 years in the wilderness. Not just led Israel, but a 40-year miracle to sustain them in the, what is it, food? The manna is a great gift.

And then I brought you into the land of the Amorites according to verse 10. A-M-O-R-I-T-E In Genesis 15, 16, God says to Abraham in about four generations when the sin of the Amorites is full that's when you're going to get your land. People who are over in the Tigris-Euphrates area and looked west, the word Amorite means westerner.

And those who are west of the Tigris-Euphrates area, and in this case the Canaanites are synonymous with the Amorites. So, coming into this so-called land of promise

meant God enabled Israel to take possession of the land of the Amorites. He describes them here in verse 9 before God destroyed them as if they were tall as the cedars and strong as the oaks.

There's the shepherd prophet now drawing on nature. These Amorites were exactly like the spies reported. We were like grasshoppers in their sight.

Their cities went all the way up to heaven. Impossible. Humanly speaking, Israel was not a trained military people.

They were a ragtag group of shepherd farmers that had come in off the desert and God affected this great gift. And because He treated people with compassion and love and gave them their land in faithfulness in accordance with what He said to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, you ought to treat others with kindness because I have been gracious to you. The third thing He mentions besides Exodus is preservation in the wilderness, giving them the land of Canaan.

He says I raised up the prophets from among your sons. Again, how do you become a prophet? God says, I raised them up. It's a we generis.

It's a unique thing. God brought the prophets, and of course, Amos was a prophetic voice. And then He also mentions the Nazarites.

Nazir, N-A-Z-I-R, is Hebrew for to consecrate, to dedicate. And so literally, the Nazarites that we first read of in Numbers chapter 16, people whom you remember, abstained from grape products, raisins, and wine, did not touch dead bodies, and let their hair grow long. Engaged in this vow to set themselves apart.

Consecrated for faithful service to the Almighty. But verse 12 is the indictment. You made the Nazarites drink wine.

You made them break their vow and commanded the prophets to shut up and stop prophesying. Basically, God is saying you have these people around here, but you have mistreated them and maltreated them and have caused them to not function for the good of the community for which I raised them up. And so the prophets and Nazarites were special gifts among the people.

But you destroyed those gifts. Then he brings to climax, this wonderful literary climax to the end of Amos chapter 2. As you know, the number 7 is the number of completions in the Bible. So, he's going to build from 1 to 7. And what's that all about? Well, he's building to describe that quickly, and certainly, the northern kingdom is going to fall.

He's laid out part of the indictment. He's going to give more in the chapters that follow. He says, Now I'm going to crush you as a cart crushes when loaded with grain.

Again, it takes us to the world of nature. Amos is the prophet from Tekoa, and then he comes up with these seven words.

The swift will not escape. The strong will not muster their strength. The warrior will not save his life.

The archer will not stand his ground. The fleet-footed soldier will not get away. The horseman will not save his life.

And then number 7, The bravest warrior, will flee naked on that day. On that day. By Yom HaHu.

On that day. What day? That literary expression, in that day, usually refers to a day of judgment. It could refer to the day of the Lord.

We'll talk about Yom Yahweh when we come to Joel. But in this particular case, in that day, it refers to 721. On that day.

When Tiglath-Pileser III starts coming in and removing conquered subjects and repopulating the land, then Sargon, Shalmaneser V comes in. And then, finally, Sargon II finishes the job.

721. This is what he is alluding to. The final days of the overthrow of the Northern Kingdom.

Why 7? Complete destruction. And never again would the Northern Kingdom be a powerhouse. And it's out of this we have the expression, the ten lost tribes of Israel.

So, they would be a fragmented community. The second main part of the book, notice the word Shema. S-H-E-M-A means hear, listen.

And that's the word used for the next three parts. These three words are messages against Israel. 3:1 says hear this word.

4:1 says hear this word. 5:1 says hear this word. So, he develops his second main section of the book under this word.

Listen up. It's an imperative in the Hebrew. Attend.

Listen. Alright, in chapter 3, God's judgment on his quote chosen. Notice 3:2 he refers to his people as chosen.

Yeah, they were people of privileged status, people of election love. God had called them, set them apart from all the families of the earth. And yet, they're not going to get a pass, even though they are chosen.

He talks about bringing them up out of Egypt, and yet their sins cannot be ignored. He then enters this very effective next section with a battery of rhetorical questions. A rhetorical question is a question intended to elicit not an outward response but it's to be answered in your mind.

And what he does here is say every effect has its cause. And he goes into a whole list of questions, rhetorical questions. Do two walk together unless they've agreed to do so? Of course not.

Does a lion roar in a thicket when he has no prey? Cause and effect. The roaring is because he's got prey. Does he growl in his den when he's caught nothing? Again, lions and lambs.

Here's the shepherd prophet writing out of this background. Cause and effect. Does a bird fall into a trap in the ground when no snare has been set? Every effect has its cause.

Then he builds here to the climax that says, okay, the reason I'm here, there's a cause behind it. And that cause is God has sent me. I am, if you will, here I am.

I'm God's spokesperson. He sent me. Surely, the sovereign Lord does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants, the prophets.

Verse 8, the lion is roared, who will not fear? The sovereign Lord has spoken, who can but prophesy? My appearance in Israel also has its cause. It's because God has spoken and I am his spokesperson. So, he builds then, in a sense, an a fortiori argument from the lesser to the greater.

And so, I am here to prophesy what God has given to me. He then alludes to his shepherd's life. Verse 12, as a shepherd saves from the lion's mouth two legs or a piece of veneers.

So will the Israelites be saved, those who sit in Samaria on the edges of their beds and in Damascus on their couches? So, he's suggesting here that a remnant is going to survive, but it's going to be very much a mutilated remnant. It's going to be a remnant that's dog-eared, if you will, that's experienced a considerable hardship.

It's going to be a wounded remnant. Some have suggested because the rich of Damascus may have been so rich, some of them even had homes extending up into

Damascus, because you notice in 3:12 he talks about those who not only are sitting in Samaria, but those all the way up in Damascus. Maybe their riches extended all the way there.

He builds to the end of chapter 4 by talking about the altars of Bethel are going to have the horns of the altar cut off. And by horns of the altar this simply means the Mickey Mouse type ears. These rock-like projections on a stone altar are the horns of the altar.

We have several examples of these, one in Beersheba and several other locations in Israel. A cairn or a horn is simply a projection. One of the great mistranslations of the Bible happened when the Vulgate was being translated.

As the Law of Moses says when he was seeing God and the glory of God, his face, namely Moses' face shone and there were kernaim, which is a dual in Hebrew. It speaks of two projections coming from Moses' face. Two rays of light shining out.

Literally, the two horns of an animal are one way of translating it. And when you know Michelangelo's Moses is the Moses with horns. And that's how that was translated.

But the idea was he was radiating light from his face. Two projections of light. So the altars of Bethel and the horns of the altar are going to be cut off.

The blood was sometimes applied to the horns of altars. Horns of altars could also be used as a place of immunity as it is used in Adonijah, who sought asylum there. He thought he was going to be David's son, who was going to reign instead of Solomon.

And when the jig was up and his short-lived attempt to take the kingdom away from Solomon, he claimed immunity temporarily there at the altar by grasping the horns of the altar. So, these were rock-like projections that look more like Mickey Mouse ears rather than animal horns in terms of some of the examples, at least that we've uncovered. He talks about taking down winter houses, summer houses, mansions and the use of ivory in these homes.

So again, the emphasis is against riches because they have corrupted the hearts of people. Their one passion in life is social status. Look at chapter 4, the demeaning words.

If any pastor of America got up and addressed the women in the front pew as cows of Bashan, do you think he'd be seeking another pastorate? I sort of think he probably would. Those words would be bitter. The area of Bashan is up in the area of what we call today the Golan Heights, directly east in the area, up in the hills going up toward Assyria, directly east of the Dead Sea.

This is Bashan. The soil there was such it produced a very sleek kind of prized cow in that particular region. The soil is very volcanic.

And these fat, sleek, prized cows who could graze in the pastures up there. This was kind of legendary. Deuteronomy 32:4 and Ezekiel 39:18 refer to this area of Bashan known for its prized cattle.

By addressing the women as cows of Bashan, what is he saying? He uses this powerful figure because, in their ease and in their luxury, they are oppressing the poor. They're just rushing around for more food and more drink, and they are totally oblivious to others around them. And calling them cows, they are trampling on all that is fragile around them.

The poor are being oppressed, and the needy are crushed. And they bark to their husbands, bring us some drinks. Sort of the reversal of the roles in the ancient world.

And so, the call is these opulent, greedy, upper-class women are going to be taken down again because of their ease and their luxury. And the call is once again toward captivity. Last point for today.

It says in 4:2, you might just read that as another interesting metaphor of the prophets. It says they will be taken away with hooks. We actually have pictures of Assyrian monuments.

You can see these in the British Museum in London. They are Assyrian reliefs from palaces showing Israelites with fish hooks protruding from their jowls, as the captors described.

We've got you hooked, and we're taking you away. Leading you away with fish hooks. Dragging you into captivity, if you will.

Even if it's against your will, so, it's a fascinating mention of fish hooks here in 3.2. The Assyrians actually use that figure in their reliefs. Alright, that will be it for today.

Next time, we'll get well into finishing Amos and hitting more high points.

This is Dr. Marv Wilson in his teaching on the Prophets. This is session 12, Amos, Part 2.