

# The Book of Amos

from the book

Minor Prophets: Major Messages

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# Contents

Preface.....	6
How To Use This Study Guide.....	6
Introduction.....	8
Major and Minor Prophets.....	8
Who Was This Man Called Amos?.....	9
What Conditions in the Northern Tribes Made Amos' Prophecy Necessary?.....	10
Chapter One.....	12
Amos 1:1-2.....	12
Amos 1:3-5.....	15
Amos 1:6-8.....	20
Amos 1:9-10.....	24
Amos 1:11-12.....	26
Amos 1:13-15.....	29
Chapter Two.....	35
Amos 2:1-3.....	35
Amos 2:4-5.....	39
Amos 2:6-8.....	42
Amos 2:9-11.....	47
Amos 2:12-16.....	52
Chapter Three.....	58
Amos 3:1-2.....	58

Amos 3:7-8.....	69
Amos 3:9-10.....	72
Amos 3:11.....	75
Amos 3:12.....	78
Amos 3:13-15.....	80
Chapter Four.....	85
Amos 4:1-3.....	85
Amos 4:4-6.....	89
Amos 4:7-8.....	94
Amos 4:9.....	97
Amos 4:10-11.....	100
Amos 4:12-13.....	104
Chapter Five.....	108
Amos 5:1-3.....	108
Amos 5:4-9.....	112
Amos 5:10-13.....	118
Amos 5:14-15.....	123
Amos 5:16-20.....	126
Amos 5:21-22.....	130
Amos 5:23-25.....	133
Amos 5:26-27.....	137
Chapter Six.....	139
Amos 6:1-2.....	139

Amos 6:3-6.....	142
Amos 6:7-9.....	147
Amos 6:10-12.....	149
Amos 6:13-14.....	154
Chapter Seven.....	157
Amos 7:1.....	157
Amos 7:2-6.....	159
Amos 7:7-9.....	163
Amos 7:10-13.....	166
Amos 7:14-16.....	169
Amos 7: 17.....	171
Chapter Eight.....	174
Amos 8:1.....	174
Amos 8:4-6.....	178
Amos 8:7-10.....	182
Amos 8: 11-14.....	188
Chapter Nine.....	193
Amos 9:1-5.....	193
Amos 9:6.....	198
Amos 9:7.....	202
Amos 9:8-10.....	205
Amos 9:11-12.....	209
Amos 9:13-15.....	213

Epilogue: A Summary of the Nine Chapters of Amos.....	219
Chapter One.....	219
Chapter Two.....	219
Chapter Three.....	219
Chapter Four.....	219
Chapter Five.....	220
Chapter Six.....	220
Chapter Seven.....	220
Chapter Eight.....	220
Chapter Nine.....	220

## Preface

The book of Amos is one of the books of the Word. Not much has been written about it in the New Church. Since I started working on this study of Amos, I have searched our library holdings with the hope I would turn up a hidden or forgotten study by some New Church scholar. Although there are sermons using a verse or part of a chapter of Amos as a text, I have found no detailed study of Amos or other books of the Minor Prophets. Why not? Is there a perception that the Writings lack a verse-by-verse explanation of these Prophets?

So far, my research has uncovered several thorough New Church books on the Major Prophets, such as Isaiah, Daniel, and Ezekiel. The absence of similar books on the Minor Prophets motivated me to undertake a study guide approach to filling this void. I hope this first study guide will prove helpful to others and that additional study guides will follow this one. Ultimately, I want the Minor Prophets to be accessible and hope to contribute to their study and use in the church. Most of all, I'd like this effort to be a challenge so that others will be encouraged to build on and improve this pilot project.

## How To Use This Study Guide

1. A slow, unhurried reading of Amos is essential. Read each chapter before you look at the related section of the Study guide. Read the chapter again while you are using the study guide, and read it a third time when you are finished. This process will give you a powerful sense of the series of events and meanings in each chapter. It is important to feel comfortable with all the names, places, and announcements in Amos' prophecy. When possible, some historical information will be included in the study guide to increase reading comprehension and enhance application.

The book of Amos is not an easy work to read and understand. Unlike some of the prophets—Jonah or Hosea—Amos doesn't tell a story that is easy to remember. He brings prophecies against neighbors of Israel, mentioning names and places one can only recognize with the help of maps and reference books. One has to wade through many historical facts to catch a glimpse of the message in Amos, so it is important to balance history with solid research of the spiritual sense. Researching can require a table full of books and hours of comparing and contrasting meanings that can be drawn from the internal sense. This study guide intends to help the researcher by including a full set of quotes so that he or she may spend less time juggling books and more time reflecting on the issues the internal sense presents. My hope is that the reader will concentrate on the process of applying doctrine to life.

2. As you read Amos, there are several resources you will want to use with this study guide. The first is a book of the Writings called *Summaries of the Internal*

*Sense of the Prophets and Psalms*.<sup>1</sup> This work includes a verse-by-verse overview of each of the nine chapters of Amos. The overview gives a general statement about the internal sense. Our research will move us toward the particulars of the internal sense.

3. Another important reference tool is *Searle's General Index to Swedenborg's Scripture Quotations*. This reference shows where in the Writings a verse(s) of the Word is either explained specifically or used to illustrate a doctrinal point that we can add to our study. There is also another use of this work. As we study, each researcher will be led by the Lord's Providence in myriad of ways and according to specific needs or states. Knowing how to use this book will help us look up related passages in the Word that will add to our knowledge of the three-fold Word.
4. You will soon discover that not every verse, word, name, etc. is directly quoted and explained in the Writings. However, there are often references to the same name, place, or thing in the explanation of a different verse of the Word. The hope is that reflection on these other references and their associated doctrine will help us see possible applications to our study of Amos. We will need to use "derived doctrine." Please don't run away from this maligned term. If we use it properly, admitting openly that it is derived, we bring no harm to the internal sense. Think about it for a minute. The Writings give us a verse-by-verse explanation of Genesis, Exodus, and Revelation. Do we stay away from the other books of the Word because the Lord didn't reveal them in the Writings in the same way He did Genesis, Exodus, and Revelation? I think not. We must look for, find, and wisely use "derived doctrine" with a humble acknowledgment that we have tried to apply doctrine with a degree of human prudence.
5. Keep a notebook handy during your study times. Write out insights, questions, and any summaries you find helpful in organizing your thoughts about each chapter. **The goal of this study guide is not to give a detailed summary of the internal sense but to start the researcher's quest for deeper insights.**
6. There is a wonderful explanation of Amos, chapter 8, in the *Dole Bible Study Notes, Volume 4*. There you will see an example of historical and spiritual information corroborating one another. It is well worth your time to read and reflect on this explanation. You might also enjoy looking at the *Sower Notes, Volume III, Chapter 58*.
7. At the end of each chapter in the study guide, you will find a study review. The review includes a summary of each section to help you reinforce and build on your understanding of several of the key points.
8. Begin each study unit with a devotional prayer asking the Lord to guide and direct your thoughts. Certainly beginning in this sphere has the power to inspire and open our minds with a higher spiritual priority that will keep us in the company of the Lord's angels. As the Writings teach, we must seek to love truth for truth's sake. Such an approach will free each reader from preconceived ideas that might limit his or her ability to "see" the intent and message of the Lord's Word.

# Introduction

Before we begin our study, it will be helpful to learn some background information about the books of the prophets and their approximate dates.

## MAJOR AND MINOR PROPHETS

Let's begin with a brief description of what the terms "Major Prophets" and "Minor Prophets" mean. In the Old Testament, there are 16 books referred to as the books of the Prophets. Biblical scholars have divided the 16 books into two categories. Augustine was the first person to use the terms "Major" and "Minor" to indicate the size of the books, not their relative importance. The Minor Prophets contain fewer chapters than those of the Major Prophets.

Scholars do not agree on the timeline of the prophets. I found at least ten different timelines. None of them agree completely on dates. If I were to simplify the research information I would say there are essentially two timelines that seem to have the acceptance among the scholars. So I offer both for your consideration.

### The Minor Prophets

Amos	750 BC *	Obadiah	840-830 BC
Hosea	745-734 BC *	Joel	830-750 BC
Micah	701 BC	Jonah	780-740 BC
Zephaniah	628-626 BC	Hosea	765-725 BC
Nahum	614-612 BC	Amos	760 BC
Habakkuk	605-600 BC	Micah	740-700 BC
Haggai	520 BC	Nahum	640-620 BC
Zechariah	520-519 BC	Zephaniah	640-609 BC
Malachi	460 BC	Habakkuk	680-605 BC
Obadiah	400-350 BC	Haggai	520 BC
Joel	350 BC	Zechariah	520-480 BC
Jonah	300 BC	Malachi	420-400 BC

## The Major Prophets

Isaiah	742-687 BC *
Jeremiah	627-580 BC
Ezekiel	593-563 BC
Daniel	605-536 BC

## WHO WAS THIS MAN CALLED AMOS?

Amos was a shepherd in a region called Tekoa, about six miles south of Bethlehem. Commentaries describe the area as somewhat rugged, rocky, and with sparse grazing fields. Shepherds in that region had to make extensive trips to feed their flocks.

In the book of Amos, we find two uses Amos performed: he kept sheep (Amos 1:1), and he cultivated sycamore trees (Amos 7:14). One translation says that he was a “pincher” of the sycamore tree blossom. This means he was a pruner. The sycamore tree in that region produced a low quality fig. Its taste was not as exquisite as that of other fig trees, so it was called a poor man’s fig tree. When overwhelmed by hunger, the poor availed themselves of the sycamore tree’s abundance.

Unlike the “sons of the Prophets” or the priests, Amos had no training or preparation prior to his call to bear a message from the Lord to the ten Northern Tribes of Israel. Amos appeared to the people, spoke the message, and then departed, never to be heard of again. It is interesting to note that his name is not mentioned anywhere else in the Word except for Luke 3:25 and most biblical scholars think that this verse actually refers to Amoz, the father of the prophet Isaiah.

Amos’ name means “burden bearer.” That seems quite appropriate for the task at hand. When we study Amos, our burden is to think from essence and not person. Rather than getting caught up in Amos himself, we need to get caught up in what his prophecies represent. How can we find ourselves in his text? Where does each lesson challenge us as members of the New Church?

We can learn more about who Amos was in the Word by considering his two uses—shepherd and pruner of sycamore trees. In Arcana Coelestia (AC) 343, we are told that a shepherd represents a person who exercises charity. Someone who leads and teaches is called a shepherd, and those who are led and taught are called a flock. This shepherd tended sycamore trees, the “poor man’s fig trees.” A sycamore tree denotes external truth, and a fig tree represents external good (AC 7553).

Putting the two uses of Amos together may help us understand why he was chosen to go to the Northern Tribes. They had fallen on spiritually hard times. The people as a flock, and their priests as shepherds, were in a wilderness state, and their external

lives were about as tasteless as the figs on the sycamore tree. Genuine obedience to the Lord was at a low point. The Lord always seeks to improve, or lift, the quality of His children. He sought to help the people shun evils as sins so they might do the work of repentance. Until the external part of a person is willing to be put in order, the person resists the ways of the Lord. Because the Israelites in the Northern Tribes were in this state, hard prophecies had to be spoken to them. The Lord chose Amos to reveal serious spiritual disorders.

Fear, predictions of doom, and hard sayings about spiritual disorder are not topics people enjoy. We prefer happier themes. But when the Word says the Lord “roars from Mount Zion,” we need to remember the “roaring” speaks of His zeal and love, not anger. The Lord doesn’t get angry. He holds up a mirror so that His people may see what they are doing to themselves. He wants us all to shun evils as sins to keep from losing our souls. “For what will it profit a man, if he gains the whole world and forfeits his life?” (Matt. 16:26)

### **WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPHETS?**

To learn more about prophets, read AC 2534. Essentially, the Writings teach us four things about the prophets in the Word.

1. They delivered the words of the Lord and not their own.
2. The messages they gave to the people often came to them in dreams or visions.
3. Often, the prophets had no idea what the prophecies meant.
4. The prophets had to memorize or write down their prophecies in order to pass them on.

Biblical scholars think that Amos wrote his prophecies down.

### **WHAT CONDITIONS IN THE NORTHERN TRIBES MADE AMOS’ PROPHECY NECESSARY?**

The *Oxford Annotated Bible* prefaces the book of Amos with a useful summary, excerpted here:

During the long and peaceful reign of Jeroboam II (786-746 BC) Israel attained a height of territorial expansion and national prosperity never again reached. The military security and economical affluence which characterized this age were taken by many Israelites as signs of the Lord’s special favor toward them which they felt they deserved because of their extravagant support of the official shrines.

Amos...was called by God...to the difficult mission of preaching harsh words in a smooth season. He denounced Israel, as well as her neighbors, for reliance upon military might, and for grave injustice in social dealings, abhorrent immorality, and shallow, meaningless piety.

This description highlights the main problems in the Northern Tribes:

1. They were experiencing a “smooth season”—things were going well for everyone, and people felt a comfortable spiritual laziness.
2. They gloried in their territorial growth and wealth.
3. They thought they were a favored people, that life owed them this prosperity.
4. Their military security allowed them to trust more in their own power and less in the Lord’s protection.
5. They committed serious injustices in their social interactions with one another.
6. Their behavior was immoral.
7. Their worship became shallow and meaningless.
8. They saw their financial support of the shrines as merit worthy of special status with the Lord.

All of these problems show us why the Lord needed to “roar out of Zion.” The Northern Tribes had failed to pursue eternal values. Instead, they longed for the things that thieves, rust, and moths could take from them. We can also see why many of Israel’s neighbors received warnings in the prophecy of Amos. The Lord wanted Israel to see in others what was so deeply involved in their hearts.

Israel thrilled at hearing the prophecy against others but resented the prophecy when the Divine light exposed their own dark motives. The Oxford summary continues:

Amos’ forceful, uncompromising preaching brought him in conflict with the religious authorities of his day...A priest named Amaziah (complained and accused Amos of treason and) sought to have him expelled...from the royal sanctuary at Bethel and (Amos was) commanded not to prophesy there again....

With this information in mind, let’s begin the study of Amos. Remember to use a notebook. Write out impressions, questions, and insights for your own reflection or to share in the group with whom you are studying.

# Chapter One

## **AMOS 1:1-2**

*“The words of Amos, who was among the sheep breeders of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake. And he said:*

*The Lord roars from Zion,  
and utters His voice from Jerusalem;  
The pastures of the shepherds mourn,  
and the top of Carmel withers.”*

## **Passages From the Writings**

### ***Prophets and Psalms (P&P)***

- “The Lord concerning the Word and doctrine thence...” (verses 1, 2)

### ***Arcana Coelestia (AC) 3995[3]***

- • “For this reason spotted is expressed in the original language by a word that also means lambs (as in Isa xl. 10, 11); and speckled by a word that also means a herdsman (as in 2 Kings iii. 4; Amos i. 1).”

### ***Apocalypse Revealed (AR) 612***

- “...therefore by Zion...is meant the church everywhere...It is called Mount Zion because by a mountain is signified love...That by Mount Zion is signified heaven and the church where the Lord alone is worshiped, may appear...”  
Amos 1:2 is cited along with other references.

### ***Apocalypse Explained (AE) 601[15]***

- “In Amos (i.2)...roaring from Zion signifies grievous distress, and the voice from Jerusalem lamentation; the mourning of the habitation of the shepherds, and the drying up of the head of Carmel, signifies because of the vastation of all the goods and truths of the church; the habitation of the shepherds signifying all the goods of the church; the head of Carmel signifies the truths of the church, because in Carmel there were vineyards, and wine signifies the truths of the church.”

### ***AE 601[16]***

- “...the roaring like that of a lion...signifies grief and lamentation over the vastation of Divine truth in the church by the falsities of evil.”

### ***AE 850[15]***

- “In Amos...(i.2) to roar and the roaring of a lion, when predicated of Jehovah, signify an ardent zeal for protecting heaven and the church, and for saving those who are therein by the Divine truth and its power, which is done by destroying the evils and falsities that rise up out of hell...”

## **Derived Doctrine**

### *Tekoa*

- We are not given the correspondence of this town. We do know that it lay 6 miles south of Bethlehem. Bethlehem represents “the Word in its spiritual sense; the Lord willed to be born there because He is the Word.” (*AE 700[9]*)
- • The word Bethlehem means “house (place) of bread” or food. Might Tekoa’s southerly distance from Bethlehem represent the way that the children of Israel, in their minds, were moving away from relying on the Word as the house of bread?
- “South represents intelligence, which is acquired by knowledges of spiritual and celestial truths.” (*AC 1458*) Is this geographic representation there to remind us that the Lord is going to return the church to intelligence about spiritual and celestial truths?

### *The Lord’s Concerns*

- “Israel in the days of Uzziah, one of the good kings of Judah...signifies the Lord’s royalty, or some aspect of His kingdom.” (*AC 1409[4]*) “Royalty of the Lord signifies heaven and the church.” (*AR 664*) These quotations indicate the range of the Lord’s concern for His heavenly kingdom and the church. He is concerned about everyone in His kingdom, not just the ancient Israelites.

### *The Reigns of Joash and Jeroboam*

- Jeroboam the son of Joash: The Writings do not provide the specific significations of these two kings. However, when we look at the history of their reigns, we can see a spiritual decline from moderate “piety” and acknowledgment of the Lord by Joash to brazen disorder under Jeroboam’s leadership. During their reigns, the quality of worship declined: worship of “strange gods” and use of temple prostitutes were permitted in the temple. Spiritually wise and prudent kings and priests would never have allowed

these practices to enter the temple of the Lord. The kings and priest became “people pleasers” instead of pursuing spiritual wisdom. The consequent comingling of holy and unholy things was abhorrent to the Lord and a degradation of all that gave Israel its distinctiveness and representation.

- Although the people looked and acted happy with their lives during this time, the Lord saw within their hearts the seed of spiritual death, and He needed to expose its deadliness.

### *The Earthquake*

- The end of the church (or its perversion) is described in the Word by concussions, overturning, and sinking of the earth. Consequently, earthquakes signify changes of the state of the church. (AR 33, 711.)

### *Two Years*

- In the internal sense, a “year” does not refer to a year of time. “...angels, who are in the internal sense of the Word, cannot have an idea of any year...therefore instead of a year they have an idea of what is full in respect to states of the church, and what is eternal in respect to states of heaven...” (AC 2906[10]) Our verse sets its time as “two years before the earthquake.” Why? When the Word refers to “two” of anything, it is often a reference to the will and the understanding. Considering the meaning of an earthquake (see above), could “two years” represent the state of the will and understanding in the process of being falsified or emptied out?

### **Putting It All Together**

1. Amos represents the Lord. The Lord is our Shepherd, and He is most concerned with His flock. We learn from the Writings that our knowledge of the Word is “speckled” with falsity. When we allow that speckled quality to grow out of control instead of shunning it as sin, falsification of the Word enters our hearts and minds.
2. The roaring of the Lord from Zion and the uttering of His voice from Jerusalem teach us several things about Him in this context:
  - He has grievous distress for His church and people.
  - He laments.
  - He mourns.
  - He has an ardent zeal for protecting heaven and the church.
  - He warns of coming vastations.
  - He points to the drying up of our “Mount Carmel” and the effects this will have on our “vineyards.” (AE 601[15])

3. The book of Amos is not about anger, revenge, and a loss of the Lord's patience. Instead, it is a love story, a story of the Lord's great love and concern for both heaven and earth. This is a book of promise: The Lord will triumph over hell's quest to dominate us and destroy the gift of salvation. This victory is not an occasional interest of the Lord's; He has an "ardent zeal" to protect us and the angelic heavens. The book of Amos also talks about the coming of the New Church.

## Read and Review

Please go back and read Amos 1:1-2.

Next, review the passages from the Writings, beginning with what we read from P&P: "The Lord concerning the Word and doctrine..."

## Questions to Stimulate Reflection

1. What parts of this opening prophecy do you think set the tone for all that will follow?
2. Look back at "Putting it all Together." Can you see ways to apply these ideas to our church and lives?
3. Is there a specific challenge to our church in what you learned in this section? What makes it simple or difficult to apply this information to the New Church?
4. Can we compare our outlook and experiences with those of the children of Israel at that time? Have we, like Israel, become overly content or comfortable with the way things are in matters of life? Why or why not?
5. Do we, like Joash and Jeroboam, close our eyes to co-mingling ideas of idolatry and unfaithfulness (in all forms)? Is this something that happens to groups, or only to individuals?
6. In what ways can we think about listening attentively to the "roaring of the Lord from Zion?"
7. Do we hear the "roar of the Lord" as care, concern and an ardent desire to save and protect His people? What might keep us from hearing it this way? How can we change our hearing?
8. The book of Amos is a love story: will we hold this idea throughout the 9 chapters? It will be a theme we need to revisit often. Think about ways to hold this idea in your mind as you continue your study of Amos.

## AMOS 1:3-5

*"Thus says the Lord:*

*For three transgressions of Damascus, and for four,  
I will not turn away its punishment,  
Because they have threshed Gilead with implements of iron.*

*But I will send a fire into the house of Hazael,  
Which shall devour the palaces of Ben-Hadad.  
I will also break the gate bar of Damascus,  
And cut off the inhabitant from the valley of Aven,  
And the one who holds the scepter from Beth Eden.  
The people of Syria shall go captive to Kir,  
Says the Lord."*

## **Passages From the Writings**

### ***P&P***

- "...concerning those who pervert the knowledges from the Word which serve for doctrine, who thus turn aside also the good of these knowledges; that they shall perish, vers. 3-5."

### ***AE 532[12]***

- "The third and fourth generation signifies all who are in falsities from evil... three in the contrary sense signifying falsities, and four evils.... Like things are signified by three and four transgressions in Amos 1:3, 6, 9, 11, & 2:1, 4, 6)."

### ***AC 9496***

- "As the staves by which the ark was carried signified power, so also did the staves or bars by which they fastened the gates of cities, as is evident from...Amos 1:5."

## **Derived Doctrine**

### *Damascus*

- Damascus, the capital of Syria, is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities of the world. Damascus was once a city where the "...remains of worship as practiced in the ancient church (existed) and from whence came Eber or the Hebrew nation." (AC 1769)
- Sadly, Damascus degenerated from a city of strength for the people of the ancient church to a place of perversion and became a chronic enemy of Israel. The Writings remind us of what the Lord said about the enemies of the household: the members of a household can represent "...the affection of falsity opposed to good; and...in [a] man who is in temptation [his] evils and falsities are within or are his, [so] they are said to be of his household...." (AC 4843[4])

### *Transgressions*

- “In the Word, evils are now called ‘sins,’ now ‘iniquities,’ and now ‘transgressions’... Those called ‘transgressions’ which take place contrary to the truths of faith...” (AC 6563)

### *Gilead*

- They threshed Gilead with the implements of iron.
- Gilead has a series of representations:
  - “...the first good, that of the bodily senses and their pleasures.” (AC 4117[3])
  - “A state of good in remote conjunction” (AC 4129)
  - “...the sensuous good by which a man is first initiated when being regenerated.” (AC 4255[4])
  - “...the good of the church, which is charity, and the good and truth of faith.” (AE 328[17])
  - “...reasoning from the literal sense of the Word in confirmation of falsities.” (AE 654[44])
- Gilead represents that first state of enthusiasm in people for the things of the church, a time when they give some thought to ways of using or applying the truths. In this state, people believe that they know all that is necessary, but they may easily be misled because they are not yet able to distinguish between friendship and charity; shunning evils as sins and the as-of-self; zeal and anger; and other important distinctions that spiritual maturity would teach them. All of this leaves “Gilead” vulnerable to the “threshing” of Damascus.

### *Implements of Iron*

- The “implements of iron” refer historically to a barbaric Syrian custom of using machines with sharp, iron blades to thresh the bodies of their enemies following a battle. It mattered little to them whether their helpless victims were dead or alive during the threshing.
- “Iron signifies truth in ultimates, which is called sensual truth; which, when it is separated from the rational and spiritual truth, is converted into a falsehood.” (AR 847)

### *Fire Sent into the House of Hazeal*

- Hazeal became a ruler of Damascus through a strange series of events. Ben-Hadad was stricken with an illness. He sent Hazeal to Elisha to ask what the outcome of his illness might be. Elisha, seeking ways to bring haughty, irreligious Israel to its knees, secretly anointed Hazeal king. Hazeal returned

and murdered Ben-Hadad, embarking on a long reign of terror and invasions within the divided tribes of Israel and Judah.

- Fire represents some kind of love. It is either a good love or a destructive self-love.

#### *Devouring the Palaces of King Ben-Hadad*

- Note this quote from AC 9434. “The Lord appears to the evil as a ‘devouring or consuming fire’...” A king denotes ruling truths. Fire in the palace, in an evil sense represents “the punishment of the profanation of what is sacred and holy.” (AR 748) “Palace (Amos iv. 3) signifies the Word, consequently, the truth of doctrine which is from good.” (AC 4926)

#### *Breaking the Gate Bar of Damascus*

- A gate signifies the passage to the rational mind. (AC 2943)
- A gate of a city signifies doctrine by which there is an entrance into the church. (AC 2943)
- A gate signifies introductory knowledges of what is good and true, out of the literal sense of the Word. (AR 899, 901, 904)
- Could the breaking of the gate of Damascus represent the Lord’s exposing, opening (unlocking), or defeat of the false principles within the rational mind?

#### *Aven*

- Aven represents “...the things of falsity and the reasonings therefrom of those in worship, which, regarded in itself, is interior idolatry, or extreme self-love.” (AC 273)
- The valley of Aven: “A valley is lower than mountains; so it signifies what is lower or external in worship...it signifies falsities and reasonings which falsify worship, and at length profane it.” (AC 1292)

#### *The One who Holds the Scepter from Beth Eden*

- “...scepter signifies divine truth as to government....” (AE 431)
- “Beth” means “house.”
- “Eden” means “love.” The two words together mean “a house of love.” What kind of “house of love” is being cut off?

#### *The People of Syria shall go Captive to Kir*

- What help do we get from correspondences?
- Syria signifies the church as to knowledges of truth and good. (AE 195)

- Kir “...denotes those who possess the knowledges of good and truth, but pervert them.” (AC 9340)
- Combining the meanings of these two verses can give us a hint that the Lord is going to remove the perversion of good and truth. This verse describes the captivity of those who pervert the truth, and the previous verse shows the Lord removing the “scepter” from the house of self love, a place where perversion of good and truth would take place.

## Putting It All Together

1. As you read the first and second chapters of Amos, you will notice how many times the “three transgressions...and four...” occur. That phrase is in Amos 1:3, 6, 9, and 11, and Amos 2:1, 4, and 6. It occurs seven times. Please consider why the Lord would repeat this phrase to six nations around Israel. The final “three transgressions...and four” is spoken to Israel. Why seven times? Why does it end with Israel?
2. Damascus in a sense reminds us of our connection with innocent remains. Gilead represents a sense of discovery, a time when we feel alive with the beauty of the senses. We love to touch or feel things to know them. How often do we want to take “things” in our hands, or smell the wonders of the world? The use of the five senses opens our mental world. These gifts at the beginning are filled with innocence. From remains, we have a kind of “mediate conjunction” with the Lord. Idealism abounds and being good is a way of getting approval and recognition. But at what point does the good beginning become the enemy of the household within? When do the sensuous, bodily pleasures become the “instruments of iron” that thresh our Gilead states? Probably, it happens when we learn to cover up our evil intentions with what appears reasonable and right, or when we put an emphasis on being right for the wrong reasons.
3. Damascus, in its prime, had a full amount of truth, but it perverted that into falsity. We are taught that the “three transgressions...and...four” represent turning truth to falsity, and “four” represents turning the natural and spiritual understanding and will into evil. The literal sense gives the impression that it is the Lord who will not turn away punishment, but it is really unrepentant self-love that brings on the punishment and misery.
4. This truth is drawn from the correspondences of the fire in the house of Hazeel, the devouring of the palaces, the gate bar of Damascus, the valley of Aven, the scepter of Beth Eden, and the people being carried off to Kir. Every one of these references deals with the results of perverting the Word.
5. Appearances mislead the rational mind. The sensual seems so much more alive and adaptable to human needs. In this way, what was so promising and vital at first becomes the enslaver. Appearances turn the mind, which could have drawn doctrine from the Word for good, to rationalizations, lies, and cover-ups, and the wayward proprium becomes the “implement of iron.”

## Read and Review

Read Amos 1:3-5.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## Questions to Stimulate Reflection

1. Can you think of some current perversions of the Word in the world around you? Are there times when we attempt to change or correct things of the church and doctrine for personal convenience? When this occurs, do we do so with a thorough study of the Word, or are we influenced by “modern” consensus?
2. Can we identify with the “Gilead” state of misguided sensual enthusiasm turning us away from the Lord? When does this happen? What can we do to turn ourselves back to Him?
3. Are there things which you do that you know are wrong, but you seem unable to overthrow them? Do you feel carried off to captivity?
4. Can you believe and find solace in the Lord’s promise to break the “gate bar” so that the rational mind can find freedom again? How can you see this working in your life, or in the life of a church?
5. How do you understand the fire entering in and devouring the palaces? Can you think of any examples of the things this represents?
6. Is it of any spiritual significance that Damascus is known to be the oldest continuously inhabited city in the world? Do we hear “remains” in this teaching?

## AMOS 1:6-8

*“Thus says the Lord:*

*For three transgressions of Gaza, and for four,  
I will not turn away its punishment,  
Because they took captive the whole of captivity  
To deliver them up to Edom.  
But I will send in a fire upon the wall of Gaza,  
Which shall devour its palaces.  
I will cut off the inhabitant from Ashdod,  
And the one who holds the scepter from Ashkelon;  
I will turn my hand against Ekron,  
And the remnant of the Philistines shall perish,  
Says the Lord God.”*

## Passages From the Writings

### *P&P*

- • “Concerning those who apply the Word to a heretical falsity, that they shall perish, vers. 6-8.”

### *AE 532[12]*

- Remember that this passage teaches that the phrase “for three transgressions...and for four...” refers to falsities and evils interfering with the natural and spiritual understanding and will.

### *AC 1197*

- The Philistines were part of the Ancient Church. In *AC 1197*, we are given a broad sweep of the Philistines’ history with a glimpse of their sad, perplexing heresy and its effect on Israel: “...they (the Philistines) sold the sons of Judah and the sons of Jerusalem signifies that they had no love and no faith...which was removed far from their borders.” Heresy removes love and faith far from their borders. Amos 1:8 is cited in *AC 1197*.

## Derived Doctrine

### *Gaza*

- “That by Gaza are signified the things that have been revealed concerning charity...” (*AC 1207* and *AC 1210*)

### *Captivity*

- “Captivity signifies being seduced, and so led away from truths and goods.” (*AR 591*)
- Question: could the phrase “they took captive the whole captivity” represent a complete seduction of truths and goods?

### *To be Delivered up to Edom*

- Edom, in the good sense, signifies the Lord’s human essence; also, strength, power, or good of the natural principle. In the opposite sense, “the natural man originating in self-love, which despises and rejects all truth, whence comes the devastation...” (*AC 3322[8]*).

### *Fire upon the Walls of Gaza and the Devouring of its Palaces*

- Gaza signifies “things revealed concerning charity.” (AC 1207) We can see that if the heart of charity is seduced and self-love rules, there will be a fire of destruction from within that will wreck or destroy the walls of our defense. Self-love defends no one. It is a choice of the heart that takes for itself and gives nothing back. Charity that has been “burnt out” destroys or devours one’s palaces.

### *Cutting off the Inhabitant from Ashdod*

- Ashdod was the site where the Philistines kept Dagon, their god. “Their religious principle was...represented by their idol called Dagon...[who] according to their description, was formed like a man from the head to the navel, and like a fish from the navel downwards; its being like a man... represented the understanding derived from truths; and like a fish... represented the natural destitute of the good of love...” (AE 817[10])

### *Ashkelon*

- Ashkelon was one of the five cities of the Philistines and the only one on the seacoast. Ashkelon bragged that Joshua or David could not take its city. The Lord said in these verses that its scepter (divine truth that governs) would be cut off.

### *Ekron*

- When the Philistines captured the ark of the covenant, they carried it to Ekron. While that city had the ark, they experienced painful physical problems that caused them to get rid of the ark as fast as they could. The city of Ekron and the Philistine god Dagon represent “the god of all falsities.” (AE 740[10])
- The god of all falsities could not stand or prevail against the Lord. Isn’t that a powerful truth?

### *Ahaziah*

- Ahaziah, a son of Ahab and king of Israel (circa 850-849), became ill. Rather than calling on the God of Israel for help with his illness, he preferred to go to Ekron so that he could consult Beelzebul. In *AE 740[10]*, Beelzebul is called the “...god of flies...the falsities of the sensual man...thus falsities of every kind.”

## *Heresies*

- Heresies are ever attendant upon the true church, and the ground of heresies is fixation upon some particular article of faith. (AC 362-363.) In AC 10402, we read that heresies arise from “...the literal sense of the Word being separated from its internal sense.”

## *The Remnant of the Philistines shall perish*

- The Lord’s truth will defeat all heresy even when that heresy prides itself on its seductive power.

## **Putting It All Together**

1. These verses tell us about the workings of heresy. Heresies are ever attendant upon the true church. What a necessary teaching for us to consider. We of the New Church need our watchmen upon the walls of the Holy City New Jerusalem to be alert. They need to warn us of the approach of heresy. Heresy is seductive. It is self-love creating and justifying what it wills. Perhaps it comes to us as a “popular” article of faith, but if it has been drawn out and separated from the internal sense, it is a heresy. Noticing the defense of that heresy is crucial. Heresies are defensive. They are sensitive. They perceive anyone as their enemy who speaks against them and will pursue such an enemy with a fervor that imitates religious zeal. The Writings tell us that heretical zeal is really anger directed against the Lord.
2. The god Dagon refers to an understanding that appears human but is actually a natural idea that is destitute of the good of love (charity).
3. The god of flies (those things that thrive on decaying and foul sources) is a god some seek out instead of the One and only God of Heaven and earth. Why would anyone choose decay over what is wholesome? Why would anyone choose darkness over light? Insanity is the only possible explanation for the creation of a god that was half man and half fish.  
This portion of the prophecy tells us that the Lord will remove the scepter from the hand of him who brags about his power to resist Joshua and David. The Lord will remove and defeat heresy because it is devoid and destitute of true charity.

## **Read and Review**

Read Amos 1:6-8.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## **Questions to Stimulation Reflection**

1. What kind of safeguard do we have that will help us find and expose heresy?

2. If we find a beginning or well-entrenched heresy within ourselves, how can we remove its roots from our love?
3. Heresies are ever intent upon destroying the Lord's church. Do you see this as a truism, or a problem that needs our careful and thoughtful attention? The enemies in certain parables did their harm while people slept. Falling asleep mentally is a lifetime nemesis, and we need the Word to wake us up. Do we seek to be roused, or do we find it bothersome?
4. What forms of the god Dagon or Beelzebub exist today? The god Dagon represents the understanding derived from human truths and Beelzebub the natural destitute of the good of love.
5. Why do so many surrounding nations of Israel represent former remnants of the Ancient Church? Why do they provide so much trouble for "their relatives"?

### **AMOS 1:9-10**

*"Thus says the Lord:*

*For three transgressions of Tyre, and for four,  
I will not turn away its punishment,  
Because they delivered up the whole captivity to Edom,  
And did not remember the covenant of brotherhood.  
But I will send fire upon the wall of Tyre,  
Which shall devour its palaces."*

### **Passages From the Writings**

#### ***P&P***

- "...concerning those who pervert the knowledges of good and truth, and thereby do violence to the external sense of the Word, vers. 9, 10."

#### ***AC 367***

- "...both faith and charity are the offspring of the church. Faith is called a man...and charity is called a brother...the union of faith and charity is called the covenant of the brethren." (Amos 1:9)

### **Derived Doctrine**

*Tyre (in a positive sense)*

- "...signifies those who possess spiritual and celestial riches." (AC 425[2])
- "...represents those who possess the knowledges of things celestial and spiritual." (AC 1154)

- “...interior knowledges...” (AC 1201)
- Since the Lord is speaking to Tyre in a corrective manner in these verses in Amos, we must assume that all of the above have an opposite representation.

### *Edom*

- In the good sense, Edom represents the Lord’s human essence (love); also, the strength, power, or good of the natural principle. “In the opposite sense, the natural man originating in self love, which despises and rejects all truth, whence comes the devastation...” (AC 3322)
- AE 746[19] teaches that the universal heaven is in the good of charity toward the neighbor. The universal hell is in anger, enmity, and hatred against the neighbor. We need the covenant of brotherhood to keep our worship and study of the Word in a conjunctive state with the Lord’s Divine Human.

### *Delivering up the Whole Captivity to Edom*

- When hatred, enmity, and revenge possess the mind, one can use the literal sense of the Word to justify almost anything wanted. A person in this state can make slavery, stealing, lying, incest, and many other disjunctive concepts appear to be sanctioned by the literal sense. Such an approach will deliver up the captives to Edom.

### *Fire upon the Wall of Tyre and the Palaces Devoured*

- “He who loves himself, hates all who do not render him service....” (AC 760[2])
- “They who are so delighted with hatreds...are not content with destroying the body, but also wish to destroy the soul.” (AC 815)
- Palaces represent the understanding in which truths are in a beautiful form. Truth is not able to remain beautiful when it is twisted and abused in the literal sense by self-love.

## **Putting It All Together**

1. The integrity of the literal sense has to be protected. It would appear that we have public pressure for scholars to make newer translations of the Word more readable. To do this, some translators who are not familiar with the spiritual sense have focused on using simplistic words to the exclusion of important series of words. If they substitute simpler words without a full study of the original texts, what harm or damage is done to the Word? How much simplifying of the Word can be done without altering the internal sense? Some, little, or much?
2. Are new translations of the Word easier for you to read? Do you find your remains fight to hold on to the King James translation, or whatever

- translation you read as a child? What do you like or dislike about different translations? Are there changes you find upsetting or refreshing? The Word needs to remain as close to the original Hebrew as possible in a translation. How do we get help guarding the literal sense of the Word? What might a New Church translator be able to offer this effort?
3. Those who delight in hatred are not content with destroying the body, but also wish to destroy the soul. The hells will use every possible excuse to discredit the literal sense of the Word and the teachings of the Writings. They hope to work toward the destruction of the soul of Divine Revelation.

## **Read and Review**

Read Amos 1:9-10.  
Read the summary from *P&P*.

## **Questions to Stimulate Reflection**

1. How many disorders in the world do you think can be made to look “reasonable” with quotations inappropriately drawn from the literal sense? Have you ever heard this happen? What was the result?
2. Since many of us are not “translators,” how do we protect our minds from being carried off as captives with errors of doctrine that may result from inaccurate translations? Does the Lord protect those who follow the persuasive leaders of the church so that their palaces are not devoured?
3. What other avenues of thought can we follow using these passages?
4. The Lord has written the Word in such a way that it promises to reach the states of all people. Do we give up too easily and expect the Word to give us all the answers without our having to work for insights? If the Word was so plain that it left no doubt about its meaning, who could stand if the Lord’s teachings were willfully disobeyed?
5. This section seems to tell us that we need to develop an attitude that says, “I may not understand this passage now, but I will prayerfully ask for the Lord’s help so that when it is time for me to see and understand, I will be ready to be led by the Lord’s Word.”
6. Faith is called a “man,” and charity is called a “brother.” Together, they are the offspring of the church. How strong and healthy would you say the church’s “offspring” are today? How do we benefit from that strength? What can we do to support and increase it?

## **AMOS 1:11-12**

*“Thus says the Lord:*

*For three transgressions of Edom, and for four,  
I will not turn away its punishment,*

*Because he pursued his brother with the sword,  
And cast off all pity;  
His anger tore perpetually,  
And he kept his wrath forever.  
But I will send a fire upon Teman,  
Which shall devour the palaces of Bozrah.”*

## **Passages From the Writings**

### ***P&P***

- “...concerning those who pervert the literal sense of the Word through falsity, whereby doctrine perishes, vers. 11, 12.”

### ***AC 4171[3]***

- “Edom did pursue his brother with a sword....his anger did tear perpetually...” (Amos 1:11) “...if a person who has lived in a life of good suffers himself to be so persuaded, and then becomes careless regarding life, and even treats it with contempt, he is said to be torn; for torn is predicated of good into which falsity is insinuated, and thereby the good becomes no longer living.”

## **Derived Doctrine**

### ***Edom***

- This is the third time in this chapter that we have had the mention of Edom: (1) Gaza delivered up to Edom captives - the whole captivity, which represents the enslavement of Charity; (2) Tyre delivered up the whole captivity to Edom, which represents the enslavement of knowledges, celestial and spiritual; and (3) now, Edom is pursuing his brother with a sword, casting off pity, and showing perpetual anger, a wrath forever.
- Who is the brother? Remember Edom’s lineage goes back to Esau. Is the brother mentioned in the lineage of Jacob’s seed?
- “Brother delivering up brother to death, signifies that the false shall destroy good; specifically, that faith shall alone destroy charity.” (AE 315)

### ***Sword***

- In the Word, a “sword” signifies (a) the truth of faith combating; (b) the vastation of truth; (c) in an opposite sense, the false combating; and (d) the punishment of the false. (AC 2799)
- “Mention is very often made in the Word of ‘sword’...by them nothing else is signified but truth fighting against falsities and destroying them....the dispersion of falsities by the Word from the Lord....” (AR 52)

### *Pity or Compassion*

- Pity or compassion “...signifies the inflow of charity from the Lord.” (AC 6737)
- It also signifies “...the influx of the Lord into those who are ignorant of truths and yet desire them.” (AC 9182[7])

### *Anger*

- Anger represents “...a departure from charity.” (AC 1010)

### *Wrath*

- Wrath represents “...a turning away from truth which was confirmed.” (AC 6359)
- It also refers to “...the fury of lusts, and their endeavor to inflict violence.” (AC 8284)

### *Temer*

- Temer “...signifies the Lord’s Divine Human as to celestial love.” (AC 2714)
- “...the change in the church brought about by the evils and falsities from which they perished.” (AE 400[10])

### *Bozrah*

- Bozrah has respect to the divine truth, and Edom, to the divine good of the Word.” (AE 922)

## **Putting It All Together**

1. Self-love, out of order, can enslave charity. And self-love wants to enslave the knowledge of good and truth. What can you expect from self-love but that it will “tear” at all that is from the Lord? Self-love will pursue the Word so as to reject it, despise it, and hate it. Hell maintains anger and wrath toward anything (brother) that seeks to remove it or oppose its values.
2. Hell seeks to persuade whomever it can to become careless in regard to life. If we treat life with contempt, it will tear the spiritual fabric and vitality of life. Inappropriate anger will eat away at the charity that is needed to love the Lord and neighbor.
3. The Lord is willing to show pity and patience to those who are in ignorance. But Hell attempts to tell us that the Lord is angry with us and that we are beyond help from the Word of the Lord. What passages from the literal sense would they use to back up this argument? What passages could we use to refute this argument?

4. We need to take on the challenge to “think clearly” regarding the Lord. The Writings put it this way: “Of how great importance it is to have a just idea of God may appear from the consideration, that the idea of God forms the inmost of thought with all who have any religion.” (Divine Love and Wisdom [DLW] 13) So, our doctrinal knowledge must grow and improve with our changing states. We need to comfort ourselves with the solid belief that the Lord loves us and will never leave us. His arms are not too short, and He never sleeps. Such a faith stands us in good stead when hell tries to inject its poisonous lies. The Writings assure us that the Lord anticipates the tricks and motives of hell and gives us the strength to resist and win. The sword of the Lord will win the battle for us.

## **Read and Review**

Read Amos 1:11-12.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## **Questions to Stimulate Reflection**

1. Inappropriate, or unhealthy, anger and wrath will attempt to tear things apart. Have you experienced this? There must be a period in all of our lives when hell has pulled some passage up from the literal sense and mocked it, and without checking things, we carelessly accepted hell’s criticism. Think of a time when this happened to you. How did you fight back so as to overcome this spiritual tearing? Are some past or present “torn” issues still bothersome?
2. What helps you remain positive about the things of faith and charity? When Hell tries to tell us how worthless or pitiful we are, how do we turn that message off?
3. Tiredness, frustration, worry, or obsession over something in our lives can cause us to err in our thinking. When we are vulnerable, hell urges us to quit trying. Hell wants falsity to reign. If falsity is given any credence, it will try to pervert the Word. Hell wants doctrine to perish. Why do you think this is true?
4. The Lord urges us to be strong and courageous. The Word teaches us, “The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” (Psalm 27:1) How can we use this verse to its fullest potential?

## **AMOS 1:13-15**

*“Thus says the Lord:*

*For three transgressions of the people of Ammon, and for four,  
I will not turn away its punishment,*

*Because they ripped open the women with child in Gilead,  
That they might enlarge their territory.  
But I will kindle a fire in the wall of Rabbah,  
And it shall devour its palaces,  
Amid shouting in the day of battle,  
And a tempest in the day of the whirlwind.  
Their king shall go into captivity,  
He and his princes together.  
Says the Lord."*

## **Passages From the Writings**

### ***P&P***

- "Concerning those who falsify the truths of the literal sense of the Word, that in the day of combat they do not resist, but corrupt the truth of doctrine, vers.13-15."

## **Derived Doctrine**

### *Ammon*

- Ammon represents "...those who falsify truths and live evil lives." (AC 6405)
- It also means the "...profanation of the celestial and spiritual things of faith." (AC 576[2])

### *Ripping Open the Women with Child in Gilead.*

- That striking a pregnant woman a blow "...signifies the injuring of the good which is from truth, is evident from the signification of to strike, as being to injure; and from the signification of a pregnant woman, as being the formation of good from truth...because the regeneration of man, which is the generation of the spiritual life in him, is meant in the internal sense of the Word by the generation of his natural life which is from his parents. For when a man is born anew, he is then first conceived, afterward carried as in the womb, and finally born." (AC 9042)
- As we learned earlier, Gilead signifies "...the first good, that of the bodily senses and their pleasures." (AC 4117[3])
- Gilead also represents "The good of the church, which is charity, and the good and truth of faith." (AE 328)
- "...the woman with child (are) those who receive truths, and she who is bringing forth those who do them." (AE 721[10])

### *That They Might Enlarge Their Territory*

- I found only one reference to the word “territory” in the Concordance and almost didn’t use it because it was in the Spiritual Diary. However, it may be a good reference for our study. See what you think.
- “It has been shown how it befell those from the Christian world. The leaders, who endeavored to destroy the kingdom of the Lord and heaven, were principally of those who were in faith alone....at length, all such...were cast down and dispersed....[they] delight in the sufferings of others, and devised unheard of contrivances for torturing others, by inflicting pain on body and mind, and holding the thought continually upon the pain, and sending those who also infused desperation: likewise, those who inflicted weariness of life and the continual desire of liberation from the pain...which two [classes] inflict such suffering and torture as cannot be described....[they were] outside their own territory. For these were in the disposition of ruling and leading others, but did not attend to their own affairs.” (SD 5758[2]; 5759; 5759[1&2])
- Those who oppose the Lord and His kingdom want to enlarge the scope of their control [territory]. Hell delights in planning the theft of the kingdom the Lord wants to give freely to His children.

### *Kindling a Fire in the Wall of Rabbah*

- Historically, Rabbah was the capital city of the Ammonites. When the Ammonite kingdom ended, Rabbah was destroyed and was not rebuilt until 259 BC, when it was renamed Philadelphia.
- Rabbah “signifies affections of truth in the natural man.” (AE 435[7])
- Rabbath of the Ammonites “...signifies the falsifications of truth.” (AE 163[8])

### *Wall*

- A wall “signifies truth in the ultimates.” (AR 132)
- In a quotation explaining the walls of the Holy City New Jerusalem, we are taught that “by its walls nothing else is meant but the Word in the literal sense, from which doctrine is derived, for that sense defends the spiritual sense, which lies concealed within it, just as a wall defends a city and its inhabitants....” (AR 898)
- The fire in the wall...shows the destructive quality of self-love and how it removes a protective quality from the inhabitants of the city.

### *The Devouring of the Palaces*

- The beautiful structure of the understanding is likened to a palace when the mind takes the truths of the Word and applies them to life. Self-love causes

the structure of the palace to fall into disrepair, leaving what was once regal and beautiful in shambles.

### *Amid Shouting in the Day of Battle*

- To shout or to cry "...is said of every affection that breaks out from the heart..." (AR 885)
- "As a cry also is an act, which corresponds to a living confession or acknowledgment from faith....when confession and acknowledgment from faith are treated of." (AC 5323)
- Crying in a good sense has respect to truths, but in a bad sense to falsity. (AC 2240, 2243)
- The "day of the battle" refers to a state when people believe themselves to be "...attacking from the understanding of truth from the Word..." The negative sense of "battle" refers to falsities fighting the truth of the New Church." (AR 431, 704)

### *Whirlwind*

- In two references, the Writings comment on the meaning of a "whirlwind," strong winds and tempests springing up. "It has at different times been granted me to perceive these tempests and also the east wind by which the evil were dispersed and cast into the hells..." (AE 419[22])

### *Their King and Princes Going into Captivity*

- "A king denotes truth itself, and prince a principal truth." (AR 548)

## **Putting It All Together**

From the very beginning of these passages, we are given a clear picture of what state this is speaking to: "Those who falsify the truths of the literal sense of the Word, that in the day of combat they do not resist, but corrupt the truth of doctrine..." (P&P)

In Psalms 78:9, we read, "The children of Ephraim being armed, and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle." Instead of fighting with honor, they turned and fled. Notice once again the problem of Ephraim. They were "armed," but their weapons never got used in the battle. Loyalty, fidelity, courage, and dedication to the Lord and His Word were present in potential, but they were not used. As a result, the falsifiers were victorious, and they rip the potential of spiritual birth from the fledgling religious idea planted in the mind.

Tired, impatient feelings give the hells the foothold they want so they may advance their cause and spoil the land that could and should be preserved for the Lord. We need to see and hear the prophecy of Amos so that we will not turn in the day of

battle. We need to be armed with the bow and aim our arrows at the center of falsity so that truth can be victorious and keep its place of great esteem.

A new day, a new tempest of an east wind can blow away the stagnant air of hell. East is representative of the Lord Himself and His love. An “east wind...in a genuine sense, denotes love to the Lord, and love towards the neighbor...” (AC 5215)

Our battle cry? “The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon.” (Judges 7:24)

With the daily reporting of news, we are exposed to a wide scope of tragic and frightful events. Each grievous, uncharitable act seems to outdo the prior. Gradually, we can become so jaded that nothing shocks us anymore. The result is that we accept these things as normal events in the lives of people. Perhaps we need to review a teaching in AC 1740[2]: “The more horror there is contracted for evils and falsities, the more love there is insinuated by the Lord for goods and truths: also, the more horror there is of evils and falsities, the less dare evil Spirits approach, because they cannot endure aversion and horror for the evils and falsities in which their life consists; sometimes they are seized with terror at the first approach of it.”

## **Read and Review**

Read Amos 1:13-15.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## **Questions to Stimulate Reflection**

1. Can you feel any sympathy with those who have little care or concern about the literal sense of the Word? Does a mental warning go off when you hear someone ignore a teaching by saying, “This was an issue back then, but it is not appropriate or applicable for our times.”?
2. How can we stay sharp with our warfare against the lethargy of spiritual cowardliness?
3. Hell waits for us to become bored, tired, and impatient with life. Then the evil spirits infuse weariness with suffering and despair that cannot be described. This is not just a morbid idea. Millions of dollars are spent each year for medications to help people cope. Without judging individual cases, it is clear that we fight mental and physical suffering and despair every day. We have powerful examples of how fragile our minds are in the presence of troubles. We need the Lord’s help to comfort our hearts and mind. What insights can be brought to this issue in our discussion time?
4. What about that teaching about having a horror for evil? Do you believe this teaching, or is it ivory tower fluff?
5. We are not finished yet with the pronouncements against Israel’s neighbors. Have you looked at a map yet to see where they once lived? Might the fact that Amos addresses them from north to south be significant? In what way?

6. How do you choose which issues to fight for and which issues to let slide by for the time being? We certainly don't like appearing negative and angry. Those who seem overly concerned with issues are told to "lighten up" or "get a life." People tell us to "relax" and not let things bother us. What do these words of admonition do to, and for, our willingness to stand up for the right?

## Chapter Two

### **AMOS 2:1-3**

*“Thus says the Lord:*

*For three transgressions of Moab, and for four,  
I will not turn away its punishment,  
Because he burned the bones of the king of Edom to lime.  
But I will send in a fire upon Moab,  
And it shall devour the palaces of Kerioth;  
Moab shall die with tumult,  
With shouting and trumpet sound.  
And I will cut off the judge from its midst,  
And slay all its princes with him,  
Says the Lord.”*

### **Passages From the Writings**

#### ***P&P***

- “Concerning those who adulterate the good of the literal sense of the Word, that they corrupt the good and truth of the church, vers. 1-3...”

#### ***AE 315[10]***

- “In Amos...(ii.3) Moab in the Word, means those who adulterate the goods of the church; the judge who will be cut off and the princes who will be slain, signify the good which is adulterated, and the truths which are thereby falsified, judge meaning good, and prince truth.”

#### ***AE 532[12]***

- “...the third and fourth generation does not mean the third and fourth generation, but that which these numbers signify. Like things are signified by three and four transgressions in Amos (i. 3,6,9,11,13, ii. 1, 4, 6). From this it can be seen how great arcana lay hidden in the Word merely in numbers, which no one can know without the internal spiritual sense.”

## Derived Doctrine

### *Moab Burned the Bones*

- “[burnings] are predicated of evil lusts, especially of those which are derived from self-love.” (AC 1297)
- Burning “...signifies damnation and punishment of evils arising from earthly and corporeal loves.” (AE 1173)
- Burning “...signifies injury or extinction of the good of love.” (AC 9055)
- The nearest I could come to “burning bones” was this quotation about “boiling bones.” In AC 3812[8], we read that harming bones “...signifies violence offered to truths.”
- Also, there is a reference to spreading out the bones of kings as “...signifying infernal things that control in idolatrous worshipers.” (AC 2441[9])
- Bones correspond to external truths, the natural, corporeal truths as facts in fixed forms on which all higher truths may rest for support. If these external or natural facts fail to exist, spiritual facts will have no basis on which to rest or grow.

### *The King of Edom*

- “Edom and Moab, in many passages are named together, because they signify those who are principled in good; but the difference is, that Edom denotes the good of the natural principle, to which are adjoined the doctrinals of truth; whereas Moab denotes natural good, such as has place with those, with whom such doctrinals are not conjoined. The former and the latter appear alike in their external form, but not in their internal.” (AC 3322) Once again, we have to note that Edom and Moab in this lesson are not representative of good but of evil.

### *Lime*

- Lime represents those who are studious in exploring justification by faith. Faith, to them, is the all of religion, and religion is nothing else but faith. In the spiritual world, these people live in huts constructed of reeds and rushes “plastered over with lime...” (AR 442)
- Those who indulge in the lusts of the flesh and those who satisfy the desires of the spirit are compared to: beasts and angels; shriveled grapes and dried grapes (wild grapes), and juicy and delicious grapes; and “...limestone and silver...” (True Christian Religion [TCR] 328)
- AE 391[14] likens the destruction of the church to the stones of an altar falling down and being scattered because the chalk (lime) is not capable of holding the truths together. Therefore, lime signifies “...falsities which do not cohere.”

### *Sending Fire upon Moab*

- Please note that there is no mention of “fire on the walls of Moab” as in the previous pronouncements. This fire comes upon Moab itself. Is it because Moab represents natural good with which doctrinal things are not conjoined?

### *Kerioth*

- Is this city also known as Ar? Many scholars think so, and they believe this is the city Amos was referring to in Amos 2:2. The Writings have no reference to Kerioth, but they do mention Ar. The city of Ar, as it is mentioned in Numbers 21:15 and Deuteronomy 2:18, “...signifies those who are in general natural good.” (AC 2468[4]) “Ar (Isa.15:1) signifies the doctrine of those in truths from the natural man.” (AE 652[21])

### *Moab Dying with Tumult*

- Tumult “...signifies the dismay of those in the church when visited by a Last Judgment and their evils are disclosed.” (AE 659[22])
- Panic (tumult) “...signifies the last state of the old church, involving a great change; and combat against the love of evil.” (AE 650[12])
- Tumult “...signifies the disputations and reasoning of those beneath heaven who are natural and sensuous.” (AE 706[23])

### *Shouting and Trumpet Sound*

- “...shouting, as being the quality of the interiors of that nation...as being the hanging of the combat between falsity and truth, and no decision.” (AC 10456)
- Trumpet “...signifies to announce that the intellectual of the church has been laid waste.” (AC 4592[10])

### *Cutting off the Judge from the Midst*

- In general, a wise judge is one who fairly and evenly seeks to adjudicate what is right and just for all people, regardless of their station or position. A judge needs to uphold civil, moral, and spiritual laws. Like end, cause, and effect, the spiritual needs to flow into the moral and the moral into the civil. Because of Moab’s representation, we can assume that the Moabites did not base their natural justice on anything spiritual. Therefore, Moab was to be remanded and its central position of selfish, unwise, and biased judgments exposed.

## *Slaying all the Princes with the Judge*

- As cited previously, a prince signifies a principle or leading truth. When judgment is faulty, its leading principles will be faulty. Therefore, both have to die when faced with the real spiritual principles of the Lord.

### **Putting It All Together**

1. When the Word is adulterated and the good of the Word is corrupted, nothing of spiritual quality holds together. Like the lime not holding together the stones of the altar, our spiritual life and our judgments are scattered. When the natural man rules and twists everything to favor his proprium, his decisions will not look to being of use to the Lord and the neighbor. Self-love will do only that which gives it praise. Self-love will do good to those whom it can use later. The Moab faith will try to hang between falsity and truth in a state of no decision. This is done so that it will appear liberal, nonjudgmental, and politically correct; it will seek to seem accepting of all lifestyles when there is an opportunity to receive honor, gain, and reputation as the reward.
2. The Lord did not find the lukewarm pleasing. He stated that He would have preferred hot or cold. The lukewarm were to be spewed from His mouth. (Rev. 3:16)
3. These verses remind us not to choose what seems convenient to us or to place the Word in unchaste conditions and decisions. The “bones” of our belief system must have integrity so that our framework will support the spiritual things we draw from the Word. The natural part of us will seek to compromise, burn, or boil the bones of our spiritual soul. At times, the natural mind feels that the act of compromise is most prudent. Is that true, or is it an appearance? With these verses, we need to reflect on how easy it is for us to have our bones burnt or turned into lime. If we do, the Word tells us that we will find ourselves unable to hold spiritual things together. The Lord calls us to face the hellish temptation to adulterate the Word by saying these words:  
“Forever, O Lord, thy Word is settled in the heavens.” (Psalm 119:89)

### **Read and Review**

Read Amos 2:1-3.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

### **Questions to Stimulate Reflection**

1. There are times when we know what we should do, and we don't do it. There are times when we know what we are doing is wrong, and yet we continue to do it. How can we break through these spiritual lapses?

2. The Writings talk about the power of good intentions. Each time we reinforce these good intentions, an inner good is strengthened that will eventually help us defeat the things we intend to overcome. Do you remember the old adage that says the road to hell is paved with good intentions? See AC 9334[2], Divine Providence (DP) 152[2]. Even though we sometimes slip, the fact that we dislike our mistakes, feel embarrassed about them, and intend to resist them is a positive step. For more thought on the power of intention, please read Conjugal Love (CL) 453. Suppose there are two men who look exactly alike and enjoy the same foods and entertainment. One intends not to laugh at an inappropriate comment, and the other man intends to laugh. Which man's actions are excused by the Lord and His angels, even if both men laugh? What do you think?
3. The theme of Chapter 1 and the beginning of Chapter 2 focused on the care and importance we must give to the Word. What can we do in our notes to keep a focus on this series as given to us by the Lord? Are we able to see first things said tying into last things said?
4. Do the abuses of the Word, as illustrated by each nation, sound more and more direful as we move toward the prophecy regarding Israel?
5. There is an interesting point to consider when thinking about Kerioth: One of the Lord's disciples came from that city. Which one? He was a person who cared for the meager finances the disciples had. He worried about the wasteful use of perfume used to wash the Lord's feet. Judas claimed that they could have sold the perfume and used the money for more practical things. Judas Iscariot was a man from Kerioth. Is this just a coincidence?

## **AMOS 2:4-5**

*"Thus says the Lord:*

*For three transgressions of Judah, and for four,  
I will not turn away its punishment,  
Because they have despised the law of the Lord,  
And have not kept His commandments.  
Their lies lead them astray,  
Lies which their fathers followed.  
But I will send a fire upon Judah,  
And it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem."*

### **Passages From the Writings**

#### **P&P**

- "Concerning those who destroy the celestial things of the Word; that they destroy both its celestial and its spiritual things, vers. 4, 5."

## Derived Doctrine

### *Representation of Judah*

- “From these and many other passages...it may be seen what is signified in the Word by Judah; and that it is not the Jewish nation, because this was very far from being a celestial church, or the Lord’s celestial kingdom; being the worst of all nations in regard to love to the Lord and charity toward the neighbor, and also in regard to faith; and this from the days of their first fathers, the sons of Jacob, down to the present time. (That such persons were nevertheless capable of representing the celestial and spiritual things of the Lord’s kingdom... [is] because in representations the person is not reflected upon, but only the thing that is represented.)...But when they did not remain in the ritual ordained by Jehovah or the Lord, but turned away from them to idolatries, they then no longer represented celestial and spiritual things, but the opposite, that is, infernal and diabolical things....” (AC 3881[10])

### *Judah Despised the Law of the Lord*

- In various passages of the Writings, we are taught that to despise means to look with contempt. It means “...that the rational lightly esteemed the truth...adjoined to good.” (AC 1911) In another passage, it says that despising “...signifies that the good of life considered its priority of no account.” (AC 3336)
- Putting these quotes next to the word “Lord” seems to indicate they held the Lord as of little esteem and His priorities as of no account. (AC 3882)
- How sad it is to read that Judah turned its heart away from its intended representation.

### *Failing to Keep the Commandments*

- In the Doctrine of Life 64 and 65, we are given a picture of the cycle of failure regarding the Commandments. Teachers and parents teach the commandments to their children, but within their own hearts, they think that they are unable to keep them and therefore find a way to excuse themselves by saying the Commandments are “humanly” impossible to keep. The children pick up this attitude, and when they become adults, they carry the same sphere. Thus, they pass on the cycle of failure. The only way to break this cycle, we are taught, is to care more about pleasing the Lord than pleasing and impressing people. If this last statement is not clear, please read Doctrine of Life 64 for yourself.

### *Lies*

- The lies they told themselves and the lies they learned from their fathers:

- The belief that they were the favored people.
- The belief that nothing would remove them from that favored position.
- The belief that they deserved prosperity and success for external gestures with little substance behind them.
- The stiff-necked resistance to the leading of the Lord's Providence.
- The necessity to have a king like other nations.
- The belief in everyone doing what was right in his or her own eyes.
- What really brought on the lies was the people's failure to value the conjunction of truth to good and to make the good of life a priority. They did not make themselves accountable for what the Lord would value.

### *The Fire on Judah and the Palaces of Jerusalem Devoured*

- We can probably feel the tension this prophecy must have brought to the nation of Israel. Conceivably, they nodded their heads in approval when Amos told them of the doom of their lifelong enemies. But now Amos dared to speak of the demise of Judah and the holy city Jerusalem. With angry voices, they must have hurled jeers and threats at this shepherd prophet. Their self-assurance and prosperity, their significant military might, and their victories of conquest made all that Amos said seem preposterous and insulting.
- All of these possible reactions can illustrate how the fire of self-love came on Judah and how shabby the mental palaces of Jerusalem had become. Her understanding was not conjoining itself with love, and worship of the Lord was all lies and death.

### **Putting It All Together**

1. The celestial things of the Word most deeply involve the Lord. How we feel in our hearts about Him is important. Are we open and honest with Him, or do we pay lip service? Do we quote what we learned from the understanding without involving the will? The Lord would prefer an active love seeking truths, mirroring the conjugal principles. Are we telling ourselves lies? Do we perpetuate the lies of the past? Do we teach the commandments (in our actions) as if they are impossible to keep, and then excuse ourselves as being only human and therefore not expected to keep them? Can we accept the challenge to break this cycle of failure so that we can follow the laws of the Lord to the best of our ability? Many questions are posed in these verses, and they are worth considering.
2. Just as Judah failed to live up to its representative role, could we as a New Church organization lose sight of our important representative role? What do we represent? How can we support that representation?
3. Again, let us reflect on the attitudes that hurt Judah:
  - a. They lightly esteemed the conjoining of truth to good.

- b. They held the good of life, as a priority, of little importance.

## Read and Review

Read Amos 2:4-5.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## Questions to Stimulate Reflection

1. Reflecting on the mistakes of Judah would probably help each of us avoid duplicating their attitudes and lies. Think of an example from your own experience when someone made a decision that was influenced by one of these lies or attitudes. How did it change their decision? What was the effect?
2. How effective is it to look at the mistakes of others to make improvements on our life? What makes this technique effective or ineffective? How can it be used wisely? How can it be abused? How is charity a part of this technique?
3. Do we come down harder on the mistakes of others because we see their mistakes from our understanding? Truth is hard, but when we look at our mistakes, we tend to look at them from the will. The will tends to offer excuses from affections. "I did this because..." The understanding, on the other hand, judges from a more legalistic stand point. What's your view of this? What do these two approaches have to offer? What happens when you separate them, or use them together?
4. How effective is it for an organization to look at the mistakes of other organizations to improve its own life? When is this useful, and when is it not useful? How is charity a part of this technique?

## AMOS 2:6-8

*"Thus says the Lord:*

*For three transgressions of Israel, and for four,*

*I will not turn away its punishment,*

*Because they sell the righteous for silver,*

*And the poor for a pair of sandals.*

*They pant after the dust of the earth which is on the head of the poor,*

*And pervert the way of the humble.*

*A man and his father go in to the same girl,*

*To defile My holy name.*

*They lie down by every altar on clothes taken in pledge,*

*And drink the wine of the condemned in the house of their god."*

## Passages From the Writings

### *P&P*

- “Concerning those who destroy the spiritual things of the church, that in consequence of this they depart into falsities of every kind, vers. 6-8...”

### *AC 6377[10]*

- “As most expressions in the Word have also a contrary sense, so also has ‘wine’ in which sense ‘wine’ signifies falsity from evil, as in....Amos ii. 8...”

### *AR 316*

- • “Holy truth is also signified by...‘wine’ in other parts of the Word....Amos ii. 8... [This] may also appear from its opposite sense, in which it signifies truth falsified and profaned...”

### *AE 376[30]*

- “That ‘wine’ signifies the truth of the church...Amos ii. 8...”

## Derived Doctrine

### *Israel*

- “Israel denotes those who are in divine truths from the Lord.” (AR 96 and 350)
- Israel “...also denotes the internal spiritual church, for that church is a church by virtue of spiritual good. Spiritual good is truth that has become good; for truth becomes good when the man lives according to it, for it then passes into the will, and from the will into act, and becomes of the life; and when it becomes of the life it is no longer called truth but good.” (AC 5595)

### *Selling the Righteous for Silver*

- To sell “and to be sold signifies to alienate truths, and to be alienated from them, and to accept falses for truths, and to be captivated thereby.” (AE 840)
- Righteousness “...is predicated of what is good.” (AR 173)
- A principled person is someone who is in the Lord.
- Silver represents “...truth acquired from the proprium.” (AC 9039) It can also mean “scientific truth.” (AC 6112) Further, we are told that silver “...signifies truth, and in the opposite sense, the false.” (AC 1551)

### *Selling the Poor for a Pair of Sandals*

- The poor signifies “...one who is not in truths, also those who are ignorant of good and truth, but desirous of instruction.” (Heaven and Hell [HH] 420)
- Sandal or shoe “...signifies the lowest natural truths by which one lives (walks).” (AC 4677[9])
- “The shoe is what clothes the sole of the foot and the heel signifies the ultimate natural...thus the corporeal itself.” (AC 1748)

### *Panting After the Dust of the Earth*

- Is panting or breathing fast a form of excitement, anticipation, or shortness of breath? Is panting a way of gasping for air? Let’s look at gasping for breath because I can only find one reference for that and nothing for panting. “Gasping for breath signifies sorrow because of falsities that extinguish spiritual life.” (AE 315[17]) In this context, it would appear that Israel did not worry about the extinguishing of spiritual life and had no regrets.

### *Eating Dust*

- “...eating dust...signifies that their sensuous part became such that it could not live from anything but that which is of the body and of the earth...it became infernal.” (AC 242)
- To understand the dust on the “head” of the poor, we need to look for help from the doctrines. Dust represents what is “damned” or “infernal.” (AR 788) It also corresponds to the lowest things of the sensual principle of man. (AE 1145)
- We can look up “head” and see that it means the dominion of evil in general, and self-love in particular. (AC 250) The head also can represent self-exaltation (AC 1307) or the insanity from unmitigated falsities, especially the denial of the Divine Human. (AR 568) So, how do we understand what is being taught here? It appears that this prophecy is intended to show the baseness of their attitudes toward the Lord and the neighbor. The “dust on their head” represents the lowest of motives lived out in their daily activities. Me, myself, and I are the greatest. All others are of little importance in comparison to self.

### *Perverting the Way of the Humble*

- When there is no love for the spiritual things of the church, as represented by Israel, it follows that the way of the humble (those wishing to rid themselves of pride and self-love) would be deceived and not helped. This would be like a doctor, with the knowledge and medication to cure or help the sick, callously withholding medication from those who need it the most.

### *A Man and His Father being Intimate with the Same Girl*

- "...it is common in the Word to call things of the church conceptions, births, offspring, infants, little ones, sons, daughters, young men, and so on." (AC 339)
- A girl "...signifies fresh goods and their affections and the derivative gladness..." (AC 2348)
- Using our information about the correspondences, we can deduce that a father and his son going in to the same girl signifies that they made their rational good unchaste. There was a willingness to spoil and make light of holy things. They were not chaste in thoughts and deeds. All delights of conjugal love, even in the ultimates, are only present when there is a love and respect of chastity. "To lie with signifies to pervert and adulterate what is true and good." (AC 3399)

### *Defiling the Lord's Holy Name*

- The possibilities of doing this are myriad. It happens when we allow the hells to convince us that they are stronger than the Lord; when we feel that living the life of religion is impossible; when we feel the Lord requires too much of us; when we feel or say we don't care what the Word says about something we want to do. We defile the Lord's name when we calling truth falsity and falsity truth. Perhaps these few suggestions will help you to think of other examples.

### *Lying Down by Every Altar on Clothes Taken in Pledge*

- According to the literal meaning of this, apparently the church (priests) was extracting money from the people. The greater the importance of the cases they heard and rendered decisions on, the greater would be their payment. Justice was not always the end. Reward and wealth tainted their decisions. Payment might come in the form of ornate and expensive garments. But the heinous thing about the tribute money was that the priests collected it in the name of the Lord. They approved and sanctioned it by rabbinical laws, so they were blatant with their demands for payment for services rendered.
- Lying down beside every altar speaks of their disrespect of worship. It does not say kneeling, standing, or being watchfully attentive. Lying down seems to connote carelessness. They did this beside every altar. It sounds as if they served whatever god or idol was called for. This is eclectic religion at its worst.
- On the spiritual side, the clothes of a priest speak of the office, or use, being served. It is the office that should be respected, not the individual wearing the clothes of the pledge.

## *Drinking the Wine of the Condemned*

- This was given to us as representing truth falsified and profaned. Instead of passing through the gate of Holy Supper or the door of conjunction, the people chose to pass through the gate of disjunction and separation from the Lord.

### ***Putting It All Together***

1. From these verses, we get a clear message. Seek first the kingdom of heaven and all else will follow. Let that truth become good. Truth becomes good when we live according to its leading. Let a truth pass into the will and from the will into act. When this happens, truth becomes part of our life.
2. We need to welcome truth and not alienate it, to see caring for the spiritually poor in us as a necessary process. We need truth to ward off ignorance, to protect the feet of natural day-to-day functions and to desire something more than the sensual, corporeal demands or “panting for the dust of the earth.”
3. In the same degree as the world glorifies the sensual and makes the unchaste appear “normal,” we need to keep our minds focused on love truly conjugal.
4. We never know who watches us and sees us as role models. Are we humble? Are we caught up in the clothes of a pledge? Do we look tired and bored with our worship? Do we withhold a concept of truth from those who need and want direction? Do we make conquering the insanity of “unmitigated falsities, especially the denial of the Divine Human” a priority? The Divine Human is to be drawn from a genuine appreciation of the Word.
5. Are we so accommodating with our thinking that we can lie next to “every altar...”?  
Some pride themselves on saying things like: “We all worship the same thing, so it doesn’t matter what church we belong to.” Can we really trust this saying?  
This section contains a significant challenge for us to reflect on. Can we do it?

### **Read and Review**

Read Amos 2:6-8.

Read the summary in *P&P*.

### **Questions to Stimulate Reflection**

The summary we worked on carries enough questions to get us started. I will not add any others at this time, but please use the space below to work on your own questions as you read these verses. We need the questions to help hold these verses before our minds.

## **AMOS 2:9-11**

*“Yet it was I who destroyed the Amorite before them,  
Whose height was like the height of the cedars,  
And he was as strong as the oaks;  
Yet I destroyed his fruit above  
And his root beneath.  
Also it was I who brought you up from the land of Egypt,  
And led you forty years through the wilderness,  
To possess the land of the Amorite.  
I raised up some of your young men as Nazarites.  
Is it not so, O you children of Israel?  
Says the Lord.”*

### **Passages From The Writings**

*P&P*

- “That the Lord had thoroughly removed the falsities of evil, when the church was instituted among them, and they were instructed, vers. 9-11....”

### **AC 6306[4]**

- And in Amos...(ii. 9, 10) “...here the ‘Amorite’ denotes evil, for the evil of the love of self is described by the ‘height of the cedars and the sturdiness of the oak.’ That the ‘Amorite’ is evil in general, is because the whole land of Canaan was called ‘the land of the Amorite;’ for it is said, ‘I lead you in the wilderness, to possess the land of the Amorite.’”

### **AC 1857**

- This passage includes the same statement regarding the Amorite and that “the whole land of Canaan denotes evil in general.”

### **AC 9489[3]**

- Height “...signifies the evil of the love of self, thus self-exaltation of mind; as in...Amos ii. 9.”

### **AC 348**

- “...works of faith devoid of charity are works of no faith, being in themselves dead, for they are solely of the external man....That (in this state) both fruit and the root perish, is thus declared in...Amos ii. 9.”

## ***AE 633[7]***

- “The vastation of the church and also full temptation are signified by the tarrying of the sons of Israel forty years in the wilderness, which is spoken of in...Amos ii.10.”

## **Derived Doctrine**

### *Reminding Israel*

- Why does the Lord have to remind Israel so often what He did for them? Are their memories so poor that they can't keep their facts straight? Could it have been that their oral tradition left out the part about the Lord's deliverance and highlighted human effort? Or had they gotten so used to His miracles they took them for granted?
- There is an interesting quote in the Arcana that says: “...Divine remembrance (or reminiscence) is salvation; and by non-remembrance, or forgetting is signified damnation.” (AC 8620) The Lord's effort to remind Israel what He did for them was not divine impatience or irritation but the action of His love to keep them in a state of remembrance or a state of salvation. The story of salvation gives hope and consolation to those who find themselves in a state of despair and temptation. If the Lord had wanted to damn them, He would have allowed them to forget.

### *Preparing Israel*

- The passages under study tell us of the preparation the Lord provided for the children of Israel. The Lord thoroughly removed the falsities of evil and gave them instruction. What does this mean? Can we get a small glimpse of what the Lord did for them?
- The following passages may help us see some ways:
  - AC 677: “Before man can be regenerated, he must be instructed in all those things which can serve as means; in goods...in truths...and in things confirmatory...Before a man has been instructed in such things, he cannot be regenerated.”
  - AC 3155: “...instruction precedes, with good, concerning truth; and with truth, concerning good.”
  - AC 4538[3]: “When the Lord makes a man new, He first instructs him in the truths of faith...”
  - AC 6879, 6881, and 6883 give us three specific kinds of instructions Israel received through Moses:
    - The first instruction: Moses is told that God (I AM WHO I AM) Himself is to be worshiped.
    - The second instruction: Divine truth, which is from the Lord, must be received.

- The third instruction: The sons of Israel represented those of the spiritual church, for whom that instruction was intended.
- The great Passover, the parting of the Red Sea, the tumbling of the walls of Jericho up to the present lesson of the Amorite's fruit and roots being destroyed were all forms of instruction that told the children of Israel that pride, conceit, and self-love would not survive in the Lord's presence.

### *Cedars and Oaks*

- Cedar trees "...signify rational or intellectual truth." (AC 119)
- Oak trees "...signify exterior conceit of those who boast from knowledges." AE 410.
- The Lord, by citing this, to Israel was saying: Remember Israel, resist the way of the Amorite. Remember Israel, the Amorites thought they were strong oaks, and yet their fruit and roots died. The Amorites were not the mental giants they thought they were.

### *"It was I who brought you up from the Land of Egypt..."*

- Egypt in the opposite sense "signifies memory-knowledge which from itself enters into heavenly mysteries, thus perverting, denying, and profaning divine truths." (AC 4735[15])
- The Writings describe this as a period in their lives when the Israelites went through full temptations and a period of vastations in the wilderness. Look at the meaning of "forty" in this context: "By their journeying and wanderings in the wilderness forty years, all the state of the combating church is described-how of itself it yields, but conquers from the Lord." (AC 2708[6])
- Temptation "...is a combat between good and evil, therefore each strives for the domination, that is, whether the spiritual man shall rule over the natural...or the contrary..." (New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrine [NJHD] 199)
- Vastation has many descriptions in the Writings. Words such as "devastate," "desolate," "despair," "laid to waste," or "emptying out" may appear in these quotations. Essentially, the word "vastation" indicates that a process of preparation must occur within the will and understanding so that spiritual ignorance and falsity are removed, or emptied out, to make way for an internal worship of the Lord that will be as free of profanation as possible.

### *The Wilderness*

- When we hear the word "wilderness," what image comes to mind? Some people picture a desert with miles and miles of sandy dunes. A wilderness is more than that. It is an untamed wild habitat, with no smooth roads or paths. Cracks and crevices abound. Scraggy trees, thistles, and briar bushes grow wherever they can find enough soil to outdo some other rival weed.

- For a lamb, danger would abound in a wilderness. There would be predators lurking in wait for the frail or unsuspecting prey. Truly, a wilderness is a place where the survival of the fittest is a way of life. A spiritual wilderness lacks order and discipline.
- So the question, “do you remember the full temptations and period of vastations you went through in the wilderness?” is there to signify “the obscurity of faith, for a wilderness is uninhabited and uncultivated.” (AC 6904)

### *I Raised up Young Men as Nazarites*

- The Nazarites put themselves under a vow to abstain from wine, from cutting their hair, and from having contact with anything unclean or dead.
- Probably, the Nazarite we think most about is Samson.
- “...the Nazarites in the Israelitish church represented the Lord as to the Word in ultimates, which is the sense of its letter. For Nazarite in the Hebrew language is hair, or lock of hair; hence Samson, who was a Nazarite from the womb, had power in his hairs.... By reason that hairs signified that holiness of the Word it is said of the Nazarite that: ‘they should not shave the hair of his head...’ Num. vi. 1-21...” (AR 47)
- “As the Nazarite represented the celestial man, who is regenerated through the good of love, and not through the truth of faith like the spiritual man, and who consequently is not regenerated as to the intellectual part, but as to the will part...therefore the Nazarite was forbidden to eat anything which came forth from the vine, thus was not to drink wine...” (AC 5113[16])
- “...there is spiritual death when there is a lack of truth.... As death signified damnation, the people of the representative church were forbidden to touch the dead, and if they touched they were unclean, and were to be cleansed...” (Num. vi. 6-12 was referenced regarding why a Nazarite was not to touch the dead.) (AC 6119 [4])

### *PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER*

1. The Lord reminded Israel of what He had done in preparation for their calling. This point reminds one of a parable in Matthew 21:33-43. In that parable, we are told of all the owner did prior to turning the vineyard over to husbandmen and going into a far country. He planted the vineyard, hedged it, dug a winepress, and built a tower. When he sought his share of the crop, they maltreated his servants, and when he sent his son, they killed him. The Lord is the owner, and mankind is the husbandmen in this parable.
2. The Lord prepared His people. He fought for and delivered them. He instructed them in the truths of faith and gave them Divine Truths. He gave them shelter in the wilderness state. He gave them the ultimate sense of the literal sense — the holiness of the Word so they might find their way out of spiritual deadness.

3. He always lifted up a strong leader, a prophet, or a Nazarite so they could see the power of the Lord in the ultimates.
4. When their pride finished its foolish surge and their downfall occurred, the Lord wanted the Israelites to see where and how they walked away from the preparatory work done for them. They killed the servants, and they killed the son. They wanted the vineyard for themselves. They lied to themselves that they had done all the work and that it was unfair that the Lord should expect any returns while He was off in another country.
5. Would the prophets' words about the drying up of the Amorite fruit and the death of the oak tree root awaken their sense of spiritual reality? It would only work for the person willing to look within the spiritual sense of the prophecy.

### **Read and Review**

Read Amos 2:9-11.

Read the summary in *P&P*.

### **Questions To Stimulate Reflection**

1. Would it be worth our time to reflect on all that the Lord has done for us? Why? Although we can't speak of all things, are there some specific or significant events that stand out as most important?
2. We probably have witnessed someone in a position of importance losing their job and the respect of their followers. Something comes out regarding a clandestine disorder that embarrasses them publicly, and they seek the shelter of seclusion in shame. What are we reminded of by such events?
3. Have we ever had hell tempt us to think that we are "the captain of our ship and the master of our fate?" The hells say things like: "I was the one who faced the heat of the sun to pull out the weeds. Where was the Lord? I was the one who carried the water to nourish the seedlings and vines. I was the one who picked the grapes and crushed them in the wine press. I was the one who went up in the tower to watch for the approach of the enemy or the wild animals that would have eaten the vines. Where was the Lord all this time?" Such thinking assumes that self-intelligence did it alone. Why might we listen to the hells? What makes us vulnerable to this temptation? What helps us to ignore them?
4. The power of the literal sense comes to our attention again in this section. Yet there are times when our lack of understanding of the Word may give us the false impression that it is "bald" or empty of meaning and relevance for our life and times. Can we think about certain passages we had assumed meant nothing, and then think of a time when we experienced an opening of our spiritual eyes? What we thought was obscure eventually helped us through some trying time.

5. I am still considering the series of things the Nazarites were told to forgo. How do they apply in our lives, literally and representatively? Avoidance of the products of the vineyard?
- Not shaving or cutting hair?
  - Avoidance of touching dead things?
- What spiritual significance are we able to apply to ourselves regarding these prohibitions?
6. Vastations. This word has the sound of something one would like to avoid, but we know there has to be an emptying out of falsity, ignorance, self-love, etc. Our prayer life may have to be that we not run away. Trusting in the Lord's Providence tells us what? No temptation will come until we are able to resist and no evil will befall us unless some good may come from it. Hell tests us on this. It throws a host of situations before us, and asks: "How come this person had to go through this horrible thing? She was innocent and blameless. How could God permit such horrible things to occur if He is so merciful?" We have doctrinal answers, but for some these answers may seem insufficient. How do you deal with these questions and answers?

## **AMOS 2:12-16**

*"But you gave the Nazarites wine to drink,  
And commanded the prophets saying,  
Do not prophesy!  
Behold, I am weighed down.  
As a cart full of sheaves is weighed down.  
Therefore flight shall perish from the swift,  
The strong shall not strengthen his power,  
Nor shall the mighty deliver himself,  
He shall not stand who handles the bow,  
The swift of foot shall not escape,  
Nor shall he who rides a horse deliver himself.  
The most courageous men of might  
Shall flee naked in the day,  
Says the Lord."*

## **Passages From the Writings**

### **P&P**

- "That nevertheless that church has perverted all things; and that hence it has become like one who is in the possession of the truth and yet is without truth; and thus at the time of judgment it perishes, vers. 12-16."

### ***AC 10303[4]***

- “...truths with man have been disposed into series according to the angelic societies with the regenerate.... The series into which truths have been disposed with the good, and the series into which falsities have been disposed with the evil, are signified in the Word by sheaves and bundles (as in...Amos ii. 13...).”

### ***AE 357[22]***

- “In Amos: He that holdeth the bow shall not stand, nor shall the swift of foot deliver himself, nor shall he that rideth upon the horse cause his soul to escape, but he that is stout in his heart among the mighty shall flee naked in that day (ii. 15,16). This describes self-intelligence, and thus confidence from an ability to reason from falsities against truths; ‘he that holdeth the bow shall not stand, nor shall the swift of foot cause himself to escape’, signifies that one who knows how to reason readily and skillfully from the doctrine and from the memory that belongs to the natural man, cannot provide for his salvation, nor stand in the day of judgment; the like is signified by ‘he that rideth upon the horse shall not cause his soul to escape; he that is stout in his heart shall flee [naked] in that day’ signifies that he who trusts in himself because of an ability to reason from falsities shall then be deprived of all truth; the ‘stout in heart’ meaning him who trusts in himself on that account, and ‘naked’ signifying deprived of all truth.”

### ***AE 783[3]***

- “...those who are in falsities are called in the Word powerful, vigorous, mighty, strong, heroes, rulers, terrible, dreadful, and wasters, as can be seen from various passages, as from the following... Amos ii. 14, 16...”

### ***AE 355[26]***

- A passage in AE 355[26], which explains Amos 2:15-16, has almost identical wording as AE 357[22].

### ***Doctrine of the Lord 4***

- “...passages from the Word which contain the expressions ‘that day,’ ‘in that day,’ and ‘in that time;’ in which...is meant the Lord’s advent. In...Amos ii. 16...”

## Derived Doctrine

### *Giving the Nazarites Wine to Drink*

- If you recall, the reason the Nazarites were prohibited from eating or drinking anything from the vine was because of a Divine representation. The Nazarites were to be regenerated “...through the good of love...and not regenerated as to the intellectual part...” (AC 5113[16]) The Nazarites represented the will and not the understanding. The Israelites got them to drink wine, which tells us they got them to emphasize or involve themselves in the intellect and not the affectional. This was a reversal of their uses. The rational is more argumentative, debating, legalistic, analytical, and forensic, and it is different from the involuntary, affectional, and spontaneous uses. With a regenerating involuntary, there is a worship and love of the Lord that flows from the heart (will) spontaneously.

### *They Commanded the Prophets not to Prophecy*

- When a person allows his or her integrity to be compromised, that person’s credibility will be called into question. When the Nazarites drank the wine, they severed their representation with the Lord and lost standing among the people. Their words of prophecy sounded empty and not worth hearing. The prophets were speaking, but they were not touching the hearts of the people. We might say they started talking about things they didn’t know much about. Their true calling was in the realm of the will, and they lost themselves in the realm of the understanding.

### *The Lord Weighed Down by Them*

- When the joy of serving the Lord is lost, everything seems meaningless, slow, tedious, and bothersome. The work of regeneration seems hard and unfair. Our sense of the Lord becomes buried in a sense of obligation that suffocates the mind and “weighs us down.” Although this verse says the Lord is weighed down, it is just the opposite. The obliged, duty-bound worshiper is the one with the weighing-down problem.

### *Cart*

- The “new cart” the Philistines used to send the ark of covenant back to Israel signified “...doctrine untouched and unpolluted by the falsities of their evil...” Whereas, a cart “...signifies the doctrine of natural truth...” (AE 700[23])
- Therefore, a weighted-down cart full of sheaves represents the series of falsities that were disposed in the doctrine of natural truths of the evil. We need to recall the two choices: One is to have the series of truths disposed so as to keep us in contact with angelic societies, and the other is to have a

series of natural truths in contact with the evil. Israel had chosen the second series.

### *Flight Shall Perish from the Swift*

- There is an interesting number in the *Arcana* where flight is explained this way: “No faith, and faith without love, are also compared by the Lord to winter where He foretells the consummation of the age, in Mark: - Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, for those be days of affliction (xiii. 18, 19). Flight means the last time, and also that of every man when he dies...” (AC 34)
- The swift are those who prided themselves with their mental agility. They were fascinated with their intellectual ability to adapt to changing popular opinions. The ones who seem to have all the swift answers will not escape Divine accountability. The speed of their rationalizations will not change the direction of their “departing flight.”

### *The Strong, the Mighty, the Powerful, etc.*

- Please read again *AE 783[3]* where we are taught that these terms, when used in the Word, represent those who are in falsities.

### *He Who Handles the Bow*

- When we use the term “archer,” there are at least four quotations worth noting to add to our consideration of this verse:
- “The man of the spiritual church was formerly called a ‘shooter of the bow,’ because he defended himself by truths, and disputed about truths; differently from the man of the celestial church, who is secure by means of good, and does not dispute about truths...” (AC 2709)
- “...the shooter of the bow...[describes the church desolated in respect to truths]...false doctrinals.” (AE 411[19])
- • “...a bow signifies doctrine combating, or doctrine by which one fights against evils and falsities...[but when a church is being vastated, a bow]...signifies that there would be no longer any truth in the doctrine nor any understanding of truth, and thus no combat or resistance against falsity....” (AE 357)
- • “That a ‘bow’ here denotes the doctrine of truth, is evident from its signification. Wherever wars are treated of in the Word, and wherever they are mentioned, no other wars are signified than spiritual ones....” (AC 2686)

### *Swift of Foot*

- “The ‘foot’ signifies what is lower, and thus more obscure, in the Lord’s kingdom.” We, as humans, are quite prone to make evaluations of what is

most important in life. How often are we right? “To the man whose mind and heart are set (the doctrine of charity and faith) appear as unimportant, and perchance as of no advantage to him; yet to the angels...these same things are precious...” (AC 2540) This number also says that what is important to men is often unimportant to the angels. So the swift of foot shall not escape because their wisdom is not able to keep up with the Lord’s.

### *The Rider of a Horse Shall Not Deliver Himself*

- “By horse is signified the understanding of the Word...horses in the opposite sense...signify the understanding of the Word and of truth falsified by reasoning, and likewise destroyed; as also one’s own intelligence...” (AR 298) This series of numbers in *AR* deals with the “riders of horses.” The spiritual meaning of the four horsemen described in Revelation is to show the effect our heart and mind can have on the Word, as illustrated in the colors of the horses: white, red, pale or black.

### *Fleeing Naked in That Day*

- To get a glimpse of this meaning, let’s turn to Genesis and the story of Adam and Eve recognizing their nakedness. “By knowing that they were naked is signified their knowing and acknowledging themselves to be no longer in innocence as before, but in evil...for where there is no innocence, nakedness is a scandal and disgrace.... For this reason nakedness is used in the Word as a type of disgrace and evil, and is predicated of a perverted church...” (AC 213)
- In this passage of Amos, it appears that they didn’t know they were naked. The Lord had to tell them how void of innocence and truth they were. Their nakedness was a disgrace.

### **Putting It All Together**

1. The Israelitish church perverted all of its divine gifts. They possessed the truth, and it was sufficient unto the day, but they didn’t use it. In the day of judgment, what they thought were their greatest attributes turned out to be useless acquisitions.
2. Their self-intelligence and ability to reason from falsities against truth hurt the Israelites. The doctrines they had to fight against evil (the archers) couldn’t stand (or couldn’t shoot straight).
3. Because they were devoid of truth, the Israelites had nothing to clothe their minds. Vulnerable, exposed, they couldn’t hold their heads up. They were a scandal and disgrace to those spiritual things they were to represent, and they perverted the church.
4. Cutting off the message of the prophets, telling them to not prophesy, and switching the uses of the will and understanding brought a spiritual insanity that obfuscated truth and reality.

## Read and Review

Read again Amos 2:12-16.

Read again the summary in *P&P*.

## Questions To Stimulate Reflection

- Have you noticed how the Word gives us examples of the will and understanding trying to usurp one another? Let's look at just two examples for now: Cain's slaying of Abel and Jacob supplanting Esau. In the Jacob and Esau story, the Writings mention how often, from the beginning of mankind, people have argued which is the most important: good or truth? See *AC 3289*. Why do we persist with this debate? The Writings make it abundantly clear that both are needed for a balanced spiritual life. So what is the problem? Why do we need to argue this point over and over again?
- How often do we question the ways of the Lord and imagine that we know a better way of making the choices of life? People still get angry with the Lord. We continue to live with the illusion that it is our prudence that gets us by. We have to be quick on our feet to sort things out. In the Word, the answers we seek to some troubling issues are not always clear. We imagine it all would be simpler if the Word were more direct in its applications. Why do you think people feel this way? What causes this anger or frustration? How do we resolve it?
- Taking our flight in winter. This has been a helpful teaching for me. It reminds me to come out of a coldness or indifference to spiritual things so that the spring and summer states are in my heart. What about you? Is there a useful state in the snow and cold of a spiritual winter? What brings us back to spring and summer?
- The idea of mental nakedness reminds us of the need to choose things that are important to angels and overcome the temptation to choose our unimportant things. In hindsight, one has to admit that unimportant things appear to be wrapped in interesting packages, and spiritual things appear to be in plain wrappings. Hell tries to remove our states of innocence by offering us seemingly attractive options. When their deception works and we finally see what shallowness we chose, they mock us for our poor choices and vulnerability. We need to pray for a discernment that will help us learn from our mistakes so we can move with spiritual haste to the state of innocence of wisdom. If ever we lapse into a state of spiritual "nakedness," there is a ray of hope offered to us in this lesson: With the Lord's help, we need not suffer too long in the disgrace and embarrassment of spiritual nakedness.

## Chapter Three

### **AMOS 3:1-2**

*“Hear this word that the Lord has spoken against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying:*

*You only have I known of all the families of the earth;  
Therefore I will punish you for all of your iniquities.”*

### **Passages From the Writings**

#### ***P&P***

- “That the church was established only with the Israelitish nation, wherefore evils and falsities will be examined there, vers. 1, 2....”

#### ***Scripture Confirmations***

- Verse 2 is quoted verbatim in a Posthumous Theological Work called Scripture Confirmations, but no explanation is given.

### **Derived Doctrine**

Our work on these verses will require more application than we have done so far. There is one reference in the whole of the Writings, and it gives a summary of the two verses with little regarding specific representations. But this is a wonderful experience, so let's enjoy it.

*“Hear this Word that the Lord has Spoken...”*

- In AC 3869[2-8], we are given a series of meanings for hearing. It signifies obedience, the understanding, to know the things contained in the Word, and to have faith in the will.
- “By hearing is signified both to perceive and to obey; because one attends that he may perceive and obey; that both these are signified by hearing is evident from common discourse, in which one speaks of hearing and of hearkening to anyone; the latter signifying to obey, and the former to perceive.” (AR 87)

#### ***The Lord Speaking to Anyone***

- “The Lord speaks with every man, for whatever a man wills and thinks that is good and true, is from the Lord...With those who suffer themselves to be led

away by evil spirits, the Lord speaks as if absent, or from afar, so that it can scarcely be said that He is speaking; but with those who are being led by the Lord, He speaks as more nearly present....” (AC 904)

### *The Lord Speaking Against Anyone*

- When the Lord speaks the truth and we find it threatening, or when the Lord speaks a “hard truth,” there is an appearance that the Lord is against us. But this is only an appearance. The Lord’s love for mankind is consistently soft, caring, concerned, and zealous to protect. Truth seems harsh and unbending, as it should be, when our actions are being turned to disorders and our minds are not open to receive spiritual sustenance from heaven. The first act of charity is to shun evils as sins, and if we are not doing that work of charity, the Lord must speak against us.

### *“O children of Israel, against the whole family”*

- We need to consider the order of the wording in this portion of our text. Children represent innocence. They represent the birth of truths of the church. Children, when rebellious, represent a form of corruption in the understanding of the church. Might one or more of these representations have some application?
- Israel represents the spiritual good. Could the call of the Lord to the children of Israel represent the Lord appealing to the remains of the spiritual good in Israel? If any productive hearing or obedience is to occur, the listener’s remains must be revitalized.
- “...families, when said of the sons of Israel, by whom is represented the spiritual church, as being the goods of truth...families denote the things which descend from good through truth, and are the goods of truth.” (AC 7916)
- The whole family: The Concordance suggests looking up the word “integrity” for “whole.” “For the sake of making anyone blessed and happy, the Lord wills a total submission; that is, that he should not be partly his own, and partly the Lord’s...the whole heart, the whole soul, the whole mind, and all the forces, being recipients, must be the Lord’s, consequently there must be a total submission.” (AC 6138[2-3])

### *Being Brought up out of the Land of Egypt*

- “The reason why Egypt signifies not only intelligence but also insanity in spiritual things, is because the Ancient Church, which extended through many kingdoms...was also in Egypt, at which time the Egyptians excelled all others in cultivating the science of correspondences between spiritual things and natural, as appears from their hieroglyphics. But when that science was turned by them into magic, and became idolatrous, then their intelligence in things spiritual became insanity....” (AR 503)

- The Lord reminded Israel that He had called them out of that Egyptian spiritual insanity.

*“You only have I known of all the families of the earth”*

- “...knowing, when said of the Lord...is because the Lord knows each and all things from eternity...” (AC 6853)
- In Exodus 5:2, it is said, “I know not Jehovah...” Such a statement signifies “...not to care [about the Lord], for he who does not care, says that he does not know.” (AC 7097) This is not the case with the Lord. He knows Israel completely.
- The Lord’s statement that He knows only Israel is a statement of divine foresight and of divine caring for all people that goes beyond human comprehension. However, this is not what the Jewish nation understood from these words. They believed that prophecies, such as this, meant they were a favored nation or chosen people. The Writings tell us anyone who believes this errs. “...the Israelitish and Jewish nation were not chosen, and still less that it will be chosen; and also that there was not anything of the church with it, nor could be, but only the representative of a church; and that the reason why it has been preserved even to this day, has been for the sake of the Word of the Old Testament (n. 3479).” (AC 7051[4])
- So the Lord’s knowing them was really His forming and choosing of them as a representative church, and any punishment for their iniquities was so that they could “...be in a holy external...and could have holy rituals by which the heavenly things of the Lord’s kingdom...[could be] represented...” (AC 3479[2])
- Eventually, the evils of Israel would be overshadowed with the prophecy of the Messiah. As a nation, Israel was plundered, and her able-bodied were sent to captivity. The Old Testament prophecies needed to be preserved because they offered hope and consolation to the world. Regardless of what happened to Israel, the story of the Lord’s coming and His redemption was to be kept alive within the representative rituals and teachings of Israel. The Lord knew what He wanted preserved in the church. He knew His church, and it was to be the means by which the story of Hell’s defeat would be preserved and fulfilled with His coming.

### **Putting It All Together**

1. The church was established only with the Israelitish nation. Wherefore evils and falsities will have to be examined there. Israel and its scribes, as troublesome as they were, meticulously copied every jot and tittle of the Word. They preserved the Word with a loyalty that is impressive. By the means of their labor, the books of the Word, with amazingly few errors, were passed on through the generations to us. The Lord’s watchful, knowing, and corrective Providence kept the Word so that

the New Testament and the Writings might rest upon a firm foundation of the Old Testament. For this to be so, the Lord knew only Israel and their evils and falsities had to be examined there.

As we think about this, it is even more amazing to think about the “wholeness” of the Word. Here is a book written for those in the past, and yet it had to be written so as to help those of us in the present. But that is not all. The Word had to feed not only the past and the present, but it had to be the source of inspiration for the angels to study to eternity and be so profound that the angels will never exhaust the myriad of truths in a single word or placement of a comma. Every detail contains meaning: The curvatures in the letters, the Hebrew letters with little horns turning upwards, the vowel sounds adding a roughness or aspiration to the meaning of the Word. So much more could be said about what the angels find in the Word. No human could ever accomplish this astounding feat of writing. Such an awesome preparation of the Word so that our discovery of truth will always be new and exciting reminds us of a passage in Genesis:

“And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not.” (Gen. 28:16)

2. Some of this amazement carries over into the way the Lord called Swedenborg to be His servant to bring the Writings into the world so as to fulfill the promise of the Second Coming. The Lord is ever watchful of His New Church. We are to be guardians of these Divine works. How are we doing? Do we think of ourselves as the chosen ones? Are we willing to be encouraged or chastised by the Lord? Do we come with a wholeness of family? The whole heart, the whole soul, the whole mind, and all the forces? Total submission to the Lord’s church?  
In part, the above reflects creative derived doctrine at work. What appeared void of direct teachings opened avenues of thought and application. What do you think of the use of derived doctrine? How does it contribute to our study?

## **Read and Review**

Read Amos 3:1-2.

Read the summary in P&P.

## **Questions to Stimulate Reflection**

1. Please write out any questions that have occurred to you during this section and share them with the group during the discussion time.
2. Here is a question I hesitate to offer because it requires knowing the differences in the branches of the New Church organizations, and I don’t want to send you off with a research project to answer this question. What are the varying views of the Writings in each branch of the New Church? Remember the four are:
  - a. General Convention.

- b. Conference.
- c. General Church.
- d. The Lord's New Church.

Each branch has a different viewpoint of the Writings. I have often wondered how Divine Providence is working with these divergent points of view.

3. How does the role of the New Church compare with that of the Israelitish church? What can we learn from their successes and failures? Are there temptations and strengths inherent in this role that are visible in both the Israelitish church and the New Church?
4. How much did Israel understand their spiritual role as a church? How much do we know? How do we learn more?
5. How do the differences between a spiritual church and a human organization play a part in understanding the spiritual role of a church?

### **Amos 3:3-6**

*“Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?  
 Will a lion roar in the forest, when he has no prey?  
 Will a young lion cry out of his den, if he has caught nothing?  
 Will a bird fall into a snare on the earth, where there is no trap for it?  
 Will a snare spring up from the earth, if it has caught nothing at all?  
 If a trumpet is blown in a city, will not the people be afraid?  
 If there is calamity in a city, will not the Lord have done it?”*

### **Passages From the Writings**

#### ***P&P***

- “...that a church and no church cannot exist together, neither truths and falsities together without [the latter] being seized [by the former], vers. 3-6...”

#### ***AC 9348[5] and earlier sections***

- “That such things do not come to pass when a man does not love himself and the world above all things, is described in Amos...iii. 4,5.
- What things do not come to pass? Earlier in this number, we are told about the signification of a snare: “...a snare when said of evils, as being allurements and deception. That evils allure and deceive, is because all evils spring from the loves of self and of the world...and the loves of self and the world are born with a man, and he feels the delight of his life from the moment of his birth...these loves, like the unseen currents of a river, continually draw the thought and the will of man away from the Lord to self, and away from heaven...”
- In this context, the things that do not come to pass are the negative aspects of the correspondences. When we read lion, roaring, prey, den, etc., we are not

to focus on allurements and deceptions nor the love of self and the world. Instead, we are to focus on the positive correspondences.

### **AC 592**

- "...it is predicated of Jehovah or the Lord that He punishes, that He tempts, that He does evil, that He destroys or kills, and that He curses. As for example...In Amos: - Shall evil befall a city, and Jehovah hath not done it? (iii. 6)." And further in this number we read: "...it is man who brings evil upon himself, and ruins and destroys himself—although it is not man, but evil spirits who excite and lead him..."

### **De Verbo, Section XII, number 284**

- "...the Divine operation does not fall into a man who is empty and void, as for example one who does not know that the Lord is pure love and pure mercy, good itself, and truth itself, and that love itself and good itself are such in their essence that they cannot do evil to anyone, neither be angry nor revengeful...that there is no evil in the city which Jehovah hath not done, as in Amos (iii. 6)..."

### **Derived Doctrine**

Please note that the Lord asks seven questions in these verses.

Question One: "Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?"

*Two*

- "That two signifies conjunction is because all things in general and in particular in the spiritual world, and consequently in the natural world, have reference to two things, namely, good and truth—to good as what acts and flows in and to truth as what suffers (submits) and receives...nothing is produced unless the two make a one by a certain image of marriage..." (AC 5194)

*To Walk*

In many passages of the Writings, to walk represents to live. Check the following for examples: AC 1794, 6276, 8420, 9212[8], and 10087[3].

- The answer to this question seems evident when we consider that a will and understanding working together produce results, or walk toward an agreed upon goal. Good acts and truth receives. Are they agreed? There is no indication that they are pulling against one another; therefore, they must be in some degree of agreement.

Question Two: "Will a lion roar in the forest, when he has no prey?"

*Lion*

- "That a lion denotes the good of celestial love and the derivative truth, in its power, and also that in the opposite sense it denotes the evil of the love of self in its power, is evident from passages in the Word where a lion is mentioned." (AC 6367)

*Roaring*

- "...the signification of 'as a lion roareth' as being on account of the desolation of Divine truth in the church; for a lion signifies Divine truth in its power...and to roar signifies the result of distress because of the desolation of truth...but in the contrary sense to roar or the roaring of a lion signifies an ardent desire to destroy and devastate the church, which is done by destroying Divine truth by means of the falsities of evil...because when a lion is hungry and seeks its prey, and also when it is enraged with anger against its enemy, it is its habit to roar." (AE 601[1-4])

*Forest*

- "...to cut down wood in a forest denotes to act from a false religiosity (extremism), and to destroy such things as are of the church; for the church is called a forest, a garden, and a paradise - a forest from knowledges, a garden from intelligence and a paradise from wisdom...and as a forest denotes the church as to knowledges, thus as to external things, it also denotes a religiosity." (AC 9011[5])

*Prey*

- This is one of those words we need to consider carefully. The Concordance alternates between prey, spoil, booty, rapine and despoil. Let a couple of examples show the problem. Potts translates AC 576[3] in the following way: "Prey in mine house (Mal. iii.10) = remains in the internal man, which are compared to prey because they are as it were furtively insinuated among so many evils and falsities."
- That same number in the standard edition, also translated by Potts, has "booty" in place of the word prey (along with some other word changes such as "stealthily" in place of "furtively").
- In AC 6442, we have a usage of spoil, rapine, and prey: "...spoil denotes those who have been rescued and delivered...rapine, spoil, and prey, denote the rescuing and deliverance of the good by the Lord."
- In AC 6443, "...from the signification of dividing the prey, as being to give a possession in the heavenly kingdom; for by prey are signified those who have

been rescued and delivered by the Lord; hence by dividing the prey is signified distribution, namely, among those in heaven....”

- AC 6368 has a powerful message about the Lord’s deliverance: “...man of himself is in hell, for his will and thought from his own is nothing but evil and its falsity, by which he has been so bound to hell that he cannot be torn away without violence. This tearing away and deliverance is what is called the prey; and because this is done from the Lord’s Divine good, it is said that from the Lord through what is celestial is the deliverance of many from hell.”

Do we have a possible answer to question two? The Lord’s roaring is to indicate how zealously He wants to pull His people from the extreme destruction of the knowledges of the church (religiosity). He, as a lion, wants to awaken within His people the remains hidden in the internal man. This portion of the prophecy is not about doom but hopefulness. The lion in the forest will roar to announce that rescue and deliverance are available for the faithful. His celestial has the power to deliver many from hell.

Question Three: “Will a young lion cry out of his den, if he has caught nothing?”

#### *A Young Lion*

- “...the signification of a lion and an old lion, as being the good of love and the derivative truth in their power.... A young lion denotes one who is in power through truth from good, and an old lion one who is in power through good.” (AC 6369)

#### *Cry Out of the Lion’s Den*

- “...that a cry in the Word, is said in reference to every affection that breaks forth from the heart, wherefore it is a voice of lamentation, of imploring, of supplication from grief, of entreaty, of indignation, of confession, yea of exultation.” AR 885.

We now have somewhat of a paradox to clear up. We do not have a direct representation of the word “den.” We have “den of thieves or robbers.” We have representations of caves, but almost nothing for a lion’s den. The only reference given is the one where they put Daniel in the lion’s den. In P&P (explaining Daniel 6:10-17, regarding those who proposed worship of themselves instead of the Lord), we read that “...when this decree was opposed by those who belong to the Lord’s church, it was enacted that they should undergo the punishment [pronounced] by the inquisition, which is the lion’s den, into which Daniel was cast.”

In the references to “cave” and “lair,” we are taught that they signify the evil of self-love robbing the individual or church of its power and truth. But with several of the references above (AC 6368 and AC 6369), we have the correspondence of old (mature) lion and young lion in a most positive usage. This third question is probably a continuation of Question Two. The old (mature) lion is to teach us about

the Lord's power through love, and the young lion is to teach us about His power through truth from good. Therefore we can't use den, cave, and lair in the opposite sense of self-love robbing the individual and church. The Lord robs no one. His goal is to set us free.

We can, however, see the Lord's Divine Good and Truth "catching" us and delivering us from the grip of hell. His power of truth from good can snatch us or tear us away from the grip hell imagines it has over us. Therefore, the young lion crying out of his den sounds, to me, like a celebration and announcement to all that His efforts were not in vain, and He is not without His catch. A cry of exultation!

Question Four: "Will a bird fall into a snare on the earth, where there is no trap for it?"

The literal sense seems to ask us to answer a "dumb" question. If there is no trap on the earth, the bird can't fall into the snare. Is that really what this question is trying to illustrate? Let's look at the correspondences.

#### *Bird*

- A bird in general signifies rational things and also the intellectual things of the inward man. See AC 40.

#### *Snare*

- A snare signifies mental delusions. "...to be deluded and misled by one's own evil and falsity..." (AC 10641) Being caught in a snare represents "...to be caught by their own evil, and thus brought into the evil of the penalty." (AC 7653) It also "...denotes allurements and deception through the delights of the loves of self and of the world...and this through reasonings from the fallacies of the senses which favor these delights..." (AC 9348)

#### *A Snare on Earth*

- AC 1066 has some very helpful teachings that seem to offer insights into the question under consideration. In the Word, "earth" and "land" have several meanings. "In the universal sense it denotes the place or region where the church is, or where it has been...it (also) signifies what is not the church, for every such word has contrary or opposite meanings.... But when the church is referred to the term earth is used to predicate "...all the doctrines both true and false that were of the churches." (AC 1066)

The answer then to the Lord's question is:

If a person's mind pays attention to the rational things of the church...

- If a person's mind feeds the inward things...

- If a person's mind does not delude itself and is not misled by its own evil and falsity...
- If a person's mind is not allured through the delights of self and the world...
- If a person's mind is not fooled with the fallacies of the senses...

...then the bird will not fall into the snare on the earth. The church will exist and will seize or expel the "no church" condition of the mind.

Question Five: "Will a snare spring up from the earth, if it has caught nothing at all?"

This is a continuation of the question started above. The mind that is given to the Lord doesn't let allow itself to be snared by negative doubts. Hell would love to prove its point that all the things of the church are useless and ineffective. Hell often seeks to win its battle against the Lord with labels. The church is "narrow-minded." The church is "behind the times" and doesn't offer help with current issues. If one opposes the disorder of homosexuality, the opposer is labeled "homophobic." If an issue is addressed from scripture, it is pointed out that other prohibitions mentioned in scripture are not adhered to. "Be consistent, and don't choose what you want to expose as disorders. Don't preach to me!"

The snare of earth would love to spring up and expose the mind of the church. The "no church" mind hates the very existence of the Lord's Church.

What I hear in this question is a profound statement from the Lord: The "no churches" think they are clever and able reasoners. Their traps, their trick questions, their lies, their plot to destroy all evidence of the Lord's truth are like an empty snare on earth with nothing in it.

Question Six: "If a trumpet is blown in a city, will not the people be afraid?"

*Blowing or Sounding a Trumpet*

- In AR 391 and 397, we are told that this represents to "...call together upon solemn occasions...to explore and discover the quality of those who are in faith alone..."
- In AE 502[1] and [2], we read that it "signifies the flowing down of Divine truth out of heaven. When this flowing down is strong, it produces one effect with the good and another with the evil. With the good it illustrates the understanding, joins them more closely with heaven, and thence gladdens and vivifies their minds; but with the evil it disturbs the understanding, separates them from heaven, joins them more closely with hell, induces terror in their minds, and finally brings spiritual death."

*City*

- The word "city" has a wonderful range of meanings. A city represents the doctrine of the church and religion. (AR 402) Or, it can represent everything

doctrinal or heretical in a person. (AC 402) AE 223[20] says that “city” can signify the false doctrine of those who reject the Lord.

Our question seems to be addressed to all of us but most directly to those who reject the Lord. They will be called together on a solemn occasion. They will be examined. Those who have loved the Lord will find it a joyful occasion. Those who have rejected the Lord will find it a time of terror and a sense of “spiritual death.”

Question Seven: “If there is calamity in a city, will not the Lord have done it?”

### *Tranquility, Serenity, Moderation*

- We are well acquainted with the teachings that say the Lord does no harm to anyone. It is an appearance that He is vengeful and hard on us. There is a beautiful teaching in AE 419 that explains what the Lord seeks for His children. The Word talks about tranquility and serenity:
- “...the separations of the good from the evil and the casting out of the evil in the spiritual world are effected by various degrees of moderation and intensity of the Divine proceeding from the Lord as a sun. When this flows in moderately the good are separated from the evil...when the Divine from the Lord flows in moderately there is everywhere tranquility and serenity...”
- I also like the teaching in this number that the Lord does this moderately. But those who rejected the Lord see Him as the one who brings calamity.

### *Perspectives*

- In TCR 69, we are given a powerful example of what the good and evil will see. “The man who lifts his mind to God and acknowledges that all the truth of wisdom is from God...is like one who stands upon a lofty tower and sees beneath him a populous city and all that is being done in its streets. But the man who confirms in himself the belief that all truth of wisdom is from the natural light in himself, is like one who remains in a cavern beneath that tower and looks through holes at the same city, seeing nothing but the wall of a single house in that city, and how its bricks are joined.”

### **Putting It All Together**

1. We must begin with the quote from P&P: “...that a church and no church cannot exist together; neither truths and falsities together without [the latter] being seized [by the former].”
2. The seven questions illustrate this point. The mind that is based on the Lord and His Word will not be empty and void.
3. The Lord will protect; He will seize the believers from the grip of hell. His roar of victory will resound throughout the heavens. Rescue and deliverance will thrill all in the heavens so that they in turn may inspire all on earth.

4. The worldly, the despisers of the Lord and His Word, will not snare the minds of those who believe in the Lord. Those who seek to snare the doctrines of the church are the ones who will be deluded and misled.  
The “no church” and the “falsity” will be seized by the Lord. Why? Because falsity cannot stand in the presence of the Lord’s truth. Unreality cannot exist in the presence of the Lord’s Reality.
5. Picture Amos speaking this message today. In all probability, he would still be told to get out of town and go back to his sheep.

## **READ AND REVIEW**

Read Amos 3:3-6

Read the summary in P&P.

## **QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION**

1. Did you see a progression in the seven questions and their meanings?
2. What is the significance of the statement of the Lord’s victory over the “no church” state? How does its significance to personal states compare to its significance for religious organizations?
3. Do we take the outcome of the Lord’s work for granted? How does the New Church differ from traditional Christianity in its expectations of the Lord’s work? What is the difference between trustful confidence and self-assured disinterest?
4. How about the Lord’s promise of tranquility and serenity, stemming from the moderate influx of the Divine? What do we think of the word “moderate”? Does it have a positive and negative sense? Which sense seems to be used in this passage?
5. What about the two views of the city? How does a “peephole” view of the city limit the viewer? What might the bricks of the wall represent in this metaphor? How do we get a view from the tower and see generals leading to particulars?

## **AMOS 3:7-8**

*“Surely the Lord God does nothing,  
Unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.  
A lion has roared!  
Who will not fear?  
The Lord God has spoken!  
Who can but prophesy?”*

## **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

### ***P&P***

- "...that the Lord will most surely reveal this, vers. 7, 8..."

### ***AR 3***

- "By servants, in the spiritual sense are meant those who are in truths; and because truths are from good, by servants are meant those who are in truths from good, thus also, those who are in wisdom from love.... Now as truths are serviceable to good by teaching it...by servant, in the Word, is meant what is serviceable, or he or that which serves; in this sense not only the prophets are called the servants of God, but also the Lord as to His Human...." Amos 3:7 is cited as an example.

### ***AE 409[6]***

- "Since the Lord in respect to Divine truth is called in the Word 'a servant' from serving, so those who are in Divine truth from the Lord and thereby serve others are there called 'servants,' as the prophets are...." Amos 3:7 is cited.

### ***AE 601[8]***

- "The Lord Jehovah will not do a word unless He hath revealed His secret to His servants the prophets' signifies that the Lord opens the interior things of the Word and of doctrine to those who are in truths from good; 'to reveal a secret' signifies to enlighten and to open the interior things of the Word; 'His servants the prophets' signify those who are in truths of doctrine and who receive; 'the lion hath roared, who will not fear?' signifies a powerful revelation and manifestation of Divine truth; 'the Lord Jehovah hath spoken, who will not prophesy?' signifies reception and manifestation. The Lord is called 'Lord Jehovah' when good is treated of." Amos 3:7, 8 are cited.

### ***AE 624[9]***

- "In Amos: (iii. 7, 8)...to 'prophesy' signifies to receive Divine truth and to teach it..."

### ***AR 241***

- "...a lion signifies truth in its power...may appear from the power of the lion above every animal of the earth, as also from lions in the spiritual world,

where they are images representative of the power of Divine truth.... Hence it is that Jehovah, or the Lord is compared to 'a lion'...." Amos 3:8 is cited.

#### **AR 471**

- "...a lion roars when he sees His enemies and is assaulted by them, and when he sees his whelps and prey taken away; so does the Lord, comparatively, when He sees His church taken away from Him by devils. That this is what is signified by 'roaring as a lion'...." Amos 3:8 is cited.

#### **AE 278[7&8]**

- "...Jehovah is compared to a 'roaring lion,' because a 'lion' signifies power to lead forth from hell or from evils, and to 'roar' signifies defense against evils and falsities...." Amos 3:8 is cited.

### **DERIVED DOCTRINE**

This section of the Word is clearly explained in the Writings, and there is no need to look for correspondences beyond what we are given. Let's go directly to our summary section.

### **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

1. The Lord laments when anyone purposely chooses to flee from His protection. The Lord laments when the hells attack a church. In other words, the Lord is not a passive observer of His children or His church.
2. He has given us the Word. He came so that He might fight and conquer the hells. All of this was not done without the Lord revealing it to His servants and prophets. His truth is serviceable and practical. These revelations and manifestations of Divine truth are "powerful" as told to us in AE 601[8]. The lion roaring is a spiritual roaring that puts fear into the heart of the hells. They surely know in their lucid moments that they cannot stand in the presence of the Lord. But sadly, their insanity causes them to imagine they can defeat the Lord.  
We, as readers of this prophecy, must take heart that we are cared for and loved by the Lord. He laments for each of us if anything of hell assaults us, and His truths, as servants, work to give us the wisdom of good to overcome and withstand the poison of falsity.
3. These two verses are a continuation of the previous seven questions. They highlight the good news of the Lord's victory and help us to understand what is said in the P&P summary: "...the Lord will most surely reveal this...."

## READ AND REVIEW

Read Amos 3:7-8.

Read the summary in P&P.

## QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION

1. Have you noticed how often the prophecy of Amos portrays the Lord as a roaring Lion? Isn't this a powerful image to add to our picture of the Lord? What other images of the Lord do we find in His Word?
2. The prophecy of Amos is more a statement of affirmativeness and that one of doom and gloom. In the spiritual sense, it is an announcement of the coming of the New Jerusalem. What parts of the prophecy so far seem to announce the coming of the New Jerusalem?
3. What explanation or understanding comes to you when the Writings say the Lord roars when He sees His church being taken away from Him by the devils? Can Hell really take the Lord's church away from Him?
4. How much are we aware of all that the Lord does for us? How often does He act on our behalf? Does He let us help Him? If so, how? How much is done for us, and how much do we do as if from ourselves?
5. How many secrets do you think the Lord has given us? I'm not thinking of a specific number as much as a sense of appreciation for all that we have been given. Do we value them enough? What do we do to cherish this gift each day?

## AMOS 3:9-10

*"Proclaim in the palaces at Ashdod,  
And in the palaces in the land of Egypt, and say:  
'Assemble on the mountains of Samaria;  
See great tumults in her midst,  
And the oppressed within her.  
For they do not know to do right,'  
Says the Lord,  
'Who store up violence and robbery in their palaces.'"*

## PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS

### *P&P*

- "...for thence it appears in what manner the church is being laid waste, vers. 9, 10..."

Note: This is the only direct reference we have to these two verses. Once again, our ability to understand these verses falls on our ability to use derived doctrine.

## DERIVED DOCTRINE

### *Palaces*

- Remember that “palaces,” in the positive sense, signify the understanding in which the truths of doctrine from good are arranged in beautiful forms. (AC 4926)
- So what follows is a call to learn by reflecting on specific contrasts. What does one see in the spiritual palaces of Ashdod and Egypt? Is this what Israel was to reflect on so that they might learn or see the contrasts necessary to repent?

### *Palaces of Ashdod*

- Ashdod was the city and site of the Philistine god, Dagon. What most important message should be proclaimed in the palaces of Ashdod? AE 817[10] indicates that Dagon represents an understanding that is destitute of the good of love. This is not what the Lord wants His spiritual palaces to reflect!

### *Palaces of Egypt*

- And what was to be said in the palaces in the land of Egypt? Egypt represented the perversion and profaning of divine truths. (AC 4735[15]) Land, on the other hand, signifies “...the church...also what is not the church...” (AC 1066)
- It seems to make sense that the Lord wanted them to look at the perverted palaces of Egypt so they would see these were not the things of His representative church. He was challenging them to clean up the spiritual palace of the mind and to restore it to the beauty and order befitting the Lord God of Israel.

### *The Call to Assemble on the Mountains of Samaria*

- The word assemble is used to represent arranging things in order. Take for instance this quote: “Assemble yourselves. That this signifies that they should set themselves in order...for in the spiritual sense ‘to be assembled’ has no other meaning, because truths and goods cannot be assembled unless they are also set in order.” (AC 6338)
- Let’s look at some representations of Samaria:
  - signifies the spiritual church or the same perverted. (AC 1368[3])
  - signifies the church which is in the affection of falsities or in affection of truth. (AC 2466[4])
  - signifies those who are in external worship. (AC 10050[2])

- In all likelihood, the last quote comes closest to what is represented here. The AC 10050 reference is cited for our Amos 3:12 verse.
- So, the Lord was calling for the reordering of external worship so that goods and truths might lead them to repentance.

#### *Great Tumults in her Midst*

- When external order is called for, internal disorder aligns itself to resist. It will not give up easily. It will cause great tumult and anxiety in the midst of the assembling order. Disorder will fight to maintain its existence and control. The Lord is telling the Israelites they have work and warfare to wage.

#### *Ignorance of the Difference between Right and Wrong*

- This makes sense. If the Israelites have impaired their external order, if that disorder entered worship, if truth did not matter, and if their prophets were told not to give prophecies, it seems logical to assume that they would lose the ability to discriminate between the things of the world and heaven.

#### *Storing Violence and Robbery in Their Palaces*

- When the ability to discriminate between right and wrong is lost, there will be serious damage or violence to truth and justice. People will warp moral virtues to fit the justifications needed to perpetrate thefts and lies. In the case of the Israelites in Amos, the worst aspect of this robbery and violence was that they made it appear legal and sanctioned by the church and the Word. Their palaces were shabby, artificial, and dysfunctional.

### **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

1. The sacrament of Holy Supper offers a time for reflection. It is a time to look specifically at our lives and find an area of disorder that is blocks the light of heaven. When that specific disorder is seen, we need to make ourselves guilty of it. We are to confess that sin, as something for which we alone are responsible. Then we are to supplicate the Lord for His help in removing that disorder. When we do this work of repentance, there is a last step in the pursuit of our goal: A new life. We must live the change to make improvement.

TCR 700[3] likens this most important sacrament to a river “containing scarcely visible grains of gold in great abundance; but when its holiness has been revealed, it is like the gold collected from the sand, melted into a mass, and wrought into beautiful forms.”

We are to be sifters. We are to separate out the falsity of sand so that we can find the gold. That collected gold then needs to be put into some form that will honor the Lord.

2. Consequently, we are to look at contrasts. We are to desire spiritual palaces that contain the gifts of a spiritual life, palaces that will show us the difference between right and wrong. We need to find the discriminating prudence that comes from the Word.
3. The church of Israel stands forth here as a symbol of waste and dishonor. Implied in this contrast are some questions: "What is the health and vitality of your church like? Is your palace a place where violence and robbery are stored? Or is it place where order is found and a tumult is going on in the midst, so that evil is banished from a sanctuary dedicated to the worship of the Lord God Jesus Christ?"

## **READ AND REVIEW**

Read Amos 3:9-10.

Read the summary from P&P.

## **QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION**

1. How successful are you at preparing for Holy Supper? Are you able to reflect on some specific thing you need help in overcoming so that Holy Supper is entered into worthily?
2. Do you slip into the general or vague request: "You know me, Lord. Remove whatever is most necessary."? It appears from the Word that we need to be specific, own up to our mistakes, and not blame others for our conduct. Why do you think it is important to follow these steps? Why is it important to be specific?
3. How fair do we have to be to discriminate in matters of right and wrong? I've heard it said that the Lord wants us to make decisions. If we see that we have erred, He wants us to be willing to change. The mistake is to stubbornly hold to a wrong decision and refuse to change. What makes change hard in this context?
4. What is your view of this thing called self-esteem? Do we place this idea in its proper order of importance? What are some ways to keep a healthy perspective on self-esteem?

## **AMOS 3:11**

*"Therefore thus says the Lord God:  
An adversary shall be around the land;  
He shall sap your strength from you,  
And your palaces shall be plundered."*

## Passages From the Writings

### *P&P*

- “...wherefore the truths of the church perish by falsities, ver. 11...”

### *AC 2973[5&6]*

- “...when man does not suffer the Lord to dispose the things round about to correspondence, then he recedes from heaven in the measure in which he does not suffer it. That the soul of man is in the midst...and that the body is round about...is well known; for it is the body that encompasses and invests his soul or his spirit.... It is now plain what ‘round about’ means.” Amos 3:11 is cited as one of the references.

## DERIVED DOCTRINE

### *An Adversary*

- Like most correspondences, the word “adversary” has a good and bad sense. In the positive sense, the Lord is an adversary to hell and all of its workings. The Lord opposes its influence on our lives. The Lord also is our adversary when we insist on doing things that are harmful to our souls. That sense is involved in Matthew 5:25, where we read, “Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him.” In other words, when we are out of order, it is in our best spiritual interest to patch up our differences with the Lord as quickly as possible because we are wrong. The Lord has the truth and the facts about our transgressions. If we were to be taken to a “judge,” the facts, the evidence, would clearly show us as guilty, and our adversary not only completely fair, but accurate. Save yourself the grief of the “hearing” or ruling of the judge, and agree to a settlement with the Lord.
- An adversary also may signify every evil and falsity that seeks to thwart our work of repentance. Hell seeks to intimidate, threaten, embarrass, flatter, and mock us into quitting the work of repentance. It claims to have evidence to prove our unworthy state and tries to tell us to give up. The Lord appears to be the adversary but to the degree we “suffer” ourselves to allow the Lord to dispose things round about, we become the winners over the hells.

### *Around the Land...*

- This word “land” has appeared often in our study. It represents “the church...also what is not the church...” (AC 1066) The seeming flip-flop here is not an inconsistency of doctrine. It represents the choice we make. We will dispose things so that the Lord can enter the soul and fill us with the things of

the church, or we can dispose of the order of the Lord and become that which is not the church.

### *The Adversary Will Sap Strength and Plunder the Palaces*

- If we turn our backs on the Lord, we lose vitality and we lose the spiritual palaces storing good and truth. If we join forces with the hells, they will surely plunder us. Hell has no love for individuals. Their hatred burns to destroy the souls of people. Either way, it is a lose-lose situation, whereas agreeing quickly with the Lord is a win-win choice.

## **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

1. The Lord alerts us to the fact that hell, our adversary, is all around the church. Hell's goal is simple. It wants to separate us from the Lord. How it accomplishes that goal is dependent on each person. Hell has a bag of thousands of dirty tricks. It will try them all. It wants to sap our strength. It wants to cause us to despair. It wants us to fight with one another.
2. To be alerted by the Lord to the plan of hell is a wise beginning. What we need to do is to "suffer" (allow) ourselves to be led by the Lord. The Lord has a plan that will conquer anything hell has to offer. Reading His Word, praying for His help, and seeking to be of use to Him and the neighbor are all ways to thwart the adversary.

## **READ AND REVIEW**

Read Amos 3:11.

Read the summary from P&P.

## **QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION**

1. Our unit of study covered one verse. That one verse had no direct teachings for us to consider. We sought the help of derived doctrine. Did that study help us see the meaning? Was anything left out that needs clarification?
2. Do we agree with the Lord because we are scared of hell, or do we agree with Him from a "holy fear?" I'm sure many of you know the difference. If not, check out DP 136-139.
3. How can we best "suffer" ourselves to let the Lord dispose the things of order "round about" us? The "suffer" means "allow." What does it mean when we "allow" the Lord, who is Omniscient, Omnipresent, and Omnipotent, to do something for us?

## **AMOS 3:12**

*“Thus says the Lord:  
As a shepherd takes from the mouth of a lion  
Two legs or a piece of an ear,  
So shall the children of Israel be taken out  
Who dwell in Samaria-  
In the corner of a bed and on the edge of a couch!”*

### **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

#### ***P&P***

- “...and the goods and truths of the Word will be taken away from them, ver. 12...”

#### ***AC 3869[10&11]***

- “...‘to snatch the two legs’ denotes the will of good; and the ‘piece of an ear,’ the will of truth. That a ‘piece of an ear’ denotes this can as before said be seen solely from the correspondences in the other life, and the derivative significatives, according to which the internal sense of the Word, and also the rituals in the Israelitish and Jewish Church.... the obedience of faith is understood by ‘ears’ and obeying by ‘hearing’...”

#### ***AC 6188[2]***

- “That a ‘bed’ denotes what is natural, is because the natural is beneath the rational, and serves it as a bed; for the rational as it were lies down upon the natural; and because the natural is thus spread out underneath, it is called a ‘bed’ as...in Amos iii.12....‘in the corner of a bed’ denotes in the lowest of the natural; and ‘on the end of a couch’ denotes in what is sensuous. For by the people Israel whose metropolis was Samaria, was represented the Lord’s spiritual kingdom.”

#### ***AC 10050[1&2]***

- “...the signification of ‘legs’...the exterior things that belong to the natural man.... The like is signified by ‘legs’ in Amos....by ‘the lion’ are here signified those who lay waste the church; by ‘legs,’ the external of the church, which also is of the natural man; by ‘a piece of an ear,’ its perception; by ‘them that dwell in Samaria,’ those who are in external worship; ‘the corner of a bed and the extremity of a couch’ denote the lowest natural, which is the external sensuous, and its truth and good.”

## **AR 137**

- “Doctrine is also signified by ‘bed’ in Amos.... ‘In the corner of a bed,’ and ‘in the extremity of a couch,’ means what is more remote from the truths and goods of doctrine. ‘Bed’ and ‘couch’ and ‘bed chamber’ have a similar signification....”

## **AE 163[3]**

- “‘Bed’ signifies the natural man, because the natural man underlies the spiritual, thus the spiritual lies on it and on the things that are in it as on its own bed.... In Amos...‘Lion’ signifies the church, here those therein that destroy goods and truths; ‘legs and a bit of an ear’ are the goods that are in the natural man, and something of perception of truth therefrom; ‘the sons of Israel that dwell in Samaria’ are those of the church; ‘on the corner of the bed, and on the end of the couch,’ are those in a little natural light from the spiritual, and in some truths therefrom.”

## **DERIVED DOCTRINE**

### *Shepherd*

- “...is one who exercises the good of charity.... He leads and teaches...those who are led and taught are called the ‘flock.’” (AC 343)

### *Mouth*

- “By ‘mouth’ is signified doctrine, preaching and discourse...reasonings from falsities of doctrine....” (AR 574) This reference from AR also presents the meaning of “his mouth being as the mouth of a lion.” A lion in the good sense is representative of the Divine truth of the Word.

## **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

1. The summary of this verse has many threads to follow. I will attempt to follow one. You may be drawn to one of the other choices.
2. The children of Israel had made their bed, and they were lying in it. They chose the lowest quality of spiritual life. Their doctrine, their preaching, and their discourses were superficial and not very nourishing for the soul. The “beds” upon which their rational would rest kept them in a sensual squalor that was not befitting a church that was to represent the Lord and His Word to the world.
3. They were satisfied with squeezing religion in the corner and on the edge of the bed. Compare this attitude with the Advent lessons, when there was “no room in the inn” for the Lord to be born. They were so busy with their own

agendas that they ignored the Lord's plans for the church and failed to see the reality of their states.

4. Cramped and not restful, their souls had little (inferior) spiritual light. They hung on the edge of the bed (doctrine). The good of love and the good of wisdom, like two legs of a lamb, were in the mouth of the lion. The Lord as the Shepherd rescued what little good was left. He always preserves a remnant of a dying church so as to build a new one to serve as protector or repository for the living Word of the Lord.
5. The piece of the ear preserved is compellingly symbolic of the little obedience of faith the Israelites had left in them. A tattered, chewed on remnant of obedience. People only hear as well as they listen. Israel had ears that were heavy, and they were not listening well.

## **READ AND REVIEW**

Read Amos 3:12.

Read the summary from P&P.

## **QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION**

1. I wonder, as we go further into this study, how those who heard Amos understood this prophecy. The deeper levels of the correspondences have to be reviewed and remembered over and over. The Israelites were so wrapped up in their lies and superficiality that I don't think they cared enough to pay attention. What do you think about this?
2. The image of the lion with the legs in its mouth and the piece of the ear being rescued is easy to keep in the mind's eye. How can we best use this teaching for ourselves?
3. What about the bed as a resting place for the rational? Do we see this in a practical example? Is the crowded corner and sleeping on the edge of the bed something we can illustrate too? Do these things speak of our limited time of reading, reflecting on, and discussing doctrine each day? Our daily schedules seem to crowd out the spiritual and we know about this, but can we change our lifestyles?
4. We need to see these questions as a positive strengthening of spiritual priorities that are intended to improve the quality of our life, and not just negative weights laid on our busy, and somewhat confusing, time management decisions. What helps us see them as positive? Do we see positive outcomes when we address such questions?

## **AMOS 3:13-15**

*"Hear and testify against the house of Jacob,  
Says the Lord God of hosts,  
That in the day I punish Israel for their transgressions,*

*I will also visit destruction on the altars of Bethel;  
And the horns of the altar shall be cut off  
And fall to the ground.  
I will destroy the winter house along with the summer house;  
The houses of ivory shall perish,  
And the great houses shall have an end,  
Says the Lord."*

## **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

### ***P&P***

- In the previous verse, we read "...the goods and the truths of the Word will be taken away from them..." And now in verses 13-15, we are told: "...together with all things pertaining to the church, vers. 13-15."

### ***AC 921[4]***

- "...'altars' denote idolatrous worship. In Amos iii. 14...'altars' denote representative worship became idolatrous."

### ***AC 2832[10]***

- "In Amos...the 'horns of the altar were to be cut off,' was because truth from good was no longer represented there; 'Bethel' is the Divine Good, and is therefore called the 'king's sanctuary,' and the 'house of the kingdom'..."

### ***AC 10182[8]***

- "In Amos...by 'the altars of Bethel,' and by its 'horns,' are signified evils and falsities destroying the good and truth of the church, of which it is said that they 'shall be cut off.'"

### ***Doctrine of the Lord 4***

- The Doctrine of the Lord 4 has a reference to Amos 3:14. There are many passages cited whereby the word 'that day,' 'in that day,' and 'in that time'...is meant the Lord's advent."

### ***AR 270***

- "A horn...by it is everywhere (in the Word) signified power; therefore when a 'horn' is predicated of the Lord, it signifies omnipotence....that 'a horn' signifies power...may appear from the following passages..." Amos 3:14 is cited.

### **AR 392**

- In AR 392, Amos 3:14 is cited as one of representative examples of where there was worship “from evil and from the falsities of evil.”

### **AE 316[20]**

- “In Amos...‘The altars of Bethel’ signify worship from evil, and ‘the horns of the altar’ signify the falsities of that evil; and that these are to be destroyed is signified by ‘the horns shall be cut off and fall to the earth.’”

### **AE 391[29]**

- “In Amos...‘To visit the transgressions of Israel upon him’ signifies their last state, in the spiritual sense their state after death, when they are to be judged; it is said ‘to visit,’ instead of to judge, because visitation always proceeds judgment; ‘the altars of Bethel’ signify the worship from evil; ‘the horns of the altar’ signify worship from falsities, thus these signify all things of worship; and that these are to be destroyed is signified by ‘the horns shall be hewn down and fall to the earth.’ It is said, ‘I will visit upon the altars of Bethel,’ because Jeroboam separated the Israelites from the Jews, and erected two altars, one in Bethel and the other in Dan...”
- This quote goes on for quite a bit more. One of the interesting points made in it is that these two altars represented a division and separation of worship from charity, and brought people to the state where “the mouth speaks apart from the understanding and the will, that is apart from the mind...they say men ought to believe even though they do not understand...(thus) they put aside deeds or goods of charity.”

### **AC 1453[2&4]**

- “...for man is a Bethel, that is a house of God, and also a gate of heaven, when he is in the celestial things of knowledges.... After Jeroboam had profaned Bethel...it had an opposite representation....”

### **AR 774**

- “That ‘ivory’ signifies natural truth may be evident from the passages where ivory is mentioned, as...Amos iii. 15....”

### **AE 1146[3]**

- “In (Amos) ‘Houses’ signify the things of the human mind, here the things of the natural mind separate from the spiritual mind; ‘winter house and summer house’ signify things of the natural man that are called sensual, and

'house of ivory' and 'great house' signify the things of the natural man that are called rational, 'house of ivory' here meaning those that have relation to truth, and 'great house' those that have relation to good."

### **AR 595**

- "By 'horns' is signified power...here the power of speaking, teaching, and writing, thus of reasoning and arguing."

### **DERIVED DOCTRINE**

This section of our study has a tremendous amount of information regarding Amos' prophecy. There is so much that I will not seek to find any more because it might overwhelm us in the summation of these verses. I will proceed now to the summary section.

### **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

1. When things go wrong, we often look for the cause. In this series, it would appear that it is important for us to start with the possible cause of things...King Jeroboam. AE 391[29] tells us that the Lord needed to visit (bring judgment) upon Israel because "Jeroboam separated the Israelites from the Jews, and erected two altars, one in Bethel and the other in Dan." His motives brought about serious effects:  
Bethel had represented a house of God and a gate to heaven. Bethel took on an opposite representation.  
Their mouths (worship) separated the understanding and will. Doctrine was presented with a requirement to believe, even though they had no understanding of what it all meant. Therefore, their hearts left the worship, and closeness to the Lord was absent.  
The horns of the altar signified power: the power of speaking, teaching, and writing, and thus reasoning and arguing. When the will and understanding were separated, these sources of power gradually diminished, and like a flickering light, they were about to go out.  
Worship had no checks and balances. The people, like blind men, followed the teachings of their priesthood as long as it pleased them to do so. Therefore, falsity and idolatry entered the house of the Lord, profaning the very vessels of representation.  
Every form of a spiritual house suffered. The winter house, the summer house, the ivory house and the great houses. The sensual, the rational and their relationship to the truth and good, were gone or destroyed.  
No one cared. Their ruling love as represented by Jeroboam separated and perverted all of the arrangements and ordering of the tribes the Lord had seen to. The Lord's ordering was so powerful Balaam could not pronounce a curse on Israel...only a blessing.

2. The Lord said that He would punish Israel for their transgressions. The punishment was not from anger but love. His love appears hard to the wicked, but it is full of mercy. The Lord had to cut off the “horns” of their altars. Their power of speaking lies, their power of teaching profanation and idolatry, their writing of foolishness, and their specious reasoning and arguments had to be cut off.
3. The house of God—the gate of heaven—was not available to the people, and the Lord needed to restore communication with the church. There could be no compromises or easing back into things. Like a cancer, their self-serving lies had to be removed completely before the contamination tainted all vital forms of spiritual love.

### **READ AND REVIEW**

Read Amos 3:13-15.

Read the summary from P&P.

### **QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION**

1. Have you formed your summary of these verses? It is important that we do this so that our ability to connect the series increases as we move on.
2. There are many other historical reasons why the nations divided. Bringing that into this section may be useful. What points might be added to strengthen this study?
3. The different houses show a fascinating progression. I wanted to check the signification of each a little deeper. Winter. Summer. Ivory. Great houses. Anyone willing to go further? What does each one mean? What might the progression mean?
4. What can we as New Church members take from this so we may protect ourselves from or avert the failings presented in this text?

## Chapter Four

### **AMOS 4:1-3**

*"Hear this word, you cows of Bashan, who are on the mountain of Samaria,  
Who oppress the poor,  
Who crush the needy,  
Who say to your husbands, 'Bring wine, let us drink!'  
The Lord God has sworn by His holiness:  
Behold, the days shall come upon you  
When He will take you away with fishhooks,  
And your posterity with fishhooks.  
You will go out through broken walls,  
Each one straight ahead of her,  
And you will be cast into Harmon,  
Says the Lord."*

### **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

#### ***P&P***

- "Concerning those who pervert the doctrine of the church, that they will also fall into falsities in outermost things, vers. 1-3..."

#### ***AC 5198[3]***

- "...that by 'kine' are signified truths of the natural may be seen from the passages in which they are mentioned...." Amos 4:1 is cited.

#### ***AC 2842[6]***

- "In Amos...Jehovah swearing by His...'great name'...by His 'holiness'...signifies the confirmation there is in Jehovah or the Lord. A confirmation by Jehovah can be given only from Himself." Amos 4:2 is cited.

#### ***AC 7192***

- Note: When the Lord said, "I am Jehovah"...this signifies confirmation from the Divine which is irrevocable...for nothing can be confirmed by Jehovah...except by Himself: it cannot be confirmed by heaven, because this is far beneath Him, still less by anything in the world; but in order that there may be Divine confirmation which is eternal and irrevocable, it must be by the Divine Itself."

### **AR 439**

Note: The New King James translation says, "He will take you away with fishhooks." In the Writings, this verse is worded "...they shall take you away with stings."

- "By 'stings' are signified falsities from evil, doing hurt...." Amos 4:2 is cited.

### **AR 474**

- This number contains an explanation of the Lord swearing by His holiness. "...the Divine truth testifies...from itself and by itself." Amos 4:2 and 6:8 are cited.

### **AE 513[14]**

- "In Amos...'they shall draw you out with hooks, and your posterity with fish-hooks'...signifies leading away and alienating from truths by means of acute reasonings from falsities and fallacies; it is said of those who abound in knowledges because they have the Word and the prophets; such are here meant by 'the kine of Bashan in the mountain of Samaria.'"

Note: In a prior number to the quote above, there is an interesting quote about the meaning of "hooks." "...if the spiritual is not dominant...both thoughts and affections are wondering, and thus man is destitute of the intelligence that should lead and rule...then every falsity and every evil has power to draw them over to their side, and thus wholly destroy them, is signified by 'Let him draw out all with the hook'..." (*Habakkuk 1:15*).

### **AE 560[4]**

- "...falsities are signified by 'sharp instruments' in Amos: Behold the days will come upon you in which they will draw you out with barbs, and your posterity with fishhooks (iv. 2). 'To draw out with barbs' signifies to lead away from truths by knowledges (scientific) from the Word and from the world falsely applied; and 'to draw out with fishhooks' signifies to lead away from truths by the fallacies of the senses, from which the sensual man reasons."

### **AE 608[2]**

- In Amos iv. 2, it is said that the Lord "hath sworn by His holiness." *AE 608[2]* explains that this signifies "...confirmation, asseveration and simple verity, or that it is true...."

## **AC 4926[6]**

- “In Amos: They shall draw out your posterity with fish-hooks. Ye shall go forth through the breaches, every one straight before her; and ye shall throw down the palace (iv. 2, 3); ‘to go forth through the breaches’ denotes falsities from reasonings; the ‘palace’ is the Word, consequently the truth of doctrine which is from good. And as by ‘breaches’ is signified the falsity which comes into existence by the separation of good and truth...”

## **DERIVED DOCTRINE**

### *Bashan*

- “...by ‘Bashan’ the external of the church, thus the natural, was signified, for Bashan was outside the land of Canaan where the church was.” (AE 163[8])

### *Oppressing the Poor and Crushing the Needy*

- Oppressing the poor and crushing the needy is reasonably straightforward in its meaning. This represents a withholding or destruction of truths so that the spiritually poor, internally and externally, have no care or sustenance. Crushing is a restriction or holding down of the conatus or endeavor to grow spiritually.

### *Asking Husbands to Bring Wine and Let Us Drink*

- Since this verse is not explained, we must make an attempt to get some application. Were the wives (affections) seeking a rational wisdom from their husbands? When there is a request to drink wine, it signifies a wish to investigate what belongs to faith. (AC 1071) Is this what they were requesting? Was the reference to the wives, “cows of Bashan,” a derogatory term?

### *Going out Through Broken Walls, Each Straight Ahead of Her*

- The breach in the wall represents “falsity from reasonings” and the “separation of good and truth.” (AC 4926)
- The word “straight” usually has a positive representation of leveling, smoothing out the rough places, preparation to receive the Lord (AE 405[36]), turning the evil of ignorance into good (AC 3527[3]). There has to be a significance here that indicates Providence is going to bring good out of their disorder.
- Could the Lord be saying that all of their games of pretense and misuse of the Word will be plainly laid out before them? Their participation in the breaching of the Word made the Lord’s truth rough, uneven, and treacherous

for anyone to use. The time was at hand for a change. The Lord in His Providence saw the spiritual need to bring the Word back to His level, even, and smooth state so that people could be brought out of the evil of ignorance to receive the Lord.

### *Being Cast into Harmon*

- We have no reference in the Writings to a place called Harmon. The *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* has a short article on Harmon that has some interesting historical comments and conjecture that might shed some light on our study:
- “The name Harmon appears (in Amos) and then nowhere else in the Bible, and no place by this name is known.” The article suggests various names or meanings for the word Harmon:
  - • The Palace
  - Beyond the mountains of Armenia
  - The mountains of Romman
  - Behind the wall of Samaria
  - Naked
  - Devoted to destruction

### **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

1. Our references from the Writings tell us that the “kine” represent those who abound in knowledges because they had the Word and the prophets. Instead of using that abundance wisely for the advancement of their spiritual uses, they turned the abundance to further their own interests.
2. They alienated themselves from truth with their “acute reasonings.” Their logic was “wondering.” They used truth as they saw fit. The consequences of this approach drew them over to the side of evil and destroyed truth. They got “hooked” on the painful barbs, or fish-hooks, of the sensual man’s short-sighted reasoning.
3. Such a careless disregard for the Word leaves the spiritually poor oppressed, and it crushes a healthy sense of one’s needy state.  
Doctrine intended to offer protection is like a formidable wall; when it is not maintained, it develops breaches in it. Pulled out by the ‘hooks’ of wandering, the residents of the city are carried off to that uncertain place of Harmon. They become estranged from their beloved place. They are taken outside Samaria’s walls. They are “spiritually naked” and seem “devoted to destruction.”

### **READ AND REVIEW**

Read Amos 4:1-3.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION

1. Do any of the prophecies in this section seem appropriate for things we are experiencing now? In our present day idiom, we describe being obsessed or addicted as being “hooked.” Our affections want something so badly we can hardly concentrate on other things. Our thoughts return again and again to the thing we want. If it is a selfish “hook,” will doctrine pull the hook out? Will the walls of doctrine hold firm? Do breaches begin to show up? Can they be mended?
2. Have we ever gotten hooked on some “wandering” sensual reasoning that carried us off to an unknown place? The unknown doesn’t give us a clue as to where we are, and we don’t know how to get back to the safe city and the protective walls of the church. What can you do when you are lost in this way? How can you help someone else who is lost?
3. In the section titled “Passages From the Writings,” look at the quote from AC 7192. How do you understand this teaching? “...confirmation from the Divine which is irrevocable...” And then it ends with this: “in order that there may be Divine confirmation which is eternal and irrevocable, it must be by the Divine itself.” How might we apply this to life?
4. Can you think of situations in which “acute reasonings” have led you or someone you know astray? Why are these reasoning so dangerous? What makes us vulnerable to them? How can we guard against them? How might these reasonings be similar to the mental processes we call “mind games”?

## AMOS 4:4-6

*“Come to Bethel and transgress,  
At Gilgal multiply transgression;  
Bring your sacrifices every morning,  
Your tithes every three days.  
Offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven,  
Proclaim and announce the freewill offerings;  
For this you love,  
You children of Israel!  
Says the Lord God.  
Also I gave you cleanness of teeth in all your cities.  
And lack of bread in all your places;  
Yet you have not returned to Me,  
Says the Lord.”*

## **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

### ***P&P***

- "...that they arrange a worship in externals according to the statutes, which will be similar [to real worship], yet only in the outermost things, vers. 4-6..."

### ***AC 1453[3&4]***

- "...'Bethel' signifies knowledges....That the ark of Jehovah was in Bethel, and that the sons of Israel came thither and inquired of Jehovah...also that the king of Assyria sent one of the priests whom he brought from Samaria, and he dwelt in Bethel, and taught them how they should fear Jehovah.... After Jeroboam had profaned Bethel...it had an opposite representation...." Amos 3:14, 15; 4:5-7 are cited.

### ***AC 2165 [5&6]***

- "...'bread' is the Lord, it belongs to the celestial things which are of love.... therefore they who are not in love and charity have not the Lord with them, and thus are not gifted with the good and happy things that in the internal sense are signified by 'bread'....In the Prophets also the celestial things of love are signified by 'bread'...." Amos 4:6 and 8:11 are cited as examples.

### ***AC 9052[3]***

- "In Amos ...'emptiness of teeth' denotes scarcity of truth; and 'lack of bread,' scarcity of good....'the teeth' in the opposite sense, signify the falsity, which destroys truth..." Amos 4:6 is cited.

### ***AE 556[12]***

- "In Amos...'Emptiness of teeth in the cities' stands for a scarcity of truth in doctrines in the life." Amos 4:6 is cited.

### ***AE 556[20]***

- "Because the teeth correspond to the ultimates of man's intellectual life, which are called sensual, and these when separated from the truths of the interior understanding, which are called spiritual, are in the falsities of evil...so 'teeth in the Word signify also ultimate truths...." Amos 4:6 is cited.

## DERIVED DOCTRINE

### *Transgress*

- There are a myriad of ways transgressions are acted out against the Lord: Disobedience, being treacherous, being obstinate, breaking the Commandments, or implementing a form of cunning and deceit that mimics innocence and truth. Each of these actions is a choice of evil that is contrary to the Lord's good and truth. "To see and understand that a thing is evil, **and still do it**, makes a person guilty." (AC 9069)

### *Gilgal*

- "...signifies the doctrine of natural truth, which is serviceable for introduction into the church..." (AE 700[14])

### *At Gilgal Multiply Transgressions*

- In the positive sense, multiply "...signifies the fruitfulness of the rational man when it submits itself to the sovereign control of the interior man when adjoined to good...unless the rational submits itself...it either suffocates, or rejects, or perverts the things that flow in; and this is still more the case when they flow into the sensuous knowledges of the memory." (AC 1940[1&3])

### *Sacrifice Every Morning*

- The Writings remind us that sacrifice means to offer up, or part with, something that blocks or hinders the soul. Sacrificing such obstacles aids our efforts to submit our interior person to the control of the Lord. The minute directions of what and how to sacrifice were not recorded so vicarious atonement might be achieved, but to represent the care needed when a "sacrifice" is offered to the Lord so that our thoughts and affections might be worthily set before Him each day. What are we to give up? We are to give up the proprium that would turn its back on the Lord and set itself up as the object of worship.
- If our sacrifices are to be accepted by the Lord, there needs to be the 'morning' state of illustration; a state of new clarity; a state of brightness and new beginnings. These are the goals to be sought each day so we may move from ignorance to enlightenment. See AC 5097.

### *Tithes Every Three Days*

- We are taught in various places that "tithes" represent remains and that "three" denotes what is holy. See AC 902 and also the following quote:

“[Tithes are]...the goods and truths which are stored up by the Lord in man’s interiors, and which goods are called ‘remains’...” (AC 3740)

### *Offering a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving with Leaven*

- In AC 9287, we read about keeping a feast of thanksgiving and unleavened things. The latter represents “purification from falsities” and that this was a state of worship from a glad mind on account of “liberation from damnation.”
- Leavening things, on the other hand, represent evil and falsity rendering spiritual things impure and profane. See AC 2342. Leavening causes things to ferment or to bring one to the state of combat.

### *Announcing Freewill Offerings*

- What kind of offerings? Meat? First Fruits? Heave offerings? Gifts? This prophecy doesn’t specify. The emphasis seems to fall on the word freewill. Offering represents some form of worship. What seems to be at issue here is the spirit of the giving or worshiping. Is it being offered as an obligation, or is it a willing or spontaneous act of worship? There is a passage in TCR 430 where payment of tribute and taxes seem to capture the spirit of the difference between freewill and duty bound offerings:
  - “Those who are spiritual pay these with one disposition of heart, and those who are merely natural with another. The spiritual pay them from good will, because they are collected for the preservation of their country, and for its protection and the protection of the church, also for the administration of government officials....Those, therefore, to whom their country and also the church are the neighbor, pay their taxes willingly and cheerfully...But those to whom their country and the church are not the neighbor pay them unwillingly and with resistance; and at every opportunity defraud and withhold; for to such their own household and their own flesh are the neighbor.”
- Freewill offerings would spring from the heart as a form of love and appreciation for all of the Lord’s benefits. The duty-bound would go through the motions to appear appreciative, but within their hearts they would resist and resent the inconvenience of the ritual, not feeling that the Lord and the church are the neighbor to be loved.

### *Clean Teeth*

- Note what the Writings say about “cleanness of teeth.” Please note this does not mean their teeth were toothbrush clean. The Writings, in AC 9052[2] and AE 556[12] teach us that this means “emptiness of teeth” or to be missing teeth, so we must see this as being representative of the scarcity of truth and scarcity of doctrine.

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

1. Having gone through most of the correspondences in these verses, we must now go back and begin with what we were taught in P&P: "...they arrange a worship in externals according to the statutes, which will be similar to real worship, yet only in the outermost things..."  
Jeroboam profaned Bethel and brought about an opposite representation of spiritual knowledges. What example past or present might illustrate this for us?
2. When the Word says that they transgressed Bethel, it means that they transgressed the knowledges of the Word. When the Word says that they multiplied the transgressions of Gilgal, it means that they twisted the introductory natural truths so badly that they misled those hearing them, and the lies prevented them from offering the kind of sacrifices, each day, that would have given them the insights necessary to amend their lives.
3. The multiplicity of falsity prevented the remains from serving the inner man. Instead of offering an unleavened sacrifice of thanksgiving (purification from falsities and a celebration of liberation from damnation), they were offering the sacrifice of leaven that represents evil and falsity rendering spiritual things impure and profane.
4. Giving to the Lord, and the temple, was for show. Those donating lavishly looked at their gifts as earning meritorious mercy from the Lord. Their use of the sacrifices was not for the Lord out of grateful hearts. Sadly, it only served their need for peer recognition. This seems to explain why the Lord said to them, "For this you love, you children of Israel."
5. The "great emptiness" message comes through the unfolding of these verses. The lack of teeth prevented them from eating and chewing foods that would have been better for them; the lack of bread in all of their palaces told them of the Lord's absence; and yet, they seemed to have no awareness of these deficiencies because they failed to correct them and return to the Lord.
6. Worship requirements were being met to fill the laws, and it appeared that they were just like the "real thing," but they were worshiping with emptiness of teeth and no bread.

## READ AND REVIEW

Read Amos 4:4-6.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION

1. These verses introduce the idea of bringing sacrifices every morning and tithes every three days. What might this mean to us? In what ways do you do some or all of this?

2. Is the use of leavening always bad? Don't we need to be brought to the point of combat so we may remove impurities? How does this teaching fit with what the Writings tell us about the nature of temptation?
3. Freewill offerings. There are times we question the wisdom of expenditures made for the church. To demonstrate our disfavor with a person or policy, we might withhold some of our future support as a sign of protest. Is this ever appropriate? Why, or why not? Have we ever justified it by saying that we will spend that money on our needs because we are also the neighbor? Should we feel guilty for not being more generous or cheerful about offering our gifts to the church?
4. Think about chewing food without teeth. Some have little confidence in their thinking skills, so they fail to think for themselves. They rely on the thinking or opinions of others. If we were to offer an analogy, we might say they have no teeth and are satisfied with prepared foods that resemble "baby food" instead of chewing things over for themselves. What are some reasons why this happens? Why is it dangerous?  
How would we characterize our generation, or the current time? Are we toothless, with a scarcity of truth and a scarcity of doctrine? Is this a choice? Is there also a lack of bread in our midst? Remember, that means a scarcity of the Lord's love.
5. How aware might we be of the times the Lord called us out of our transgressions and we failed to hear or come out of them? Is our conscience tuned in to the Lord, or is it overwhelmed with the noise of other values?

## **AMOS 4:7-8**

*"I also withheld rain from you,  
When there were still three months to the harvest.  
I made it rain on one city,  
I withheld rain from another city.  
One part was rained upon,  
And where it did not rain the part withered.  
So two or three cities wandered to another city to drink water,  
But they were not satisfied;  
Yet you have not returned to Me,  
Says the Lord."*

## **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

### ***P&P***

- "...that some truths will remain, when the rest have become falsities, whence the truths have no power, vers. 7, 8..."

### ***AC 382[2]***

- “In Amos...where by the ‘part of the field on which it rained’ is signified the doctrine of faith from charity; and by the ‘part’ or ‘piece’ ‘of the field on which it did not rain,’ the doctrine of faith without charity.” Amos 4:7-8 is cited.

### ***AR 496***

- “That ‘rain’ signifies the Divine truth from heaven, appears from these passages...” Amos 4:7-8 is cited.

### ***AE 644 [9&10]***

- “...the Lord...always flows in both with the evil and with the good...but the cause is with the man of the church, that he does not receive any influx of Divine truth, for the man who does not receive closes up with himself the interiors of his mind...‘to command the clouds that they rain no rain’ signifies that no influx of Divine truth from heaven is received....rain...is the source of spiritual intelligence...‘no rain’ signifies that no such intelligence is given...because of the evils and falsities that refuse to receive and that reject it.” Amos 4:7-8 is cited as one example.

### ***AE 532[8]***

- “In Amos...This treats of the lack of truth at the end of the church, when those who desire truth from spiritual affection will not find any truth in the doctrines, wherever they may search, and therefore it is said, ‘two three cities wandered unto one city to drink waters, yet they were not satisfied;’ ‘two three cities’ signifying those who are in the affection of truth from good, ‘city’ signifying the truth of doctrine; ‘to draw waters’ signifies to learn truths; ‘to wander’ signifies to search; and ‘not to be satisfied’ signifies not to find truth which in itself is truth; it is said ‘two three cities,’ because ‘two three’ signifies those who are in good and in truth therefrom.” Amos 4:8 is cited.

## **DERIVED DOCTRINE**

### *Harvest*

- “...‘harvest’ signifies the last state of the church preceding the Last Judgment, when the Lord explores every one and separates...” (AE 908)
- Almost all of AE 911[1-18] is a repetition that “harvest” signifies the last state of the church. In AR 645, “harvest” signifies the church with respect to divine truth because corn is harvested and corn is used to make ‘bread’ and bread signifies the good of the church.

Almost everything we need to look toward a summary was given to us, so we will not include more derived doctrine here.

## **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

1. When falsity is the mainstay of a church, it belittles the power of truth. Think of it this way: If everyone in the world were insane, their insanity would appear to be sanity. The sane person trying to teach or live out the truth would be viewed as a “lunatic,” and his actions would be drawn into question and found unacceptable. Could this be analogous to what the faithful remnant in Israel experienced?
2. The Lord who loves all lets His rain fall upon the just and the unjust evenly. It is not the Lord who withholds the rain. Some will not allow His rain to fall into their city. They close off their minds to the Divine truth. Spiritually, they wither. They choose to resist the Lord’s “rain” and consequently fail to quench their parched souls with the living water that only the Lord can give.
3. For a few in Israel, there was a vague sense that something was missing from their lives. They searched and found water in another city, but that water could not satisfy their thirst. Why? Could it have been that they sought water from others and not the Lord? Is it an example of what the Word teaches us, that we can’t borrow truth from someone else? Is it like the example of David not being able to wear Saul’s armor?
4. Lastly, we have the wistful refrain “yet you have not returned to Me...” There was a spiritual thirst, but a collective “amnesia” as to where that thirst could be quenched. The Israelites were so caught up in the rush of external prosperity and peace that they did not know how withered they were. What would it take to snap them out of their spiritual lethargy?

## **READ AND REVIEW**

Read Amos 4:7-8.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## **QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION**

1. Are there any questions here? The spiritual sense clearly outlines that the Israelite cities had no rain because they rejected the Lord.
2. I wonder about those who went to another city for water. Does it seem “unfair” that they ended up not being satisfied? Don’t they get some credit for looking in some other city? Could this search for water in another city represent lazy thinking and the willingness to borrow from the minds of others without consulting the Lord’s Word? How might it compare to the people we mentioned in the last lesson who did not want to chew their food (think for themselves)?  
The Lord will not leave anyone thirsty if they truly seek His living water. What might have kept the Lord from “raining on their city”? Were they

- representative of those who make moral judgments in the “light” of popular opinions?
3. Can you remember a situation where your concept of what was right, sane, and reasonable was made to look unreasonable, insane, and wrong? How does one deal with that experience?
  4. Think about all of the activities or lifestyles that at one time were viewed as disorderly and are now tolerated. Things that Swedenborg called “unspeakable evils” are now called “viable alternative lifestyles.” Were people wrong in the past? Were we narrow-minded? Have we found new truths in the Word to change our understanding on these issues? Or have we drawn unsatisfactory water from other cities that won’t sate the thirst?

### **AMOS 4:9**

*“I blasted you with the blight and mildew.  
When your gardens increased,  
Your vineyards,  
Your fig trees,  
And your olive trees,  
The locust devoured them;  
Yet you have not returned to Me,  
Says the Lord.”*

### **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

#### ***P&P***

- “...that afterwards all things of the church have been falsified, ver. 9...”

#### ***AC 9277[3]***

- “In Amos...‘vineyards’ denote the goods of faith; and ‘olive trees’ the goods of love; the punishment for not receiving these goods is signified by ‘the caterpillar devouring the olive trees.’” Amos 4:9 is cited.

#### ***AC 9277[3]***

- “...‘the fig tree’ denotes natural good; ‘the vine,’ spiritual good; ‘the olive,’ celestial good...”

#### ***AC 9331[5]***

- “That falsities and evils in the extremes-that is, in the external sensuous of the man of the church-are signified by the various kinds of insects...for the

subject treated of is the perversion of the truth and good of the church... which are destroyed by such insects..." Amos 4:9 is cited.

### ***AC 10261[8]***

- "...the 'fig tree' signifies the good of the external church...but the 'vine' the good of the internal spiritual church, and the 'olive' the good of the internal celestial church." Amos 4:9 is cited.

### ***AE 403[8]***

- "In Amos...'Gardens' signify all things of the church that constitute intelligence and wisdom; 'vineyards' spiritual goods and truths; 'fig trees' natural goods and truths; 'olive trees' celestial goods and truths; 'the palmer-worm' means the falsity that destroys..." Amos 4:9 is cited.

### ***AE 638[20]***

- • "In Amos...'Gardens' signify such things as belong to spiritual intelligence; 'blasting and mildew' signify evil and falsity in what is most external, or from the corporeal-sensual...the 'palmer-worm' signifies falsity destroying good." Amos 4:9 is cited.
- That "...a 'vineyard' signifies the spiritual church is evident from the passages in the Word..." Amos 4:9 is cited.

## **DERIVED DOCTRINE**

### *The Insect*

Note: The locust, the caterpillar, the worm, and the palmer-worm are the various names we find used in the translations for the insect that devoured the vineyard, the fig tree, and the olive trees.

- AE 543[8] says 'locust' and the 'caterpillar' have the same signification...'locust' signifies the falsity of the sensual man, and the 'caterpillar' its evil..."
- "The falsity of evil, which is in the good that is from our own, is compared to 'a worm' because the case with them is similar; for falsity also gnaws and thus torments." (AC 8481) "...the palmer-worm means the falsity that destroys..." (AE 403[8])

### *Blasting*

- Webster's Dictionary defines this word as breathing; a violent gust of wind; or a sudden stream or discharge of air. AC 8286 says that when predicated of the Lord, "...'blowing with the nostrils' or 'breathing,' is signified to be angry..."

It would seem that this is the sense of understanding we should follow with “I blasted you with blight and mildew.”

### *Blight*

- Turning to Webster’s Dictionary again, we read that a blight is “A disease or injury to a plant that results in a withering, cessation of growth, and death of parts, as leaves, without rotting.”

### *Mildew*

- “...a thin, whitish growth produced on organic matter, and on plants by fungi...”
- As we know from experience, that thin layer of white is one form of fungi; another is the blackish layer of fungi. Both forms of fungi do harm to plants.

I’m sure there is some spiritual correspondence for this. Could the following application have some merit for us to consider?

A lie is a lie whether it is a “white lie” or a “black lie,” and eventually, it will put some kind of blight on our moral character and injure our first efforts to do good. Withering, cessation of growth, and the death of many a good intention are experiences we all have felt and regretted.

## **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

1. *P&P* says that “...all things of the church have been falsified.”
2. Therefore, it follows that the representations in this story of the things of the church (vineyards, fig trees, and olive trees) should be shown undergoing some affliction. When the things of the church are falsified, the garden with all spiritual intelligence is a victim. The loss of celestial, spiritual, and natural good shows the demise of their love. When obedience is lost, the person in the church doesn’t hear, see, or submit to the urges of the Word. Spiritual insights are warped and made meaningless. The heart that is absent from the Lord turns cold and is inclined to follow the urges of self, the sensual or corporeal interests. To people in that state, such as the children of Israel in this story, it appears that the Lord is angry and blasting. Blight and mildew attack the growth (or lack thereof), and the locust, caterpillar, worm, or palmer-worm destroy the spiritual garden.
3. “Yet you have not returned to Me.” Notice that this is the second time in this chapter that the same phrase is given to the Israelites, and it will be used again in verse 10. Like a patient and loving parent, the Lord wants them to see the consequences of their actions. The Lord wants to face them with reality. What will it take for them to see what they are doing to themselves? What more could the Lord have done for them? And yet, instead of having a

vineyard that produced sweet grapes, they produced sour grapes not fit for much of anything.

4. What we can anticipate, from the historical perspective, is that the people of the church eventually will turn, and project on the Lord anger and disregard for their condition. They will act as if this spiritual blight came on them suddenly with no warning. They will see and remember the great “blast” as a manifestation of His sudden anger and impatience with human beings. With anguished voices, they will cry out: “Why, O Lord have you visited us with such direful punishment?”

## READ AND REVIEW

Read Amos 4:9.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION

1. Does this verse prepare us to think about our gardens, vineyards, fig trees, and olive trees? How can we assess the state of our gardens, etc.?
2. The blight, the mildew, and the worms that attack and seek to destroy the church: Can you put a face on them? Is there some form of “spiritual spray” to protect the tree of life?
3. The Writings liken the worm to the proprium. It is a worm that is within and gnaws its way out and thus torments. Fruit trees have to be sprayed when the blossom appears, to rid the blossom of the worm. Otherwise, the fruit will be eaten from within. Is there a message here for us?
4. What is your impression of the Lord’s words, “And yet you have not returned to Me..”?
5. The external church, the internal spiritual church, and the internal celestial church: Are you able to differentiate the meanings of these terms? How about effect, cause, and end? That is a reverse order of what should be for the church. We are taught that all order flows from End to Cause to Effect. Could it significant that philosophical “proofs of God” often reversed the method of finding God? They each start their effort by looking from the effects to cause to end.

## AMOS 4:10-11

*“I sent among you a plague after the manner of Egypt;  
Your young men I killed with a sword,  
Along with your captive horses;  
I made the stench of your camps come up into your nostrils;  
Yet you have not returned to Me,  
Says the Lord.  
I overthrew some of you,*

*As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah,  
And you were like a firebrand plucked from the burning;  
Yet you have not returned to Me,  
Says the Lord."*

## **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

### ***P&P***

- "...and that, lastly, they were profaned through sensual scientifics, which have spread to all things of the church, so that scarcely anything was left, vers. 10, 11;"

### ***AC 2799[14&19]***

- "In Amos...‘in the way of Egypt’ denotes the memory-knowledges which vastate, when they reason from them on Divine things; the ‘captivity of the horses’ denotes the intellectual faculty deprived of its endowment....That a ‘sword’ in the opposite sense signifies falsity combating...a ‘sword’ also signifies the punishment of falsity..." Amos 4:10 is cited.

### ***AC 7102[8]***

- "In Amos...‘the pestilence in the way of Egypt’ denotes the vastation of good by means of falsities, which are ‘the way of Egypt;’ ‘I have slain your young men with the sword, with the captivity of the horses,’ denotes the vastation of truth. (By ‘young men’ are signified truths, and by ‘horses’ things of the intellect...)" Amos 4:10 is cited.

### ***AC 7102[9&10]***

- "...‘pestilence’ denotes adulterated good...‘pestilence’ denotes every kind of evil and its damnation."

### ***AC 7161[2]***

- "...as ‘odor’ denotes all that which is grateful to the Lord, so ‘stink’ denotes that which is ungrateful to the Lord, consequently ‘stink’ denotes aversion, and also abomination....which are of falsity and evil." Amos 4:10 is cited.

### ***AC 7505***

- "In Amos...where ‘the pestilence in the way of Egypt’ denotes the vastation of good and truth by means of falsities, which are ‘the way of Egypt;’ ‘your young men have I slain with the sword, with the captivity of horses’ denotes

the vastation of truth; 'young men' denotes truths, and 'horses' intellectual things..." Amos 4:10 is cited.

### ***AC 7668[3]***

- "...young men'...in the original tongue denote intelligence, thus its truth, in Amos...where 'the way of Egypt' denotes memory-knowledges perverted; the 'young men' who were slain,' the truths thence destroyed; 'the captivity of the horses,' the intellectual seduced." Amos 4:10 is cited.

### ***AC 10458***

- "...the vastation of truth is here treated of, and when this is vastated, the 'camp' signifies hell...'pestilence' denotes vastation...'way' denotes truth, and in the opposite sense falsity...'Egypt' denotes what is external, and also hell...'a sword' denotes falsity fighting against truth...'young men' denote the truths of the church...'to be slain' denotes to perish spiritually...'captivity' denotes the privation of truth...'horses' denote an understanding which is enlightened...'a stink' denotes what is abominable exhaling from hell.... From this it is evident that in this sense a 'camp' denotes hell..." Amos 4:10 is cited.

### ***AR 862***

- This number has a reference to Amos 4:10 and only indicates that 'camp' signifies falsities and evils.

### ***AC 2220[2]***

- "In Amos...where Samaria is treated of, by which is signified the perverted spiritual church, and which in respect to evils in general contrary to the goods of charity is called 'Sodom,' and in respect to falsities in general contrary to the truths of faith is called 'Gomorrhah,' and in respect to both...is called the 'overthrowing of God.'" Amos 4:11 is cited.

### ***AR 502***

- "...'Sodom' is the love of dominating from self-love.... These loves and their evils are signified by 'Sodom and Gomorrhah'..." Amos 4:11 is cited.

## **DERIVED DOCTRINE**

### ***A Firebrand Plucked from the Burning***

- *AE 559[8]* explains that "A 'smoking fire-brand' signifies the lust of falsity and consequent wrath against the truths and goods of the church."

- AC 6952 also explains that “...‘smoking firebrands’ denote wrath.”

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

1. With so much given to us regarding these verses, where should we start tying together a workable theme? My attention was drawn to the words “memory knowledges.”  
The memory of each person is unique and has wonderful and necessary facts stored up for our usage now and later. The five senses gather impressions, note contrasts, give us the ability to cognitively follow certain logical cause-and-effect relationships. The Writings talk about the scientifics and truths in a person’s memory cohering into “bundles” or forms of information that are arranged according to the person’s loves. (See AC 5881.) Briefly, the memory is like a gateway by which the Lord may work the wonderful miracles of elevating the mind into the light of continuous and discrete degrees. So much more may be said about the potential of the things in one’s memory.
2. But the internal sense indicates that something is not right with the “memory knowledges” referred to in this story. There are words like “pestilence,” “killed with the sword,” “captivity,” “stench,” “overthrown,” “Sodom and Gomorrah,” and “firebrand” that tell us that these memory knowledges are not interested in being useful or of service to the Lord. Instead, these memory knowledges are intent on the “...overthrowing of God.” (AC 2220[2])
3. Continuous and discrete degrees require a “conatus” that seeks conjunction with the Lord. In *The Doctrine of the Lord* 102, we read: “...with one in whom there is nothing reciprocal [conjunction] is not possible....” Real conjunction must involve reciprocation, return, and mutuality.
4. Our text tells us that Israel involved its memory knowledges in the things of sensual scientifics and corporeal knowledges. In other words, they were only interested in what served immediate use in the world or for their bodily enjoyment. AC 4618 teaches us that the corporeal memory serves only the temporal, and like the temporal, it perishes at death.  
Sadly, the scientific and corporeal caused a stench or stinking in the “camp.” Their intelligence was slain, and their thoughts were like an abomination “exhaling from hell.”
5. The reference to the Israelites being a firebrand denotes what kind of wrath against God they had within their hearts. The Lord tried to pluck them out of the burning hatred, but “Yet you have not returned to Me.” The “stick” represented the “power” or usefulness of natural good being destroyed because their ends were for themselves and not the neighbor.

## READ AND REVIEW

Read Amos 4:10-11.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION

1. What part of AC 10458 did you find most helpful in explaining the meaning of these verses?
2. What is a corporeal memory knowledge? Can you think of anything specific to describe one of these? Can a corporeal memory knowledge be turned into a useful thing? What about the scientific memory knowledges?
3. Why would the Lord have these forms of memory knowledges die off when we die?
4. Have you ever had a discussion with someone who was totally committed to the corporeal memory knowledges? What is the feeling? How did you do with the discussion?
5. The “stink” of the camp is a graphic form of imagery, and I think we can relate to what is being suggested. Hell is full of unclean thoughts, intentions, festering, etc. Is the Lord trying to scare us into shunning these things, or is this a good form of “tough love?” How does imagery like this help us?
6. Again, we have that poignant phrase: “Yet you have not returned to Me.” Like many of the wonderful stories I have heard about the innocent participatory enthusiasm of children, my heart wants to respond, “Yes Lord, I have heard You, and I will return!” Amen, which means: So may it ever be. What is it inside of us that responds to the Lord this way? How can we foster this response in ourselves?

## AMOS 4:12-13

*“Therefore thus will I do to you, O Israel;  
Because I will do this to you,  
Prepare to meet your God, O Israel!  
For behold,  
He who forms mountains,  
And creates the wind,  
Who declares to man what his thought is,  
And makes the morning darkness,  
Who treads the high places of the earth-  
The Lord God of hosts is His name.”*

## PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS

### *P&P*

- “...An exhortation that they should turn to the Lord, vers. 12, 13.”

### ***AE 405[3]***

- “In Amos...God is here called ‘the Former of the mountains’ because ‘mountains’ signify the goods of love, and ‘the Creator of the spirit’ because ‘spirit’ signifies life from such goods; and because through these He gives intelligence to man it is added, ‘and declareth unto man what is his thought,’ for the intelligence that man has is of his thought, which flows in from the Lord through the good of love into his life, so ‘to declare’ here means to flow in.” Amos 4:12, 13 are cited.

### ***Doctrine of the Lord 49***

- “That by ‘spirit’ is meant the life of one who is regenerate, which is called spiritual life....” Amos 4:13 is cited.

### **DERIVED DOCTRINE**

*“Therefore will I do to you...” and “because I will do this to you...”*

- The Writings have an interesting comment on such phrases as these when predicated of the Lord: “...‘doing’ or ‘do to you’ [when]...predicated of God... [refers to His] providence...for whatever is of the Divine Providence is certain to be the event....” (AC 5284)

### ***Prepare to Meet your God***

- We have no direct teachings on the meaning of this exhortation. John the Baptist told the people to “Prepare ye the way of the Lord...” which signifies “...to prepare one’s self for goods to enter...” (AC 3142) “In the precise degree in which man prepares his understanding by means of truths from the Word does he adapt his understanding to receive faith from God, and precisely as he prepares his will by means of works of charity does he fit his will for the reception of love from God.... One prepares himself to receive God and to be conjoined with Him by living in accordance with the Divine order...” (TCR 110[5])

### ***Making the Morning Darkness***

- Churches go through various states. “Its first state is...of innocence, consequently of love to the Lord, which state is called ‘morning;’ the second state is a state of light; the third is a state of light in obscurity, which is its ‘evening;’ and the fourth is a state of no love and hence of no light, which is its ‘night.’ (AC 10134[9])

*The Lord God "...treads the high places of the earth...."*

- In AC 85, there is an explanation of "being uplifted over the lofty things of the earth." (Isa 58:13,14) This represents "...the quality of the celestial man...he acts not according to his own desire, but according to the good pleasure of the Lord, which is his 'desire.'"
- Could this represent the truth that the Lord is above the highest thoughts human beings can conceive? The lofty ideas and concepts of earth will not influence the workings of Providence. The Lord will not be swayed by human prudence. He acts according to the Divine laws of His order, and that is above the "lofty things of earth."
- The Lord told us about this in Isaiah 55:8-9: "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways...For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts."

## **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

1. *P&P* tells us that these closing verses are an exhortation that the Israelites should turn to the Lord.
2. The Lord reminds all that His Providence will act. All that His order has planned will take place. Good and truth will prevail. Therefore, preparation needs to be a priority for all of the Lord's people.  
In the precise degree the understanding and will prepare for the Lord, to that degree will He enter in and conjoin Himself with us. "Prepare to meet thy God" is not a "hell-fire and damnation" sermon. It is a well-reasoned reminder that we need to put first things first.
3. Making the morning into darkness seems as if it were an act of the Lord. It is a statement about our changing states. Have we moved from the morning state of innocence to no love, no light, and therefore darkness?

## **READ AND REVIEW**

Read Amos 4:12, 13.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## **QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION**

1. The Lord knows what our thoughts are before we speak them. Why then does He let us come to Him with specific requests for help? Why do we have to perform self-examination? Wouldn't it be better for the Lord to tell us what we need to overcome and then go inside of our affections and "disconnect" all related and contributing factors?
2. Do we have an effective "prophet" to call us back to the Lord? Might it be a regular study of the Word? Church services? Doctrinal classes? We need some

- objective source against which to compare our progress, or lack thereof, and from which we can learn about pertinent issues. What do you think would bring about the best results for you?
3. The “earth” of the human mind made remarkable advances, but the Lord is beyond the comprehension of people and angels. In spite of this, we tend to “limit” the Lord by doubting His Providence. Therefore, these verses pose the question: how can we imitate the celestial man so that we too may “...act not according to [our] own desire, but according to the good pleasure of the Lord...”?
  4. The answer seems to be: Take charge of our spiritual life. Be alert. Be responsible for our choices and actions. Check out our intentions. In all things, pull the reigns on the sensual and corporeal priorities so the Lord’s good pleasure may do the leading.
  5. Preparation is a “sweeping” out of the house, opening the blinds of the house so the hells are exposed and the light of heaven welcomed. Can we do this without the usual rationalizations? Like little children, will we try to deflect responsibilities by making odious comparisons? “So and so does this...” “If that ‘pillar of the church’ does such and such and I don’t, then I don’t have to worry about my regeneration right now.” “Do you know what so and so did? Wasn’t that stupid?” Such ridicule dulls the voice of the conscience and insulates us from hearing the “Former” of the mountains and the creator of our “spirit” telling us the things we need to hear and know. How much do we try to excuse with the statement “To err is human.”?

## Chapter Five

### **AMOS 5:1-3**

*"Hear this word which I take up against you, a lamentation, O house of Israel:*

*The virgin of Israel has fallen;*

*She will rise no more.*

*She lies forsaken on her land;*

*There is no one to raise her up.*

*For thus says the Lord God:*

*The city that goes out by a thousand*

*Shall have a hundred left,*

*And that which goes out by a hundred*

*Shall have ten left to the house of Israel."*

### **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

#### ***P&P***

- "A lamentation over the church, that it was successively laid to waste, vers. 1-3..."

#### ***AR 620***

- "'For they are virgins' signifies because they have loved truths because they are truths, thus from spiritual affection; the reason why these are meant by 'virgins' is because 'a virgin' signifies the church as a bride, who desires to be conjoined with the Lord, and to become a wife; and the church which desires to be conjoined with the Lord, loves truths because they are truths, for by truths, when one lives according to them, conjunction is effected. Hence it is that Israel, Zion, and Jerusalem, in the Word are called 'virgins' and 'daughters'; for by 'Israel,' 'Zion,' and 'Jerusalem,' is signified the church." Amos 5:2 is cited.

#### ***AE 836[13]***

- "Because the church is a church from the spiritual affection of truth, which is the love of truth for the sake of truth, the following expressions are frequently used in the Word.... 'The virgin of Israel...'" Amos 5:2 is one of the references cited.

### ***AC 576[2]***

- “In Amos.... Where speaking of remains it is said that very little would be left, being only a ‘tenth part,’ or remains of remains.” Amos 5:2, 3 are cited.

### ***AC 468[4]***

- “The residue or remains of a man, or of the church, were also by the tenths, which were holy represented.... And in Amos...a city is preserved for the sake of the remains of the church....” Amos 5:3 is cited.

## **DERIVED DOCTRINE**

*“I take up against you, a lamentation....”*

- In addition to the word lamentation, we might consider looking up “lament,” “mourn,” “weep,” and “wail.” The reasons for lamenting vary.
- In an AR 767 reference, those who had been in positions of authority weep and wail in embarrassment over the loss of wealth and being cast down from positions of dominion.
- In AE 695[24], we have a picture of angels and men of the church lamenting and howling because of the vastation of all good and truth.
- AE 659[4] tells of a wailing because knowledges did not “...take form as effects, conclusions, and confirmations from the truths of the spiritual man...”
- The Lord wants lamentation to come upon the church so it might grieve over any wrong it has done. Asking for forgiveness prepares the way for repentance, reformation, and regeneration. These three “r’s” restore spiritual vitality to a growing church.

*“The virgin of Israel has fallen...”*

- This signifies that Israel gave up its regard for the Lord’s truth. Truth became a tool to prove or justify whatever they wanted.

*“She will rise no more.”*

- The word “rise” in the affirmative sense is beautifully explained in the *Arcana*: When the “...words of the sense of the letter are wonderfully changed, when it ascends from a man who is reading the Word to the sphere in which the angels are, that is, to heaven....” one is said to “rise.” (AC 2333[2])
- In the opposite sense, “rising no more” indicates how the Word remained in the literal sense and was not being “wonderfully changed” for the Israelites. The Word for them was not ascending in their heart and mind to where angels were.

*“She lies forsaken on her land...”*

- The correspondences of the words “forsaken” and “land” are important for our understanding. In AE 768[24], we read that “forsaken” signifies estrangement from the Lord. This “...signifies they have rejected Divine good and Divine truth... [and] turn themselves backward from the Lord...”
- “‘Land’ in the internal sense signifies...the external man of the church...signifies the region where the church is...the church itself... [and] that which is their essential, namely, love to the Lord and charity toward the neighbor, for on this they all hang...” (AC 2571)

*“There is no one to raise her up.”*

- So long as the church ignores the Word, communication or conjunction with the Lord is impossible, and it appears that no one can “raise her up.” But if the church returns to the Word with a desire to find genuine truths, the Lord will raise her up again. This verse then is the Lord reminding the Israelites that they cannot count on any human prudence to rescue them. Only those who listen to Him will find the way out of their ignorance, as is so aptly described in the gospel of John: “And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not...” (John 1:5) “And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.” (John 3:19)

*Thousand, Hundred, Ten*

- “The city that goes out by a thousand shall have a hundred left, and that which goes out by a hundred shall have ten left...”
- AC 576[2] tells us that this verse is “...speaking of remains...that very little would be left...or remains of remains...”
- Each of these numbers, thousand and hundred, are multiples of ten. How we are to apply these numbers doctrinally is not quite clear to me, but the teachings in the Arcana about the reduction or loss of “remains” down to the “remain of remains” gives me some insight to follow.
- The Israelitish people at one time had an abundance of truth adjoined to good, but over time, they squandered these assets away until the Lord needed to act on behalf of His people. He preserved their remains. “...for unless remains were preserved by the Lord in every one, he must needs perish eternally...if there were not always some with whom the church, or true faith, remained, the human race...a city, nay, sometimes a whole race would perish...sometimes a whole kingdom, is saved for the sake of a few.” (AC 468)
- That a “thousand” signifies “...an infinite abundance of rational truth adjoined to good, is evident from the signification of a ‘thousand’ as being much and countless; here infinite, or an infinite abundance, because predicated of the Lord...” (AC 2575)

- In a nutshell we are given an overview of the Lord's Providence mercifully working with what "little" He is given when in blindness we turn away from the "countless" the "infinite abundance" He offers to all.

## **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

1. Pride, an out-of-control love of self, needs to come to its senses. "Lamenting" is an essentially healthy emotion. Saying to the Lord that we are sorry for not letting His knowledges "...take form as effects, conclusions, and confirmations..." is so much better than lamenting over the loss of wealth or power over others. When the heart is hardened to the gentle leading of Providence, we close, lose, or wall out all that the Lord could do for us.
2. Like a virgin, our innocence falls, and it feels unable to get up. Innocence, seeing our confusion and indifference (stiff neck, heavy ears, troublesome nature), senses that we are unaware of the gravity of the situation. With no spiritual plan to follow, innocence feels there is no real hope for the future. "Is there anyone who will restore my dignity?"
3. "Rising": We need that positive sense that reading the Word of the Lord can, and does, carry us into that sphere where angels are. The words we read will be "...wonderfully changed..." for us. These words will put away any estrangement that might have crept into our hearts and minds.
4. The "remains" the Lord has watched over from our infancy and stored up in the internal will be called forth when needed, and we can go out by the "thousands," drawing on the infinite abundance of the Lord. We need to put the image of thousands going in and out of the city as our goal. Just saying the words "remain of remains" draws the soul into the decision-making process.  
"See, I have set before you this day life and good, death and evil....therefore choose life, that you and your descendants may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying His voice, and cleaving to Him...." (Deuteronomy 30:15-20)

## **READ AND REVIEW**

Read Amos 5:1-3.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## **QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION**

1. There is a part of us that wants the Word to be happy, bright, cheerful and free of anything that inspires guilt. There are elements of these themes throughout the wonderful stories of the Word, and yet there are those "heavy" themes of separation or estrangement. The Rev. Cairns Henderson wrote a series of article in *New Church Life* about the "hard sayings" of the Lord. Ever read them?  
The punishment of evil and the loss of opportunities is a repetitive theme.

- How do you keep a balanced perspective of these states so that you find comfort when it is needed and be made uncomfortable when you have gotten lethargically comfortable?
2. Have you ever done a doctrinal study on the correspondence of numbers? Why are there times when the meanings of the numbers are explained by multiplication, division, or addition?

### **AMOS 5:4-9**

*“For thus says the Lord to the house of Israel:  
Seek Me and live;  
But do not seek Bethel,  
Nor enter Gilgal,  
Nor pass over to Beersheba;  
For Gilgal shall surely go into captivity,  
And Bethel shall come to nothing.  
Seek the Lord and live,  
Lest he break out like fire in the house of Joseph,  
And devour it,  
With no one to quench it in Bethel-  
You who turn justice to wormwood,  
And lay righteousness to rest in the earth!  
He made the Pleiades and Orion;  
He turns the shadow of death into morning  
And makes the day dark as night;  
[He calls for the waters of the sea  
And pours them out on the face of the earth;  
The Lord is His name.  
He rains ruin upon the strong,  
So that fury comes upon the fortress.*

### **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

#### ***P&P***

- “...an exhortation that they should seek the Lord, lest all things of the church should perish through evils and falsities, vers. 4-9...”

#### ***AC 3969[12]***

- “In Amos...(v. 4, 6, 15)...where...the spiritual are signified by ‘Joseph;’ the ‘house of Israel’ is the spiritual church.... ‘Joseph’ is the good of this church...”

### ***AE 448[14]***

- “In Amos...(v. 4, 6, 15)...‘The house of Israel’ signifies the spiritual church, and ‘the house of Joseph’ that church in respect to the truths of doctrine. That truths of doctrine will perish unless they are in the affection of truth and good and a life according to them, is meant by ‘lest He fall like a fire upon the house of Joseph’...”

### ***AC 2723[1&2]***

- “...‘Beer-sheba’ signifies the state and quality of the doctrine, namely, that it is Divine and to which what is of human reason is adjoined...to the doctrine of faith; and because they are...adjoined...the doctrine thus became adapted to human comprehension, it is called a ‘city’...” Amos 5:5 is noted as representing “the opposite sense.”

### ***AR 410***

- “...by ‘wormwood’ is signified infernal falsity... Wormwood...from its intense bitterness... renders food and drink abominable...” Amos 5:7 is cited as a representative example of this from the Word.

### ***AE 519[6]***

- “...‘wormwood’ signifies the evil of falsity...” Amos 5:7 is cited as an example of this teaching.

### ***Coronis 56***

- This number cites Amos 5:9 as one of the many references in the Word to the “vastation” and “desolation” of the good and truth “of the church, whence there is nothing but evils and falsities.”

## **DERIVED DOCTRINE**

NOTE THE PROGRESSION OF A SERIES THAT TELLS US WHAT IS NOT “SEEKING THE LORD AND LIVING.”

*“Seek Me and live...”*

- Seeking the Lord involves an effort of the will, from the love of truth, for the sake of truth. Seeking the Lord is not a gathering of facts merely to know them, but it means drawing them into ourselves so that we may live by them.
- The Writings give us a symbol to reflect on: “Drawers of waters.” AC 3058 teaches that “To ‘draw waters’ is to be instructed, to understand, and to be

wise." This number then warns us that there will be some who "...continually desire to know truths, but for no other end than to know them, while caring nothing for the use." Seeking means loving truth so spiritual uses may be offered to the Lord, to the neighbor, and to ourselves. Such "drawers of water" bring constructive amendment to the will, and their lives are lived to the fullest measure.

*"...do not seek Bethel..."*

- The word Bethel means "House of God." In the best sense, the Writings teach that Bethel represents the knowledge of celestial things. See AC 3720.
- Worship for the Israelites had fallen into a routine. They believed just entering the house of God was enough. The Lord said no, it isn't. Quoting celestial things is not enough. They carried the water, but they did nothing with it to quench their spiritually parched souls.
- The words of the prophet must have seemed inappropriate to his listeners. They looked up at the temple. There it stood, beautifully and esthetically awesome. "What is this man talking about? We have given of our wealth to make this the most special 'House of God.'"

*"Nor enter Gilgal..."*

- Gilgal represents "...the doctrine of natural truth, which is serviceable for introduction into the church." (AE 700[14]) Natural truth apart from a love for the Lord would not help carry the Israelites into spiritual life. The facts of spiritual law needed to be added to their knowledge of natural law.

*"Nor pass over to Beersheba..."*

- Please note that in AC 2723[1&2], we were told that in the good sense, "Beersheba" represents the adjunction of human reason to the doctrine of faith so that human comprehension might be assisted.
- The word ADJUNCTION is not the same as CONJUNCTION. According to *Webster's Dictionary*, adjunction means "...something added to another thing, but not essentially a part of it..." By contrast, conjunction is the entering into and blending or marriage occurring where the two become as a one.
- Therefore, we are told in the *Arcana* that the Israelites took what could have been a helpful adjunction and turned it to the "opposite." They did not seek to adjoin their human reason with the doctrine of faith. The loss? Human comprehension of the Lord's Word dimmed like a fading or flickering light.

*What were the results of the Israelitish failure to seek the Lord?*

1. "...Gilgal shall surely go into captivity..." Natural truths that could have been introductory truths will become enslaved.

2. "...Bethel shall come to nothing..." The "house of God" ornate, beautiful, and impressive, will mean little to the spiritually ignorant.
3. "Seek the Lord and live..." Here is the solution, cries the prophet. Listen and obey the Lord.
4. "...fire in the house of Joseph...and [he] will devour it..." If you fail to repent, the truths of doctrine will perish. I believe the "he" here refers to the enemy of truth, not to the Lord.
5. "With no one to quench it in Bethel..." Human prudence, the priesthood, the gods, whatever they had great hope or faith in could not take away the great thirst for spiritual waters. Not wealth, not armies, not expanded territories, nothing will work! Only the Lord can give you what you so desperately need and don't know it.
6. "You who turn justice to wormwood..."
  - a. The word "wormwood" is used in the Word to convey a sense of bitterness and sorrow. The Writings teach that "wormwood" in food renders the food and drink "abominable." How so? Is it just the taste, or is there a more subtle but deadly reason?
  - b. In some countries, "wormwood" is used in the making of absinthe. It is a green alcoholic liquor containing oils of wormwood and anise and other aromatics. If over-used, this disguised, sweet-tasting, alcoholic drink will eventually cause a serious nervous derangement. The culprit? "Wormwood!"
  - c. Justice in Israel's society was being lost. Like the drink of absinthe, their morals, reasoning, caring, and sense of fairness were becoming deranged. The justice of the day, as explained by the priests, was like the cleverly mixed abominable "wormwood." Ambition, greed, and laziness covered their bitter taste of injustice with sweet anise and other aromatics.
7. "And lay righteousness to rest in the earth."
  - a. Simply put, this means that righteousness was put to sleep in the minds of people. The end justifying the means was acceptable as long as it gave them what they wanted.
8. "He made the Pleiades and Orion..."
  - a. Pleiades is a group, or cluster, of bright stars. There are seven stars in this constellation. The ancients had some elaborate myths about all of the stars in the heavens. One of these stars of Pleiades, according to tradition, became hidden or banished when it mistakenly fell in love with a human. (Isn't it interesting what lengths human self-love will go to even in myths?)
  - b. Orion is also a constellation of stars which, for the ancients, formed a gigantic warrior with a belt and sword. Orion was a man of great strength who at his death was transferred to the heavens. Did Israel find the story of these myths appealing? Or did the myths represent the foolishness of those who trusted in their own strength instead of the Lord? Did Israel consult the stars for answers? Did they seek their "powers" by offering gifts or sacrifices? The source I checked,

Interpreter's Bible Dictionary, indicated historians think they probably did.

- c. The point here is that the Lord reminded them that it was He who made these stars, and that which the Lord creates is not greater than its Creator.
  - d. Before leaving this portion of the text, let's look at two wonderful quotes in the Writings regarding stars and Pleiades and Orion.
  - e. "...I can, from all experience, and thence testimony from heaven, declare with certainty, that it is impossible to derive a single genuine theological truth from any other source than from the Lord alone; nay, that to derive it from any other source is as impossible, as it is to sail from England or Holland to the Pleiades, or to ride on horseback from Germany to Orion in the sky." (Brief Exposition 98)
  - f. "...truths are all like stars, which by their light make the faith manifest and give it form. Man acquires this faith from the Word by means of his natural light, in which light it is knowledge, thought, and persuasion; but the Lord causes it, in those who believe in Him, to become conviction, trust, and confidence; thus faith becomes spiritual-natural, and by means of charity becomes living." (TCR 137[5])
9. "He turns the shadow of death into morning and makes the day dark as night..."
- a. "'Spiritual thick-darkness,' 'the shadow of death,' and 'darkness,' are nothing else but the states of those in hell, who are in the falsities of evil.... The Word in many places treats [of the above words to mean those] whose eyes the Lord will open; and by them are meant the Gentiles...Christians...they know the Lord indeed, but do not approach Him, and they have the Word, but yet do not search for the truths therein." (AR 110)
  - b. There is hope and deliverance for those who are blind from ignorance and are lost but a stern warning to those who insist on turning the Word to their own ends.
10. "He calls for the waters of the sea and pours them out on the face of the earth..."
- a. There is a lesson in AC 2162[7] that explains Revelation 10:1-2. In that text, a strong angel is seen with a little book open in his hand. He has his right foot upon the water of the sea and his left foot upon the earth. We are taught that the "'sea' denotes natural truths, the 'earth' denotes natural goods..."
  - b. The Lord is offering relief from the parched and thirsty condition of poor spiritual leadership. He will bridge the gap. He promises to restore a wholesome communication if they return to the knowledge and love of the Lord alone. Their spiritual thirst can only be quenched with "living waters" and not the cleverly mixed delusions the drink of "wormwood" was giving them.
11. "The Lord is His name."

12. "He rains ruin upon the strong so that fury comes upon the fortress."

What a powerful finish to the above conditions:

1. Seek Me and live.
2. Don't look to the physical temple you built.
3. Don't count on your natural-introductory truths
4. Don't destroy the adjunction of the doctrine of faith and human reason.
5. If you do, you will destroy all the things of the church, and you will perish through the evils and falsities of the drink of "wormwood" hell has prepared. It will give you a deranged sense of justice and righteousness.
6. I will remove the shadows of death. I will turn your nights into mornings.
7. Remember, it is not the myths of Pleiades or Orion that will help you.
8. Don't waste your time courting their favor or power. There is only one Source of help:
9. The Lord is His name.

### **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

I feel we just did that. Maybe you want to add your own summary to the above. Please do so, and share that summary with one of your study partners.

### **READ AND REVIEW**

Read Amos 5:4-9.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

### **QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION**

1. Do you feel the sense of mercy here from the Lord? He is showing the Israelites the series of causes and effects their actions brought about, but He doesn't leave them without a solution. He shows them the way out of the confusion: "Seek Me and Live."
2. What excuses do you think will be offered up when people have their spiritual eyes open in the World of Spirits and they see all that the Lord did for them when they had imagined they fought evils alone? Do you think the excuse of ignorance will offer up an "airtight alibi"?
3. As clear a picture as the Writings give us about the prophecy of Amos, I still feel some sympathy for the plight of the "laymen" Israelites. Some of them could not read nor write. They could not go to the Word and reflect on the words the way we can. But then I remember that none of this would have happened if they had stayed committed to the ways of the Lord. The Lord provides for all states and conditions and makes sure His Word is sufficient for the day.  
How far have we strayed, and what false faith have we built up that seeks to

- offer substitutes for the real things of faith? How does the Lord provide for people like the Israelites who could not read the Word for themselves?
4. I found the information about “wormwood” quite interesting and valuable. What about you? Are we still in subtle ways drinking hell’s artificially sweetened, but bitter and sorrowful, hoax? What are some ways to detect “wormwood” before we drink it?
  5. Have you noticed the number of ads on television encouraging people to seek the advice of “psychics”? Is this harmful to those who use their counsel? What about the man who claims he can contact family members or friends in the spiritual world? He has a best-selling book telling about his most celebrated contacts. Someone said, “He has told me things that only I had knowledge about.” A great following of “readers” and clairvoyants seem to be pulling people away from “Seek Me and live.” What do you think about this?

### **AMOS 5:10-13**

*They hate the one who rebukes in the gate,  
 And they abhor the one who speaks uprightly.  
 Therefore, because you tread down the poor  
 And take grain taxes from him,  
 Though you have built houses of hewn stone,  
 Yet you shall not dwell in them;  
 You have planted pleasant vineyards,  
 But you shall not drink wine from them.  
 For I know your manifold transgressions  
 And your mighty sins:  
 Afflicting the just and taking bribes;  
 Diverting the poor from justice at the gate.  
 Therefore the prudent keep silent at that time,  
 For it is an evil time.*

### **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

#### ***P&P***

- “...that they reject truths because they are in self-intelligence, vers. 10-13.”

#### ***AC 1071[5]***

- “In Amos:- ( v. 11) This is said of the spiritual church, or ‘Israel,’ of which planting vineyards and drinking the wine thereof is predicated, when it becomes such as to have faith from charity...’ Here is described the opposite condition, when the spiritual church is vastated.”

### **AC 8941[4]**

- “By ‘hewn stone’ is signified that which is from self-intelligence....” Amos v. 11 is one of the verses cited.

### **AR 316**

- “...it is provided by the Lord that the holy goods and truths, which lie interiorly concealed in the Word, shall not be violated and profaned. ‘Oil’ signifies the good of love, and ‘wine’ truth from that good...” In the larger quote, it references Amos 5:11 as an example of how the Lord cuts off the wine from the mouths of those who seek evil.

### **AE 376[17]**

- In AE 376[17], the Writings translate the text as: “Vineyards of desire shall you plant...” The Revised King James Version text reads: “You have planted pleasant vineyards...”
- “...spiritual wealth, which is the knowledges of good and truth....when devastated one profits nothing and receives nothing, even though he listens to them, and sees them in the Word...” Like things are meant in Amos 5:11, we are told in this number.

### **AE 919**

- This number quotes many passages from the Word where ‘vineyard’ signifies the spiritual church. Amos 5:11 is one of the citations.

### **AR 899**

- “Since ‘gates’ signify introductory truths, which are knowledges from the Word, therefore the elders of a city sat in the gates, and judged; as is manifest from...” Amos 5:12 is cited as one of the examples.
- “Because ‘gates’ signify introductory truths, therefore it was among the statutes:- ‘That the elders should sit at the gates and judge’...” Amos 5:12 is one of the examples cited.

## **DERIVED DOCTRINE**

*“They hate the one who rebukes in the gate, and they abhor the one who speaks uprightly.”*

- We can see from some of the above quotes that the “gate” and those who sat there were the elders of the city. By divine statutes, they were to be there for the people. They were to judge and lead the people according to the precepts

of the Word. But those who sought to deceive did all they could to discredit the truthful or faithful elders so their opinions would not interfere with their plans to cheat or defraud others.

- Apparently, it became difficult, and unpleasant, for the elders to speak from principle. Those in the city hated the “messengers” because a righteous elder made the thieves feel exposed or uncomfortable as they went about their nefarious business.

#### *Treading Down the Poor and Taking Grain Taxes from Them*

- There is an interesting quote in AR 489 that tells us that where the literal sense states there will be those who will seek to trample the holy city for forty-two months, it represents their attempt to “...disperse every truth of the Word, even so that nothing would remain.”
- “...seeds, barley, wheat, and the like denote interior truths and goods...” (AC 7112)
- The Concordance suggests that it is useful to use “tribute” when looking up the word “taxes.” A quote from AC 6659 seems to serve our present study well: “...princes of tributes...signifies falsities that would compel to serve...”
- Those who hated the elders at the gate wanted to “trample” every truth of the Word so that nothing would remain, and they worked to destroy interior truths and goods so that they could “tax” or compel falsity to serve their interests and gain from the “poor” because of their ignorance of the Word.

#### *Houses of “hewn stone”*

- We need to note the difference between a “stone” and a “hewn stone.” A stone that is “unhewn” represents the wholeness of the Lord’s truth. A “hewn” stone represents “...an intelligent person who falls into perversities, and calls or makes to be true things that are false...‘hewn stone’ denotes what is fabricated.” (AC 1296)
- “If thou wilt make Me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone; for if thou lift up thy tool upon it thou hast polluted it.” (Exodus 20:25)
- The Lord wanted them to see that they had built “houses” in their minds that seemed attractive and lofty but were actually misshapen distortions of their memory knowledges. In other words, they lived in mental houses where perversities fabricated lies and distortions.

#### *“Yet you shall not dwell in them...”*

- What they thought was so secure and stable would not last or survive in the presence of the Lord’s clear and eternal truth.

*Planting Vineyards of Desire, But Not Drinking Wine from Them*

- When Noah drank of the wine from his vineyard, we are taught that this represented “...he desired to investigate the things of faith, and this by reasonings...” (AC 1071)
- From this explanation, may we assume that the Lord was telling them that their desire to investigate the things of faith was from a “hellish” desire and that their reasoning therefore would never have them taste of the true wisdom of the Word?

*Manifold transgressions; mighty sins; afflicting the just; taking bribes; diverting the poor from justice at the gate*

- Transgressions are evils done against the truths of faith. See AC 9156.
- Sin is different than evil. Evil is somewhat passive. It is a thought or a temptation. Sin is the giving in to that thought and a giving in to the temptation. When we sin, we make some evil our own. There is a wonderful passage in the Writings that presents a challenge to reflect on: “In order for anyone to know what evil is, and consequently what sin is, let him merely study to know what love of self and of the world is...” (AC 4997) Evil and sin bring about disjunction from the Lord and the heavens.
- A just person is one who lives according to divine laws. (AR 815) Those who sought to live according to divine laws were scorned and afflicted by those in power.
- Taking bribes: In AC 8711, we have an explanation of what is meant by those “...‘hating gain,’ as being aversion to persuasions from falsity and evil.... By ‘gain’ in general is signified all the falsity from evil that perverts the judgments of the mind...and withdraws from truth and good...” This is the case with those who have the world as their end.
- Diverting the poor from the gate: A gate is representative of the entrance into the mind. It also represents teachings or doctrines which introduce the truths of faith. See AC 2943 and AC 3721 for more insights into the meaning of a gate.
- Essentially, those who were “poor” in matters of faith were being ignored and purposely kept ignorant of the introductory “riches” of the Word.

*The Prudent Keeping Silent, the Evil Time.*

- “By means of His Divine providence the Lord leads the affections of a man’s life’s love, and at the same time leads his thoughts, from which human prudence is derived.” (DP 200)
- It seems to make sense if the people were intent in shutting out the Word of the Lord that “prudence” would keep silent at that time. Human prudence would take over and try to present its ideas as more important and vital for life. Such a state of mind would make for “an evil time.”

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

1. The key to these verses seems to be the problem of self-intelligence. When it takes control of one's mind, it does not wish to hear any of the judgments from the "elders" of the city gate. Instead, self-intelligence will make the spiritual principals unwelcome and hated. Self-intelligence will trample down and discredit the spiritual laws, and will build up its own secular altar with "hewn stones" that fit its concepts and feel comfortable worshiping the love of self and the world.
2. The Writings translate "pleasant vineyard" as "vineyard of desire." Self-intelligence is a vineyard of desire, and those who grow their grapes of desire would become spiritually drunk with the intoxicating disorder that would destroy freedom and rationality. The Lord urges His children not to drink this wine.
3. Another condition that hurts the spiritual potential is acceptance of bribes. Accepting a bribe is a release of internal restraints so as to be "bought off," a willingness to pervert the judgment of the mind and to have the mind withdrawn from good and truth. When we allow this to happen, the "elders at the gate" cannot lead us. Providence cannot lead our affections and thoughts. Prudence loses its willingness to follow the internal dictates of the Lord's truth.

## READ AND REVIEW

Read Amos 5:10-13.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION

1. We learn from the three-fold Word. We have to read, reflect, and make applications. A good portion of this process uses the intelligence. How do we keep self-intelligence in a healthy state?
2. The human mind can arrange "selected" teachings from the Word in such a way as to prove whatever we want. What can we do to prevent such a "hewing" of the stones so that we don't fabricate falsity?
3. Is there a way that you keep the "poor" from coming to the gates of the city? Is there a way you keep the "poor" coming every day to the gates so that introductory truths refresh the heart, the mind, and the soul? Do you do this to yourself? To others?
4. Have you ever felt this way? In matters of daily discrimination, you feel uncertain about your stance on current issues and hesitate to speak up. But as you read the Word, and see its internal sense, you feel more confident to express your insights on the things taught in the lesson. Why do you think this happens?

5. How do you explain the difference between evil and sin? Does it make sense that we are not held accountable for the inherited tendencies toward evil, but we are accountable for sins we confirm through our loves?
6. What do you think of the difference in translations regarding the vineyard? Is there a significant difference between “pleasant vineyards” and “vineyards of desire”?

### **AMOS 5:14-15**

*Seek good and not evil,  
That you may live;  
So the Lord God of hosts will be with you,  
As you have spoken  
Hate evil, love good;  
Establish justice in the gate.  
It may be that the Lord God of hosts  
Will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.*

### **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

#### ***P&P***

- • “...[an exhortation] that they should turn themselves, vers. 14, 15...”

#### ***AE 573[7 &8]***

- “The tribes were called ‘hosts’ because the twelve tribes taken together represented all the truths and goods of the church, and each tribe some universal essential of the church... From this it can be seen that the truths and goods of heaven and the church are meant in the Word by ‘hosts’...” Amos 5:14 and 16 are cited in the numerous references in the Word.

#### ***AC 2943***

- “...in Amos...That a ‘gate’ also signifies the way of access to the rational mind, and that this mind is compared to a city...” Amos 5:15 is the cited passage. Also it is important to note that this number encourages us to read more about the ‘gates’ of a city in AC 2851.

### **DERIVED DOCTRINE**

*“Seek good and not evil...”*

- Seeking requires an effort to find something. The Lord identifies what that “something” is. He asks the Israelites to find “good.” Good has a whole host of

meanings, and here are just a few: Love, Will, Affection, Esse, the First, the End, the Substance. In other words, the Lord was directing them to seek Him in the things of the affections. If His Love became important again, they would have the “substance” out of which “form” (wisdom) might bring use back into their worship of the Lord.

*“That you might live...”*

- AC 39 has a wonderful way of describing whether a person is “alive” or “dead.” When the Lord is permitted to “illuminate” the internal man, the person is alive. When the person seeks to be resuscitated (regenerated), he or she is living. When people imagine that they live from themselves, they are dead. The Lord calls all to live but not all choose to “live.”

*“...the Lord God of hosts will be with you...”*

- In the simplest of terms, the Lord is promising the children of Israel that He will give them the “truths and goods of heaven and the church...” (AE 573[7])

*“Hate evil, love good...”*

- Abhor evil, and it loses its power. Evil cannot stand having its life rejected. Evil thrives when we give it recognition it does not deserve. Therefore, the Lord tells us to hate evil.
- We might find this teaching hard to share in our age. Hell has been working hard to color all of its disorders with respectability. Profanity is now called “adult language,” so children grow up thinking that when they reach adulthood, they should use profanity. Profanity is seen as a way to express emotions. Telling our age to hate profanity (and many other evils we could cite) would meet with some strong resistance.
- There seems to be a message here: When we hate evil, we then can come to the point where we love good.

*“Establish justice in the gate.”*

- The mind is a gate. “Something” sits at the gate. If the gate keeper is of the Lord’s appointment, we will call, or invite, into the mind the things of spiritual importance. If the gate keeper is of hell’s appointment, it will invite in the things of hell. The Lord calls for a gate keeper of justice.

*The “Lord God of hosts will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.”*

- Joseph represents the Lord. He also represents “...the celestial of the spiritual from the natural...the celestial is good from the Divine, and the spiritual is truth from that good, and thus is the truth of the good from His Divine

Human.” (AC 5307) Putting this more simply, we might say that the Lord was promising to return the Israelites to the “remnant” remains that would help them love the wisdom of the written Word so that they might regain the glimpse of the Divine Human they had lost. God for them had become “invisible,” and it was hard for them to love what they could not see or conceptualize. They had to come back to seeing God again. Isn't this a powerful promise to reflect on?

- Don't we, with the revelation of the Writings, have a wonderful way of seeing the Divine Human? The Lord has truly been gracious to the remnant of Joseph.

## **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

1. When each of us enters into the World of Spirits, we will pass through three states if we have chosen Heaven within our hearts. In the first state, there is an unfolding of the externals so our internals will shine forth. In the case of those who have hardened themselves against the Lord, there is often a denial of what was loved. There is an attempt by some to complain that they did not have a fair chance to find heaven. They blame parents, poor educational opportunities, etc. The Lord shows them a summary of their life and calmly points out the numerous opportunities they had to choose heaven, but they refused to accept the opportunity. They again deny this was so. They see their life again. This may go on for twenty or thirty years. Finally, they can't deny it any longer, and they dive head-long into their hell.
2. As we read these verses, this insight from Heaven and Hell may add a sense of the Lord's patience with those who deny His merciful offers. “Seek good and not evil. That you may live.” The Lord offered them the chance to once again use the “host” of truths and goods of heaven and the church. The Writings in P&P plainly teach that the Lord exhorting them to turn themselves around.
3. This passage says to the Israelites, “Hate evil, love good, and put justice back at the entrance of your minds so love of the Word may manifest itself in the spiritual truths as presented in the literal sense.” The great “reward” was that they would “see” the Lord in the Divine Human. They would no longer have an invisible God in their concepts, but the remnant of Joseph would graciously turn them about.

## **READ AND REVIEW**

Read Amos 5:14-15.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## **QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION**

1. The stated goal of the New Church is that it will have a faith in the visible God within whom is the invisible. (TCR 339) “For what is invisible does not fall

- into an idea of thought..." (AC 10737) "There can be no conjunction with an invisible God." (TCR 786) How are you doing with this important work of bringing the invisible into the visible?
2. Do we have a conscious sense of how often opportunities present themselves to help us "turn" ourselves? Or will we be like those who have to see the whole of our life played over and over before we admit the Lord tried often to turn us? How can we become more alert to those opportunities when they occur?
  3. Why does the Word "seem" to reverse the call to repentance?  
"Seek good and not evil...  
Hate evil, love good..."
  4. Do you remember a course, a sermon, an article, or a book that helped you the most with the doctrine of the Divine Human? Would you be comfortable telling someone what the phrase seeing "the Lord in the Divine Human" means?
  5. What question(s) came to you while you were reading these two verses?

### **AMOS 5:16-20**

*Therefore the Lord God of hosts, the Lord, says this:*

*There shall be wailing in all streets,  
And they shall say in all the highways,  
Alas! Alas!  
They shall call the farmer to mourning,  
And skillful lamenters to wailing.  
In all vineyards there shall be wailing,  
For I will pass through you,  
Says the Lord.*

*Woe to you who desire the day of the Lord!  
For what good is the day of the Lord to you?  
It will be darkness, and not light.  
It will be as though a man fled from a lion,  
And a bear met him!  
Or as though he went into the house,  
Leaned his hand on the wall,  
And a serpent bit him!  
Is not the day of the Lord darkness, and not light?  
Is it not very dark, with no brightness in it?*

## **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

### ***P&P***

- "...a lamentation over the destruction of the church, and over their ruin, when the Lord comes, vers. 16-20..."

### ***AR 501***

- "“By ‘streets,’ in the Word, almost the same is signified as by ‘ways,’ because streets are ways in a city; but still by ‘streets’ are signified the truths or falsities of doctrine....” There are many verses from the Word cited. One of the examples cited is Amos 5:16.

### ***AE 652[18]***

- "“In Amos...‘Lamentations shall be in all the streets, and they shall say in the open places, Alas, alas!’ signifies grief because truth and good are everywhere laid waste; ‘and they shall call the husbandman to mourning’ signifies the grief of the men of the church on this account, ‘husbandman’ signifying the man of the church, because a ‘field’ signifies the church in respect to the implantation of truth.”

### ***AC 9139[5]***

- "“In Amos:- ‘In all vineyards shall be wailing; I will pass through thee. Woe unto you that desire the day of Jehovah! What to you is the day of Jehovah? It is of darkness and not of light (v. 17, 18); this is said of the last time of the church, when there is no longer any good and truth of faith, which time is ‘the day of Jehovah, a day of darkness and not of light;’ whence it is said, ‘in all vineyards shall be wailing.’”

### ***AR 650***

- "“That ‘a vineyard’ signifies the church where the Word is, by which the Lord is known...” Amos 5:17 is one of the verses cited for this teaching.

### ***AR 573***

- "“...by ‘a bear’ are signified those who read the Word and do not understand it, whence they have fallacies.... ‘The lion and a bear’ are mentioned (in the Word) because by ‘a lion’ is signified falsity destroying the truths of the Word, and by ‘a bear’ are signified fallacies, which also destroy, but not in so great a degree....” Amos 5:18, 19 are cited.

### ***AE 781[16]***

- “‘The day of Jehovah’ means the coming of the Lord, who is the Messiah whom they expected; and as they believed that He would deliver them from the enemies of the land, and would exalt them in glory above all the nations, they desired Him. But as the Lord came into the world not for the sake of any kingdom on earth but for the sake of a kingdom in heaven, and as the Jewish nation was in the falsities of evil, and these were at that time manifested, it is said, ‘Woe unto you, that desire the day of Jehovah. What to you is the day of Jehovah? It is a day of darkness and not of light,’ ‘darkness and not light’ meaning the falsities in which they were; ‘as one who fleeth from a lion meeteth a bear’ signifies fear because of the domination of falsity when truths are sought from the sense of the letter of the Word, which they cannot but falsify; for one is said ‘to flee from a lion and to meet a bear’ when he is interiorly in falsity from evil, and is led to investigate truths from the sense of the letter of the Word, which he then, because of the interior domination of falsity from evil, cannot but pervert; ‘who cometh to a house and leaneth with his hand upon a wall and a serpent biteth him’ signifies that when such a man in seeking goods consults the Word in the sense of the letter he does not see that evils pervert it; ‘the bite of a serpent’ signifying falsification, here the falsification that arises from the interior domination of falsity from evil.” Amos 5:18, 19 are cited.

### ***AC 1839[5]***

- “In these passages, the ‘day of Jehovah’ denotes the last time and state of the church; ‘darkness and thick darkness’ falsities and evils.” Amos 5:18, 20 are cited.

### ***AC 7688***

- “...thus ‘to be darkened’ is to be in falsity; and as the devastation of those who have been of the church and have known truths, but have lived a life of evil, is here treated of, therefore by ‘the land was darkened’ is signified falsity where truth was.” Amos 5:18-20 is one of the examples cited to illustrate this teaching.

### ***AR 413***

- “...by ‘being darkened’ is signified not to be seen or known by reason of evils from falsities and falsities from evils. Evils from falsities are with those who assume the falsities of religion, and confirm them till they appear as truths, and when they live according to them they do evils from falsities, or the evils of falsity. But those have falsities from evils, who do not regard evils as sins; and still more those who, by reasonings from the natural man, and more still

from the Word, confirm with themselves that evils are not sins." Amos 5:18, 20 are among the passages from the Word cited.

### **TCR 761**

- This number tells us that the end of a church is signified with "night" as a sign of the Lord departing from it and going "to a new church."

### **AE 526[5]**

- This number cites Amos 5:18 and 5:20 as an example of the Lord coming to judge a church because there is no longer "any good of love or truth of faith, but the evil of falsity and the falsity of evil, that day is called 'a day of darkness and of thick darkness.'"

## **DERIVED DOCTRINE**

We are given such a full and complete explanation that there seems to be no need to offer additional references. However, if you think of some references that might add to the study, it would be appreciated if you would add them during the discussion period.

## **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

Before making a summary, let's look at key words that lead us to a summary:

1. The domination of falsity: The Israelites were interiorly in falsity from evil. The interior domination of falsity from evil cannot but pervert.
2. The streets and highways wailing is representative of the devastation of good and truth. Where once there had been truth, there was now falsity.
3. Where there had been hope and longing for the Messiah, they were now told their reasons for hope and longing were all wrong.

Any summary we make cannot match what we have in AE 781[16] and AR 413. We are taught that Israel did not have a clue about what the Lord was going to do for the world and to eternity. They focused on belief in falsified traditional thinking that they were the Lord's "chosen" people. They wanted Him to come so that they would be the "greatest" among all nations.

How do you tell a nation they are wrong? The wonderful story about the lion, the bear, and the serpent illustrates the hopeless efforts of their traditional expectations of the Lord. Instead of having "light," they had "darkness." *AR 413* explains how "darkness" entered their minds: "...by reasonings from the natural man, and more still from the Word, (they) confirm with themselves that evils are not sins."

The "serpent" biting their hand is such a graphic description of sensual reasoning overcoming the power of the natural man's ability to perform the ultimate uses so

necessary in the life of worship to the Lord and love of the neighbor. Uses were turned to self-interests.

## **READ AND REVIEW**

Read Amos 5:16-20.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## **QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION**

1. With so much given to us from the Writings about these verses, did you find it easier to anticipate the summary of them? What skills do you learn from studying the Word regularly?
2. Past and present political indiscretions have produced a need for the White House advisors to hire people who are gifted as “spin masters.” What this means is that these people are to work on “spinning” a positive interpretation on any news that would appear harmful to the president of the United States or any other important senator or congressperson. Does hell have a gifted crew of “spin masters” employed in its effort to dominate interior reasonings that bring about darkness? What are some of their techniques? How can we spot them and see through them?
3. Israel longed for the coming of the Lord. He told them they didn’t really want Him to come. He told them that when He walked among them, there would be great wailing and their streets and cities, vineyards and husbandmen would wail, crying out “Alas, alas.”
4. As New Church men and women, what do we think about when we reflect on this prophecy? Do we make assumptions like those the Israelites made? Have we built a system of traditional beliefs that are blinding us to the Lord’s truth? Do we put too much emphasis on traditional forms of worship? How do we distinguish tradition from theology?
5. How much time do we spend studying the three-fold Word? What happens when we study regularly? When we don’t? Are we fleeing from the lion to encounter the bear? When at home, are we allowing our hands to be bitten by the serpent? Can we reflect on this question with a determination that some positive alternatives will come forward?

## **AMOS 5:21-22**

*I hate, I despise your feast days,  
And I do not savor your sacred assemblies.  
Though you offer Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings,  
I will not accept them,  
Nor will I regard your fattened peace offerings.*

## PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS

### *P&P*

- "...that their worship cannot be acceptable, vers. 21, 22..."

### *AC 925[4]*

- "In Amos:- 'I hate, I have rejected your feasts, and I will not receive the odor of your holidays, for if ye shall offer Me your burnt-offerings and gifts, they shall not be acceptable (v. 21, 22)... Here 'odor' manifestly signifies what is grateful or unacceptable."

### *AC 922[1&2]*

- "...it is evident that burnt-offerings and sacrifices were nothing else than representatives of internal worship; and that when they (internal and external sacrifices) were separated from internal worship they became idolatrous. This anyone of sound reason may see. For what is an altar but something of stone, and what is burnt-offering and sacrifice but the slaying of a beast? If there be Divine worship, it must represent something heavenly which they know and acknowledge, and from which they worship Him whom they represent...It is by internal things, namely, charity and the faith therefrom, that He who is represented is to be seen and acknowledged and believed, as is clearly evident in the prophets...." Amos 5:22, 24 are verses used to illustrate the above.

## DERIVED DOCTRINE

### *"I hate, I despise..."*

- "...when we read in the Word concerning Jehovah or the Lord 'hating'...in the internal sense (it) is not 'hatred,' but mercy, for the Divine is mercy; but when this (mercy) flows in with a man who is in evil...it then appears as hatred... Above all other peoples the Jewish and Israelitish people were such that as soon as they observed anything unfriendly, even in associates, they believed it lawful to treat them cruelly, and not only to kill them, but also to expose them to wild beasts...and therefore...they could not believe otherwise than that Jehovah also entertained hatred, was angry, wrathful, and furious, and for this reason it is so expressed in the Word according to the appearance; for such as is a man's quality, such the Lord appears to him...." (AC 3605)

## *Burnt-Offerings and Sacrifices of Every Kind*

- “The burnt-offerings and sacrifices in the Jewish Church represented nothing else than the celestial things of the Lord’s kingdom in the heavens, and of the Lord’s kingdom on earth (that is, in the church), also of the Lord’s kingdom or church with each person, and in general all things which are of love and charity, for these are things celestial; and each kind of sacrifice represented something special and particular.” (AC 2165[3])
- The laws for burnt-offerings may be found in Leviticus 1.
- The laws for bread-offerings may be found in Leviticus 2.
- The laws for sin-offerings may be found in Leviticus 4:1-35.
- The laws for offerings for defilement may be found in Leviticus 5:1-13.
- The laws for trespass-offerings may be found in Leviticus 5:14-19 and 6:1-7.
- The laws for peace-offerings may be found in Leviticus 3 and 7:28-34.
- The meanings of many of these sacrifices are covered extensively in the *Arcana*. The teachings are so extensive it would be impossible to quote all of them. For those who wish to pursue the quotes, turn to AC 2176-2185 for the meaning or use of each offering.

*“I will not accept them, nor will I regard your fattened peace offerings.”*

- Why wouldn’t the Lord accept their offerings? Was He interested in something deeper than the smell of burnt offerings and showy celebrations? The power of the literal sense is very clear with an answer in Micah 6:6-8:
  - “Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doeth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”

## **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

1. The children of Israel were making noise and sacrifice that was empty. Their hearts were not intent on repentance and change. They thought they were “buying” the Lord’s favor. In effect, they were saying, “Look at what we are doing. See how special our assemblies are. Look at the cost of what we offer. Be pleased with us, give us more stature with other nations, and increase our possessions.”
2. The Lord wanted nothing to do with these offerings. He wanted clean hearts and minds. He wanted charity and faith to increase. He wanted them to walk humbly with Him, shunning evils as sins.

3. When Israel sensed His displeasure with their offerings, they thought He hated and despised them. The message could have brought them to their knees beseeching help, asking for forgiveness, but it did not motivate them to do so.

## **READ AND REVIEW**

Read Amos 5:21-22.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## **QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION**

1. "What is an altar but something of stone, and what is a burnt-offering but the slaying of a beast?" As a child, growing up in a non-New-Church environment, I wondered at the requirement to offer up sacrifices. It seemed somewhat cruel and barbaric. I even wondered at Abraham's willingness to offer up Isaac. I remember my teachers telling me it was a test of one's faith. God needs to test our mettle. He needs to see whether we can endure the tests of faith. Does God really not know me? Is it somewhat questionable to Him what I will do under certain stresses? I never liked the explanations of sacrifices. Thankfully, I can now read what the Writings teach regarding this subject. What were some of your earliest questions or doubts when you heard or hear of sacrifices?
2. "...for such as is a person's quality, such the Lord appears to them...." Looking at the history of religious faith, the Lord has been represented as a cruel, demanding taskmaster. He has been presented as the "absentee Creator." The Lord is seen as one who became so angry with the world that He demanded payment for the sins of all peoples. The teaching in AC 3605 clearly indicates that we project on to the Lord what is in our own hearts. How can we work on improving our perceptions of the Lord? How can we project a more representative image of His mercy to ourselves and others?
3. "What shall I render to the Lord?" What kind of worship is acceptable to the Lord? These verses told Israel, "Your worship cannot be acceptable."

## **AMOS 5:23-25**

*Take away from Me the noise of your songs,  
For I will not hear the melody of your stringed instruments.  
But let justice run down like water,  
And righteousness like a mighty stream.  
Did you offer Me sacrifices and offerings  
In the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?*

## **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

### ***P&P***

- "...that it (their worship) will be acceptable if they possess good and truth, vers. 23-25..."

### ***AC 4137[3]***

- "He who does not know that in everything of the Word there is the heavenly marriage...might believe that joy and gladness are one thing, and that both are mentioned merely for the sake of greater emphasis, thus that one of the expressions is superfluous. But this is not the case...'joy' is predicated of good, and 'gladness' of truth..." Amos 5:23 is cited as one of the examples from the Word.

### ***AC 2235***

- "In the Word, 'righteousness and judgment' are many times named together, but what they signify in the internal sense has not yet been known....in the internal sense 'righteousness' denotes that which is from good, and 'judgment' that which is from truth. Good is all that which belongs to love and charity; truth is all that which belongs to the derivative faith..." Amos 5:24 is one of the many verses used to illustrate this point.

### ***AC 9263***

- This number contains similar statements to those in the above reference.

### ***AC 9857***

- This number quotes Amos 5:24, "let judgment flow like water..." with the following explanation: "...'judgment' denotes intelligence from Divine truth, and the consequent life."

### ***AR 668***

- "...by 'judgment' is signified the Divine truth, and by 'justice' the Divine good, therefore, in many passages, where the Lord is spoken of, 'justice and judgment' are mentioned..." Amos 5:24 is cited.

## **TCR 751**

- This number offers a range of quotes from the Word where justice and righteousness are predicated of love and the judgment of wisdom. Amos 5:24 is one of the references cited.

## **DERIVED DOCTRINE**

### *Noise*

- Noise may have several meanings: "...tumult, or disturbance, and also on the occasion of any happy event....it [also] denotes accusation." (AC 375)

### *Singing*

- "...in the Ancient Church and afterward in the Jewish Church the songs were prophetic and treated of the Lord, especially that He would come into the world, and would overthrow the diabolical crew...and would liberate the faithful from their assaults....the songs contained such things...[that] signified a glorification of the Lord, that is, a celebration of Him from gladness of heart...." (AC 8261[2])

### *Stringed Instruments*

- "In general, by wind instruments were expressed affections of good, and by stringed instruments affections of truth..." (AC 8337[2])

### *Forty Years in the Wilderness*

- "...'forty' denotes the duration of vastation and desolation; and in the internal sense forty years are not meant, but only, in general, the desolation of faith..."
- See AC 730[2&4].

## **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

1. We can probably get a mental picture of what is being represented here if we can recall a chapel service with a piano playing a hymn. Two hundred or more were standing, out of custom, with hands in their pockets. Hymnals were not open, and certain in attendance were not singing from the heart. With glazed eyes, they stood waiting for the song to finish so they might sit and comfortably go to sleep.  
Israel lost the "joy" of singing about the coming of the Lord. They did not feel the joy of the Lord rescuing them from their spiritual enemies. There was no glorification of the Lord and no celebration within their hearts.  
Instead of a melody, that had harmony to it, there was a "noise" of tumult and

disturbance within their minds. The Lord had to let them know there was no excitement in their voices.

The Lord offered them a “new song” the words of which encouraged them to let justice and righteousness flow like water and a mighty stream. He wanted them to pursue good and truth that would renew their lives with works of charity and a derivative faith.

2. The closing question asked them if sacrifices were necessary when they were in the wilderness for forty years. No! The Lord led them and provided those things that helped sustain them through those periods of vastation and desolation. Why would they think that offering sacrifices would be necessary to “win” His favor now? The Lord cannot be bribed with the offerings of tired and meaningless acts of worship.

## **READ AND REVIEW**

Read Amos 5:23-25.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## **QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION**

1. Music can touch the depths of our souls. Certain songs bring back memories of wonderful experiences we had with a friend or friends. But not if the tune is a song of one note. Some of us get so tied up with the sameness of religion that our melodies probably lack the chords and parts that blend and enliven the song of our hearts. What is your impression of this idea? Can we allow the Lord to teach us “a new song”? How?
2. Justice and righteousness running like water and a mighty stream are illustrative of a land where the running water gives life to an abundance of things. The plant life is lush and hearty, and it draws from rippling pools that are not stagnant.

The Lord is challenging us to put our principles of faith into practice. Don't let them gather in the memory like stagnating facts. Let good and truth flow like a mighty stream.

How can we do these things? What does it take to put the things the Lord wants from us into action? Do we need to rethink and sing enthusiastically about the Lord's Second Coming? Do we need to talk more about His liberation work? Can we show others by our actions that we are free of the curse of hell? What will keep us from having to hear the Lord say, “Take away from Me the noise of your songs....”?

I think this is a wonderful challenge presented to us. Talk about ways that individuals and organizations can accept and meet this challenge.

## **AMOS 5:26-27**

*You also carried Sikkuth your king  
And Chiun, your idols,  
The star of your gods,  
Which you made for yourselves.  
Therefore I will send you into captivity beyond Damascus,  
Says the Lord, whose name is the God of hosts.*

### **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

#### ***P&P***

- "...that otherwise they will be deprived of every knowledge of truth and good, vers. 26, 27."

#### ***AC 1715***

- "The farthest boundary of the land of Canaan, beyond Dan, is described as being Damascus, as in Amos...(Amos v. 26, 27)."

### **DERIVED DOCTRINE**

#### *Sikkuth and Chiun*

- Is it Sikkuth or Sakkuth or Moloch? Is it Chiun or Kaiwan or Rephan? The Writings have no references or representations that I can find for these two pagan deities. They were Assyrian deities. Acts 7:42-43 quotes the prophecy of Amos but uses the names of Moloch and Rephan in the place of Sikkuth and Chiun. The *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* says that Moloch had a title: "the king." That seems to fit in with the text when Amos accuses the Israelites of carrying Sikkuth (Sakkuth) "your king."
- Rephan or Kaiwan was worshiped by the Assyrians as an astral deity, and it is the Babylonian name for Saturn. This also seems to fit in with the prophecy of Amos when he told the Israelites they had an idol that was "the star of [their] gods."

#### *The Idols that They Made for Themselves*

- In this charge, it is clear that idols are the works of their own hands and are powerless creatures that should not be in the house of the Lord. It is a reference to the futility of pagan worship.

### *Going into Captivity beyond Damascus*

- Is this like the idea the world had prior to Columbus sailing to the new world? Did the Israelites think that there was little or nothing beyond Damascus?
- Damascus, the oldest city in the world, a city that once had the remains of the Ancient Church, represented in the positive sense the knowledges of good and truth. (AC 1715)
- Was the Lord telling the Israelites that they were about to lose all knowledge of good and truth? Was He telling them that their worship of other gods was taking them to a dangerous unknown point where they would be deprived of the holy representatives given to the church?

### **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

- That is what we did above. With only two short references, we had little doctrine to follow. Therefore, I feel all of the above will serve us as an “open summary” with the Lord leading us to any tentative conclusions.

### **READ AND REVIEW**

Read Amos 5:26-27.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

### **QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION**

1. What questions or thoughts occurred to you in connection with these verses?
2. Think about the teaching about gods made by human hands. What are the gods of today that seek to supplant the Lord? What are their origins? How can we recognize them?
3. When He speaks of going into captivity beyond limits known to us, what is the Lord telling us? What was He telling the Israelites? Is the Lord warning us about the depth of depravity we can fall into when we make a religion of convenience that we would call “the king”? What other meanings do you see?

## Chapter Six

### **AMOS 6:1-2**

*Woe to you who are at ease in Zion,  
And trust in Mount Samaria,  
Notable persons in the chief nation,  
To whom the house of Israel comes!  
Go over to Calneh and see;  
And from there go to Hamath the great;  
Then go down to Gath of the Philistines.  
Are you better than these kingdoms?  
Or is their territory greater than your territory?*

### **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

#### ***P&P***

- “Concerning the spiritual church which had been instituted, that it became worse than the religious systems of the other nations, vers. 1, 2...”

#### ***AE 163[4]***

- “Those that ‘trust in the mountains of Samaria’ are those that trust in themselves, and from self-intelligence hatch out doctrines. ‘Samaria’ is the perverted spiritual church...” Amos 6:1 is cited. Note: We will be using this quote again when we get to Amos 6:4-6.

#### ***AC 1180***

- “Calneh” (along with other nations mentioned) signifies the type or sincerity of worships themselves, “...the externals of which appear holy, but the interiors are profane.” Also see AC 1183 for another reference to Amos 6:2.

### **DERIVED DOCTRINE**

#### ***Ease***

- Regarding those who are “at ease,” the *Swedenborg Concordance* directs our attention to the word “secure” instead of the word “ease.”
- The wrong kind of security will let a person acquiesce to evils and falsities. See AC 2220[3].

- DP 340[4] warns that the person who reasons that the Lord's mercy will save all people so therefore it doesn't matter what kind of life one leads "...such a security makes nothing of adultery, frauds, injustice, violence, defamation, and revenge...he lets his spirit run riot in them all..."
- AE 706[7] cites a conversation the Lord had with the Pharisees and Scribes about what signs they were to look for. They were not really interested in signs but were tempting or mocking the Lord with their questions. They were so at "ease" with their security that they lacked the spiritual quest that would have shown them the signs of truth. The AE 706[7] quote ends with these words: "...they had no knowledge of the Lord, and lived securely in falsities from evil..."
- Could these passages help us see what is meant by "Woe to you who are at ease..."

#### *Ease in Zion*

- Zion in its positive correspondence represents "...the church as to love." (AR 612) Used in the opposite sense, it would appear that the Lord was telling the Israelites that they were careless with their love toward Him.

#### *Trusting "...in Mount Samaria..."*

- AC 10050[2] tells us "...by 'them that dwell in Samaria', are those who are in external worship..."
- A mountain usually represents the extension of worship from either love of the Lord or a love from self. It seems reasonable to assume that this passage is speaking of the extension of external worship from the love of self. They were very much into the worship of the Lord for what it would do for them.

#### *"Notable persons in the chief nation, to whom the house of Israel comes!"*

- This quote seems to carry a warning instead of a compliment. Excellence, eminence, dignity, and sovereignty are terms that, when involving the Lord or a representative of the Lord, are spoken of with the word "glory." Truth of faith and the good of charity are the uses the Lord allows to flow through His representative "notable persons." (See AC 6345). But this verse gives no hint of genuine dignity or notableness. It sounds like they were in love with the human prudence offered from those not seeking to impart wisdom from the Lord.

#### *"Go over to Calneh and see..."*

- This directive to look at Calneh had as its end a lesson about the consequences of external and profane worship. Would the Israelites look at the tragic results of Calneh so they might amend their worship of the Lord?

Or would they rest in their belief that they were a chosen people and therefore continue on in their false sense of “ease” or security?

- Nimrod, as a descendent of Ham,” was mighty “in hunting before Jehovah....And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel and Erech, and Accad and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.” (Genesis 10:9-10) These cities, in the land of Shinar, were in external worship where all holy things were profaned. See AC 1183.

*“And from there go to Hamath the great...”*

- AC 1205 describes “Hamathite” as one of many nations representative of those who “...are entirely unwilling to know internal things, and when instructed reject them, are very prone to all...idolatries...whose interiors are unclean (who will) rush into interior idolatries...”

*“Then go down to Gath of the Philistines.”*

- Those who pervert the truths of the Word are seen as having “streets” that are filled with offensive and disgusting refuse. Evil reigns in the street, and to represent this, the streets appear “...full of dung, mire and clay.” In II Samuel 1:20, Israel was told, “Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon, lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice.”

*“Are you better than these kingdoms?”*

- What a powerful question! The sadness of this is that Israel probably responded, “Yes, we are.” They had no sense of how full of spiritual decay they were. They probably saw no validity in the contrast of the nations of heathens with themselves.

*“Is their territory greater than your territory?”*

- We have no direct teaching on the word “territory,” but what might this question mean if it were phrased this way: “Are you any better off than those who openly reject the Lord? Are you enlarging or expanding the borders of your mind into new territories of the Lord’s truth?”

## **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

1. This chapter offers us a valuable consideration of contrasts. The contrast is not to make us feel proud or special. Instead, it is offered to see if we are making the progress necessary to increase the “borders” of knowledge. Are we, as readers of the three-fold Word, clearing away the falsities of the other nations? Are we intellectually and affectionately open to the things of internal worship, or are we worse than the religious systems of the “other nations”?

2. The streets of the New Jerusalem, as shown in Revelation 21:21, are to be like “...pure gold, as it were transparent glass.” Gold, when refined, is free of impurities and represents the pure love we are to give to the Lord. Revelation describes gold that is like transparent glass. Our worship is to be open and free of any blockage or hidden agendas.
3. These questions need not be ominous. Instead, they are liberating and challenging to improve whatever we do in our worship of the Lord. Falling into a lazy form of ease or security is not in our best interest for spiritual health. Expanding, growing, forging ahead into the wonders of spiritual territory is our challenge.

## **READ AND REVIEW**

Read Amos 6:1-2.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## **QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION**

1. When you reviewed these verses, were you able to see the progression of the prophecy regarding the demise of worship?
2. We all like what is comfortable, familiar, and non-threatening. We must be aware of dull routines. On the other hand, changing for the sake of changing doesn't ensure success, so what is the best way to invite the Lord's sphere into our lives?
3. Self-intelligence “hatching out” doctrines: does this sound like anything we ought to participate in? In other references, the Writings warn about “innovators” who seek to impose their ideas and doctrines on the church. Where is that fine line between being creative and spontaneous, and becoming “hatchers” or “innovators”?  
This reminds me of a classic argument that took place in the organized church when a debate raged on about “doctrinalists and personalists.” Those who rigidly followed doctrine were seen as unfeeling and “uptight” individuals who were short on emotional responses. The personalists saw themselves as free and caring individuals who were ready and willing to take “risks” to explore new forms of worship. Bitter feelings and words were exchanged between them. We still see some of this suspicion in the church. How do we resolve this and keep self-intelligence out of the process?

## **AMOS 6:3-6**

*Woe to you who put far off the day of doom,  
Who cause the seat of violence to come near;  
Who lie on beds of ivory,  
Stretch out on your couches,*

*Eat lambs from the flock  
And calves from the midst of the stall;  
Who sing idly to the sound of stringed instruments,  
And invent for yourselves musical instruments like David;  
Who drink wine from bowls,  
And anoint yourselves with the best ointments,  
But are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.*

## **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

### ***P&P***

- "...that it (the spiritual church) possesses in abundance all things of the church, and that they think nothing about the ruin of the church, vers. 3-6..."

### ***AE 163[4]***

- "...'beds of ivory' are fallacies of the senses on which doctrine is founded; 'to stretch themselves upon couches' is to confirm and multiply the falsities therefrom; 'to eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall, to drink out of bowls of wine and to anoint themselves with the firstlings of the oils,' is to draw the truths and goods of the Word out of the sense of its letter and to apply and falsify them. 'Not to be grieved over the breach of Joseph' is not to care that the spiritual church is perishing, and that its truths are being infringed upon. (That 'Joseph' in the highest sense signifies the Lord in respect to the Divine spiritual; in the internal sense the Lord's spiritual kingdom, thus also the spiritual church; and in the external sense the fructification of good and multiplication of truth, see AC n. 3969, 3971, 4669, 6417, 6526.)"

### ***AC 9391[5]***

- In Amos 6:3-4: "...here are described those who are in abundance of the knowledges of good and truth, and yet live an evil life; 'eating the lambs out of the flock' denotes to learn and appropriate to one's self the goods of innocence that belong to the internal or spiritual man; 'eating the calves out of the midst of the stall' denotes to learn and appropriate to one's self the goods of innocence that belong to the external or natural man. (That 'eating' denotes to appropriate...'lambs' denote the interior goods of innocence...'calves out of the midst of the stall' denote the exterior goods of innocence...Moreover the 'stall' (used for fattening) and 'fat,' signify the good of interior love..."

**AE 279[4]**

- In Amos 6:3-4: “Here those who have an abundance of the knowledges of good and truth are treated of; ‘to eat the lambs out of the flock’ signifies to imbibe the knowledges of internal good or of the spiritual man; and to ‘eat the calves out of the midst of the stall’ signifies to imbibe the knowledges of the external good or of the natural man; and ‘to cause the habitation of violence to draw near’ is to live a life contrary to charity.”

**AR 137**

- “That ‘a bed’ signifies doctrine, is from correspondence, for as the body rests in its bed, so does the mind rest in doctrine. But by ‘bed’ is signified the doctrine which every one acquires to himself either from the Word, or from his own intelligence, for therein the minds resets and, as it were sleeps. The beds in which they lie in the spiritual world, are from no other origin; for there every one’s bed is according to the science and intelligence, magnificent for the wise, mean for the unwise, and filthy for the falsifiers.”

**AR 774**

- “‘Ivory’ signifies natural truth, because it is white and can be polished, and because it protrudes from the mouth of an elephant, and likewise makes his strength....”

**AE 1146[3]**

- In Amos 6:4 “Reasonings from falsities are thus described, ‘beds of ivory’ being doctrines seemingly from rational truths, and ‘to stretch themselves upon their couches’ being to reason in favor of these from falsities.”

**AC 6188[3]**

- In Amos 6:4, 6 “...‘beds of ivory’ denote the pleasures of the lowest natural, which are those of the proud; ‘not to be grieved for the breach of Joseph,’ is to have no concern about the dissipation of good from the internal.”

**AE 448[12]**

- In Amos, “[the passage describing those who devise for themselves instruments of music like David, etc.] treats of those who counterfeit good affections in externals, and bring together for confirmation many things from the Word, and yet are interiorly evil. To counterfeit good affections in externals is signified by ‘playing upon the psaltery, devising for themselves instruments of music, and anointing themselves with the firstfruits of the

oils;’ to bring forth many things from the Word for the sake of appearances is signified by ‘drinking out of bowls of wine;’ that they have no regard for the truths of doctrine of the church, even though the church should perish by falsities, is signified by ‘they are not grieved over the breach of Joseph,’ ‘Joseph’ meaning the spiritual church, which is with those who are in the truths of doctrine.”

## **DERIVED DOCTRINE**

### *Day of Doom*

- What is meant by putting off the “day of doom?” In the positive sense, “day” means the Advent of the Lord. In the context of these passages, where the children of Israel had little regard for the perishing of the church and their counterfeiting truth, the advent of the Lord would appear to them as a day of doom. See Doctrine of the Lord 5 for references to the many meanings of the word “day.”

### *Seat of Violence*

- Causing the “seat of violence” to come near has many interesting possible meanings. A seat represents things in the natural which receive the goods and truths “inflowing from the internal.” See AC 6675.
- Coupling this with “the seat of violence,” we get a picture of “those who destroy the truths of faith and the goods of charity.” (AC 6353[8]) The attitude of indifference was the seat of violence that worked systematically to prevent the inflowing of anything good from the Lord.

### *“Singing idly to the sound of stringed instruments”*

- Singing is a way of glorifying the Lord for His wonderful liberation. See AC 8261. Here, we get a picture of the children of Israel “idly” or mindlessly singing or mouthing the words, but their hearts were not filled with a joyful melody of gratitude.
- Stringed instruments represent the exciting of the affections by truth. See AC 8337[2] for a fuller explanation. But the nexus of this verse is that the Israelites were void of any real excitement about what the Lord was doing for them.

## **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

1. With so much information given to us that we can see clearly what the Lord was saying to the children of Israel. He told them they had an abundance of all things of the church. He told them that they were counterfeiting the truths of the church. Cleverly, they were applying the literal sense of the Word so

that it would appear to justify their ends. By doing this they were offering a “seat of violence” to all incoming truths. Before truth had a chance to take hold, grow up, and cause a change in their lives, they killed the messengers of spiritual hope.

2. Their beds of ivory were well-polished forms of reasoning that lulled their minds to sleep. They appropriated for themselves the things of innocence and ruined their quality in both the internals and externals. They took the best of the “first” oils for themselves, ignoring the need to offer them up first to the Lord.
3. Therefore, the Israelites were ignoring the day of doom. They did not seek the Advent of the Lord into their hearts and mind.  
As a result, they didn’t see or care that the spiritual church was dying in their hearts and minds. Even sadder is the fact that they had plenty of spiritual resources to use, but they chose to ignore them. To use an analogy, they were starving in the midst of plenty.

## **READ AND REVIEW**

Read Amos 6:3-6.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## **QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION**

1. We could use many issues for our discussion. What specific applications to today’s issues could we place in our text to examine? Are there any indications of the “day of doom” being put off? Remember, this day of doom is to be a happy advent, but to the mind occupied with self, it seems like doom.
2. The beds of ivory make for an interesting thought. They refer to well-polished forms of reasoning that lull the mind to sleep. Can you think of examples in our world?
3. The seat of violence is something to ponder, too. How effective were the Israelites at blocking the entrance so that they stopped the in-flowing from the internal (soul)?
4. The “singing idly” is a wonderful point to ponder. Do we sing (talk) enough about the liberating power of the Lord from the forces of hell? Do we instead seem to be more prone to sing about “poor me, look at how sad my life is!”?
5. How can we help our children feel excitement for the Lord and His New Church? Historical faith can carry them just so far, and then they have to move on to a genuine experience of their own. Explanations are good, but discovery seems best and the most lasting. Do we have discovery in our educational techniques? What are some ways we can help our children find the Lord?

## **AMOS 6:7-9**

*Therefore they shall now go captive as the first of the captives,  
And those who recline at banquets shall be removed.  
The Lord God has sworn by Himself,  
The Lord God of hosts says:  
I abhor the pride of Jacob,  
And hate his palaces;  
Therefore I will deliver up the city  
And all that is in it.  
Then it shall come to pass, that if ten men remain in one house, they shall die.*

## **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

### ***P&P***

- "...that therefore all things shall perish, vers. 7-9..."

### ***AC 6297[3]***

- The reference in Amos 6:8 to "fullness" is explained as denoting "...truth and good..."

### ***AR 474[2]***

- That by "...Jehovah...swearing "by Himself" signifies...that the Divine truth testifies....and the Lord's conjunction with the church was thence represented by a covenant, such as is made between two who swear to their compact; therefore, because an oath was a part of the covenant, it is said that 'Jehovah sware;' by which...is not meant that He sware, but that the Divine truth testifies...." Amos 6:8 is cited.

### ***AE 608[2]***

- "Now as 'to swear' is only an external corresponding to the confirmation that belongs to the mind of the internal man, and is therefore significative of that... [swearing] signifies confirmation, asseveration and simply verity, or that it is true..." Amos is cited twice: Amos 6:8 and Amos 4:2.

### ***AE 750[20]***

- "Jehovah is said 'to swear by His soul' when He confirms by His Divine truth, for 'to swear' signifies to confirm, and 'the soul of Jehovah' Divine truth." Amos 6:8 is cited.

### **AC 576[2]**

- In Amos 6:8-9 “...where, speaking of remains it is said that very little would be left, being only a ‘tenth part,’ or remains of remains.”

### **AE 675[14]**

- “In Amos...(vi. 8,9) ‘The pride of Jacob and his palaces which Jehovah hates,’ signify the love of falsity and belief in it with those who are of the church, ‘pride’ meaning the love of falsity, and ‘palaces’ the falsities themselves, which are called ‘palaces’ because they belong to the proud, and because the falsities of such are embellished in external form so as to appear magnificent, although they are most vile, like huts full of rubbish and filth; ‘to shut up the city and the fullness thereof’ signifies to condemn the doctrine, because it is full of the falsities of evil, and is possessed by them, ‘city’ meaning doctrine, and ‘fullness’ the falsities of evil; therefore ‘if there remain ten men in one house they shall die’ signifies that all the truths of good with every one shall perish, ‘ten men’ meaning all truths, ‘house’ man in respect to good, and ‘to die’ to perish.”

## **DERIVED DOCTRINE**

### *Going as the First of the Captives*

- I’m not sure of the meaning of this verse. However, there are some interesting possibilities. AE 811[27] says that those who bar others from truth and good will themselves be captive to falsities. Might we assume that this verse is telling us that those who are most guilty of perverting truth and good will be the first to be captives?
- Could this be a reference to love, that it is first in end and first to go captive?

### *Reclining at Banquets*

- “... by banquets and feasts is signified conjunction, specifically initiation to conjunction...” (AC 5698)
- Reclining, the Concordance tells us, means to “press” or to “encumber” or to be “weighed down.” Probably, this represents those who seek to make the “initiation or conjunction” of spiritual food seem impractical or lacking in nourishment. Those who would “press” truth would direct others away from the Word to things that seem more interesting than doctrine, saying that it is impossible to fulfill the commandments of the Lord. The Lord, they say, is a “hard taskmaster.”

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

1. The Lord “swears” that if we break our covenant with Him, we will become captives. Hell will carry us away on its torrent of falsity. Hell will press us down with a long list of excuses why we do not read the Word and apply its teachings to our lives. They will press us to put off what is essential for our souls. Excuses will spill forth about the “style” of the Word. We will be pressed with doubts about correspondences, significatives, and representations.
2. Once evil rationalizations possess the mind, they will build “magnificent” palace walls to hide their true selves. The walls cover up the vile scenes and are “like huts full of rubbish and filth.” Remains gathered will “die” off, and as AC 576[2] tells us, “very little would be left being only... remains of remains.”

## READ AND REVIEW

Read Amos 6:7-9.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION

1. How many covenants do we have with the Lord? Was our baptism a covenant? Is Holy Supper a covenant? Is a marriage a covenant? How about the rite of confirmation?
2. Are there specific things we can do to cooperate with the Lord to keep remains alive and well? Admittedly only the Lord knows where remains are stored, but we can tune them out.
3. The walls of Jacob, instead of being protective from evil, seem to be set up to perpetuate a hoax that we are spiritual. How do we overcome the pretense so that we can be open to the Lord and get rid of the trash in our lives? How might the pretense of spirituality bar us from achieving actual spiritual life?
4. What did you think about the meaning of “reclining” being more like “pressed” or “encumbered?”
5. The Lord tells us that His burden is light, but we tend to think of it as heavy or difficult. Why? How can we come to see His way as easy or light?

## AMOS 6:10-12

*And when a relative of the dead, with one who will burn the bodies, picks up the bodies to take them out of the house, he will say to the one inside the house, “Are there any more with you?” Then someone will say, “None.” And he will say, “Hold your tongue! For we dare not mention the name of the Lord.”*

*For behold, the Lord gives a command:  
He will break the great house into bits,  
And the little house into pieces.*

*Do horses run on rocks?  
Does one plow there with oxen?  
Yet you have turned justice into gall,  
And the fruit of righteousness into wormwood.*

## **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

### ***P&P***

- “...insomuch that nothing (of the spiritual church) will remain, vers. 10-12...”

### ***AC 1488***

- Houses are compared, or likened, to “memory-knowledges that are collected.” When collected in the mind, it is like that which “frames the external man, and build(s) it up, is not unlike building a house...In Amos...(vi. 11, 12)...‘houses’ denote in like manner falsities and the derivative evils...” We can see from the latter part of this quotation why the Lord says that He was going to “break the great house into bits.”

### ***AE 519[6]***

- “In Amos...(vi. 11, 12)...‘Jehovah will smite the great house with gaps, and the little house with clefts,’ signifies much perversion and falsification of truth with the learned, and some with the unlearned, a ‘great house’ signifying a learned man, and a ‘little house’ an unlearned man; ‘gaps’ signify truths destroyed by falsities, and ‘clefts’ the same, but in a less degree...”

### ***AC 5895[4]***

- “In Amos...(vi. 12) ‘shall horses run on the rocks?’ denotes shall the truth of faith be understood? For ‘rock’ in the spiritual sense is faith....and ‘horses’ are those things which are of the understanding....‘will one plow with an oxen?’ denotes shall he do good? ‘Oxen’ being good in the natural.... That this could not be done is signified by the words which follow: ‘because ye have turned judgment into gall and the fruit of righteousness into wormwood.’”

### ***AC 9263[9]***

- “...by ‘judgment’ is signified the truth which is of faith; and by ‘righteousness,’ the good which is of charity...”

### ***AC 9857[5]***

- “In Amos...(v. 24) [we read]...‘ye turn judgment into gall....’ ‘Judgment’ denotes intelligence from Divine truth, and the consequent life.”

### ***Doctrine of Sacred Scripture 85***

- This number contains a rather long description of the meaning of the expressions “righteousness” and “judgment.” Quoting all of these references would take up quite a bit of the paper, and listing the references from the Word would be quite extensive. I therefore leave that for you to follow up on as needed.

### ***AR 410***

- “‘Wormwood’ signifies infernal falsity, from its intense bitterness, whereby it renders food and drink abominable...” Amos 5:7 and 6:12 are cited. We covered “wormwood” in our study of Amos 5:4-9. Go back and review that section if you have forgotten it.

### ***AR 668***

- AR 668 cites the signification of “judgment” and “justice.” Judgment is of Divine truth, and justice is of Divine good. Amos 5:24 is cited.

### ***TCR 51***

- *TCR 51* says that “...in the Word justice [or righteousness] is predicated of love, and judgment of wisdom...it is by means of these two that God’s government is carried on in the world...” Amos 6:12 is cited.

### ***AE 355[34]***

- “In Amos...(vi. 12)...‘Shall horses run upon the rock?’ signifies, is there any understanding of truth? ‘Shall any one plough with oxen?’ signifies, is there any perception of good? This is plainly the meaning, for it follows, ‘for ye have turned judgment into gall, and the fruit of justice into wormwood;’ ‘to turn judgment into gall,’ signifies to turn truth into falsity, and ‘to turn the fruit of justice into wormwood,’ signifies to turn good into evil.”

## DERIVED DOCTRINE

### *Gall*

- In the *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, we are told that gall is a poisonous juice extracted from the herb "Conium maculatum," and that in the Word, it is often mentioned with "wormwood." Gall is a poison, and wormwood causes one to lose a sense of what is right or wrong.

### *Relative, Family*

- Looking up the word "relative" is not helpful at this juncture. "Family" member is somewhat more helpful. Turning to the *Arcana*, we read that in the process of regeneration, all the goods and truths, or things of charity and faith, are brought together by the Lord and are represented by families. (AC 917) Therefore, could this reference in Amos 6:10 of the relative of the dead be a powerful contrast of the total burn-out of the soul to the celebration of the newness of life that should have occurred?

### *Burning the Bodies*

- The burning of the bodies I think represents the destructiveness of self love. AE 1173 describes the grief of the mind when it sees the "burning" or "punishment on account of the direful falsities that flowed from their loves." It is self-love that consumes and destroys the very essence of its victim, not the Lord.

### *The Dead*

- The question posed to them was, "Are there any more [dead] with you?" Taking stock, counting the losses, does not escape the Lord's attention. He knows the extent of our deadness, but do we?

*"Hold your tongue! For we dare not mention the name of the Lord."*

- What could this mean? I think it ties into the bold answer the Israelites gave, saying that there were no other dead within the house. Maybe they hadn't looked carefully, and maybe there was a bit of rebellion there. Evil cannot mention the Lord's name. The mere mention of His holy name would put them to flight. In other words, the "relative" of all that was good in them recognized that evil should not speak idly in the Lord's presence. "Hold your tongue" could mean, "Be careful what you say, for we are in the presence of the Lord."

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

1. As in so many stories in the literal sense, it appears in these verses as if the Lord is angry or “fed-up” with the decisions of His people. The Lord breaking up great and little houses into bits and pieces seems harsh and a “rush to judgment” until we are given the internal meaning of the text. The Lord is lovingly righteous, and His judgment is full of mercy. Love and wisdom are the means by which “...God’s government is carried on in the world.” (TCR 51) There cannot be a variance from His laws of Providence. So the great and the small will have their houses brought before His Divine “fairness.” Will they stand?
2. Their “houses” of memory-knowledges had been framed up with such gaps and flimsy falsities that the great and small houses just couldn’t stand. The foundation pieces were not solidly anchored. The Lord’s truth placed along side of these distorted frameworks just knocked their props out. Can we picture our experience in the world of spirits when our “book of life” is opened? Might there be some structures we built falling apart? Yet, we thought the world of those “great houses.”
3. Turning the Lord’s things into gall and wormwood is a serious blunder by those who turn against the Lord. They must stop offering poisonous and delusional drinks offered to themselves and others. Only the Lord can call out the dead, and only the Lord can give us the perception of good and intelligence. Otherwise, we try the silly acts of horses or oxen ploughing rocks: futile work with no returns.

## READ AND REVIEW

Read Amos 6:10-12.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION

1. Have you ever seen a “house” you thought would last forever only to see that it had to be torn down and built again? It would seem that this is par for us as humans. The problem comes when we become defensive and deny the building is in danger or we become lazy and fail to apply ourselves to the rebuilding efforts. What is your experience with this?
2. Have you ever confronted someone about their speaking disrespectfully of Divine things? Have you been looked at as a fanatic for caring so much for holy things? Have you ever wanted to say, “Hold your tongue. You don’t know not what you’re saying.”?
3. It’s interesting to consider the teaching about mixing gall in with justice. It poisons the intellect and kills the conscience so that nothing bothers us. The result is that the fruit of justice is spoiled by wormwood, causing delusions in

the rational mind. What might be some examples of this? What is the antidote to “wormwood” and “gall”?

### **AMOS 6:13-14**

*You who rejoice over Lo Debar,  
Who say, “Have we not taken Karnaim for ourselves  
By our own strength?”  
But, behold, I will raise up a nation against you,  
O house of Israel,  
Says the Lord God of hosts;  
And they will afflict you from the entrance of Hamath  
To the valley of the Arabah.*

### **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

#### ***P&P***

- “...by reason that they have acquired these things [the worst religious system] to themselves from self, vers. 13, 14.”

#### ***AC 2832***

Note: In the New King James Version, “Lo Debar” is mentioned. The *Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible* says that this name is an alternate form of “Debir.” In *Everyman’s Bible Commentary*, on page 143 in the chapter on “Hosea and Amos,” it says that “Lo-debar are two Hebrew words that are the idiom for ‘nothing’. Even in modern Hebrew one says lo-debar when he wants to say, ‘It’s nothing; it doesn’t matter; forget it.’”

- The *AC 2832* translation of Amos 6:13 agrees with that in the quote above: “Ye who rejoice in a thing of naught, who say, have we not taken to us horns by our own strength? ‘horns here denote the power of falsity’”

#### ***AC 10182[7]***

- “In Amos...(vi. 13)...by ‘horns’ is signified power, is evident, and indeed power in both senses, namely, the power of truth against falsity, and of falsity against truth....”

#### ***AE 316[21]***

- “In Amos...(vi. 13) ‘To take horns by our own strength’ signifies by the powers of self-intelligence to acquire falsities by which truths will be destroyed.” Amos 6:13 is cited.

## DERIVED DOCTRINE

*“Have we not taken Karnaim for ourselves...”*

- The Writings give us little or no help with the meaning or correspondence of this region. One *Interpreter’s Bible Dictionary* source says that Karnaim means “the horns.” That seems consistent with what we have been presented in the passages regarding the people’s boast of taking power (the horns) by their own strength.

*The affliction “from the entrance of Hamath...”*

- The Hamathites were many nations, and they signified many different idolatries. The nature of these idolatries is that they are “entirely unwilling to know internal things, and when instructed reject them...” (AC 1205)

*Arabah*

- Where is this place called Arabah? There is no mention of it in the Writings. Scholars debate its location. Some place it between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Eilat (Aqaba). Do we try to make some application? It seems better not to because our information about it is so uncertain. To “press” some application might take us away from the spiritual issues.

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

1. Under King Jeroboam II, Israel had become extremely confident in its military strength. They had been boasting about their most recent conquests. To hear from an unknown prophet that these conquests were “Lo Debar” (“of no importance”; “it doesn’t matter”; “forget it”) seemed so inappropriate. They probably responded, “Look at what we have done by our own strength. It seems evident the Lord is not upset with us. We have recaptured lands that our forefathers had possessed and then lost. We are moving forward, and other nations can see we are a military force to be feared.”  
When the Lord told them that they had lost all of their spirituality, it must have been hard to match up that failure with the events of their recent past. To be told they practiced the worst forms of idolatry didn’t seem right for the “chosen ones.”
2. How do we see this in our own life story? We get so wrapped up in the effort to get ahead in our work that we set religion aside. We face the competition in the work world and have to be “politically astute” to navigate that fine line, and we compromise our morals to avoid standing out. Talking religion is not the corporate thing to do, so we avoid it as a topic of conversation. Over the years, other priorities force religion out, and we fail to have a devotional life that has substance to it.

When this happens, we lose the “check and balance” that spirituality offers to a person living in our world, where most people want fewer and fewer restrictions to “doing it my way.” When we get into this mindset, we do feel as though we have taken the bull by the “horns” and wrestled all successes for ourselves.

3. What was the idolatry of the Hamathites? They became “entirely unwilling to know internal things, and when instructed rejected them....”  
We need to pray that this condition of mind will not come to us and infill us with its coldness toward the things of the Lord.

## **READ AND REVIEW**

Read Amos 6:13-14.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## **QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION**

At this point, we need to allow you to come up with some questions. The ability to put oneself into the text is important. I will give you one question to start you off, and then you can use the space provided to write out questions of your own. Write as many as you wish. When you are finished, please share your questions in the group discussion.

1. Are there examples of an unwillingness to know internal things present in our times?

## Chapter Seven

### AMOS 7:1

*Thus the Lord God showed me: Behold, He formed locust swarms at the beginning of the late crop; indeed it was the late crop after the king's mowings.*

### PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS

#### *P&P*

- "That the church has increased from the externals to externals, ver. 1..."

#### *AE 543[11]*

- "The 'locust' signifies...falsity in the most external things, or the densest falsity...which is one of the curses if they did not keep and do the commandments of Jehovah....and the 'locust'[denote] dense falsity from the sensual man that consumes and destroys...." Amos 7:1-2 is cited.

### Derived Doctrine

#### *Swarming Locusts*

- The swarming of locust is not covered specifically for this verse of Amos, but we can draw on other references from the Word such as *Exodus 10:14-15*, in which the locust were so thick they darkened Egypt, and they ate the residue (the late crop) of what was left from the plague of hail.
- The Writings make a point that this represents a sad period in the life of an evil person who "persuade themselves that they are in truth by faith, but they are not; they are in falsity, and are against the truth of faith." (*AC 7689*) Such a spiritual state severs all connection with the light of heaven and the "crop" of every living thing is devoured with a malicious swarming of lies thus producing a gross darkness of the mind.

#### *King*

- We need to note the good and bad representation of king. In the good sense, "king" represents being led by the divine truth and divine good from the Lord, our "king." In the bad sense, it represents those who feign obedience but really seek to rule themselves by claiming, or demanding, merit. Let this quote help us see the difference:

- "Those who have lived a good civic and moral life, but have persuaded themselves that they merit heaven by their works...have their false principles turned into such phantasies that they seem to themselves to be cutting grass, and are called grass-cutters.... They are always hoping to be taken up to heaven, and sometimes consult together how they may introduce themselves by their own power." (AC 1111)
- The locusts eat early and "late" mowings by such self-serving kings.

## Putting It All Together

1. The reading in P&P on this verse turns our attention to this teaching: "That the church has increased from externals to externals..." What does that mean to you? To answer this question, let's turn to a passage in the Arcana: "...when a man is in things external, as when he is in worldly and bodily things, then the angels are removed, and when they are removed, then nothing at all of...goods and truths appears." (AC 5897[11])
2. Increasing from externals to internals is lauded. We are told that such a progression causes a conjunction of the Lord with His church. But that is not what is happening in this prophecy. All thinking and living is from sensual and bodily things. Let's liken this process to a sand dune. Little grows on it. It offers little in the way of a firm foundation because its substance shifts with the prevailing current or wind.
3. Have you ever looked at a teaching from the Word and thought you understood the essence of the passage until popular opinions caused you to have doubts about its eternal application? Were precedents pointed out that appeared to provide exceptions to the teaching? It sometimes appears that human experience testifies against a teaching in the Word, and we need to explain away the former rigidity with modern enlightenment. "We were turning people away from the church with such hard teachings." This is an appearance, not the truth.
4. The "mowings" of modern meritorious thinking seem to hold more of an appeal than the "antiquated" teachings of the Word. There are those who want to have a feel-good experience with religion. Are we in a period of moving from externals to externals? Has the external world rationalized the Lord's Word to the point where a "swarm" of locusts plunder everything in sight, silencing the warnings of our conscience and perception?
5. Lastly, do we see evidence that there are those who keep "cutting grass" thinking that leading a civil and moral life will carry the day and earn heaven for them? How about this statement: "It doesn't matter what kind of faith we follow as long as we are kind to one another. We all worship the same God, and after all that is all that really matters in the long run." What truth and falsity are mixed in this statement?

## Read and Review

Read Amos 7:1.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## Questions to Stimulate Reflection

1. What is the first act of charity? To shun evils as sins. If we move from externals to externals, how can we even begin to fulfill this requirement? Why is the internal necessary to the existence of charity in us?
2. Have you ever done a study of what acts of worship the Lord abrogated? Please check out *AC 9349*. This quote might be of great use if a discussion should arise about the validity of rites and rituals. Old forms versus modern forms can be a heat-producing topic.  
Did you see anything in this number that would be of great use when the world or the bodily senses (logic) try to abrogate inconvenient prohibitions to their ends?
3. How flexible have the "external of externals" made us in our thinking? Why?
4. Would you see yourself as a "mower of grass"?
5. Is it necessary for us to rework the image of the church to bring those who have been hurt back into the fold of the church? What specific things would have to be looked at and possibly changed? Would those external changes eventually lead to internal changes? Are there internal changes we can make that would bring about external changes? How can we be softer, but yet true to the Word of the Lord, so that we don't have a "swarm of locust" so thick that the skies grow dark and the spiritual food of the soul is devoured?

## AMOS 7:2-6

*"And so it was, when they (the locust) had finished eating the grass of the land, that I said:*

*O Lord God, forgive, I pray!*

*Oh, that Jacob may stand,*

*For he is small!*

*So the Lord relented concerning this.*

*It shall not be, said the Lord.*

*Thus the Lord God showed me: Behold, the Lord God called for conflict by fire, and it consumed the great deep and devoured the territory.*

*Then I said: O Lord God, cease, I pray!*

*Oh, that Jacob may stand,*

*For he is small!  
So the Lord relented concerning this.  
This also shall not be, said the Lord God."*

## **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

### ***P&P***

- "...that when externals were corrupted, reparation was made, vers. 2-6..."

### ***AC 4281***

- "...in the Word 'Jacob' denotes not only Jacob, but also all his posterity... Jacob and his posterity were of such a character that with them celestial and spiritual love could not be conjoined with natural good (that is, the internal or spiritual man with the external or natural man)...for they did not know, nor were they willing to know, what the internal or spiritual man is, and therefore this was not revealed to them; for they believed that nothing exists in man except that which is external and natural. In all their worship they had regard to nothing else, insomuch that Divine worship was to them no otherwise than idolatrous..." Amos 7:2 is cited.

### ***AC 7571[2]***

- This number cites Amos 7:2 regarding the meaning of "grass and herbs." By these words are meant such things as are of the church. "...the truth which is of faith..."

### ***AC 10441[3]***

- "In these passages Jehovah is said to have 'repented,' when yet it cannot be that He repents, because He knows all things before He does them; from which it is evident that by 'repenting' is signified mercy." Amos 7:3, 6 are cited.

### ***AC 587***

- "...it is of mercy to be punished, because mercy turns all the evil of punishment into good... Mercy has its name from the fact that it delivers man from miseries and from hell..."

### ***AE 538[13]***

- "In these passages...'the abyss' and 'the depth of the sea' signify the hell where and from which are the falsities of evil; for the reason that the evil spirits who

are there, and who while they lived as men in the world were in the falsities of evil, seem to dwell as it were in the bottom of the seas, and this more deeply according to the grievousness of the evil from which was their falsity.” Amos 7:4 is cited as one of many examples.

## DERIVED DOCTRINE

*“Oh, that Jacob may stand...”*

- In AC 7068, we have this interesting quote: “...they who are in truth are as it were rigid, and stand erect as if they were hard; and when they ought to humble themselves before the Divine, they only bend the body a little; but they who are in good are as it were soft, and when they humble themselves before the Divine, they bow themselves down to the earth.”
- In AR 366, we are told that standing before God is to hear and do what He commands.
- Standing represents new life such as belong to a regenerate person. (AE 666[3])
- Somewhere in this wide range of meanings, it would appear that the Word is contrasting the state of the Israelites to that of the external man. He is broken by the “locust” events in his life, and yet he remains resistively proud and fails to give total humility to the Lord. The external man is only willing to bend the body slightly to acknowledge the mercy of the Lord.

*Jacob’s Small Size*

- In AE 696, we have an explanation of the “small and the great” fearing the name of the Lord. The “small” mean those “...who have but little knowledge of the truths and goods of the church, and ‘the great’ those who know much, thus those who worship the Lord little and much; for (small or great) is measured according to how much a man knows the truths of faith and lives according to them....”

*The Lord Relenting*

- “The Lord relented concerning this...” Could this mean that the Lord took into account how “small” Jacob was? If Jacob had been described as “great,” would the Lord’s mercy have relented?

*Conflict by Fire*

- AE 702 includes a teaching that may offer us a possible meaning of this verse. “...Where the evil are there were conflicts and disturbances of the thoughts and reasonings...respecting the goods and truths of the church.” The ranting

and ravings of hell offered up confusion and uncertainty to the worship of the Lord.

- The conflict of fire could represent how the Lord's love (fire) will consume all of these illogical ravings and disturbances. This prophecy tells us that the Lord's love or mercy will "consume" and expose the malignant insanities the evil thought they had well hidden in the deepest recesses of their dwellings or territory.

### *Repetition in the Word*

- Once again, the plea of the prophecy asks the Lord to cease and to help Jacob stand for he is small, and once again, we are told that the Lord relented. Why are these words repeated? Is it for poetical emphasis?
- We need to hear the teaching of the Writings:
  - "...there is not the least word [in the Word] that is superfluous and vain...There is therefore no repetition, except with another signification." (AC 734)
  - "...he who does not know the mystery...cannot but think...[that] repetition [is] for the sake of emphasis. But this is not so... One expression has reference to truth, the other to good; thus one has reference to the intellect...and the other to the will..." (AC 4691)
- Therefore, we must see that this second reference is not repetition; it is for the examination of the quality of the will.

### **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

1. When externals are corrupted, the Lord works to make reparations possible for His children. When the locust "finished eating the grass of the land...the Lord relented..." Evil has to run its course, and human beings have to almost hit the bottom of despair. Providence can then enter and lift us from the grip of hell's influence. Such states of despair help to break up the hard ground of the mind. The ground of our minds wants relief and protection from the barrenness hell has left us in.
2. How small or great are we? Will we stand before the Lord with rigidity and reluctance, bending so slightly to His magnificent royalty? Or will we fall prostrate before Him with a degree of softness and loving humbleness?
3. The Lord tells us that all factors of our choices (intentions) will be given proper consideration. We will be given an opportunity to see the contents of our understanding and our will. Mercy will carry a degree of "punishment" so that we may be led into good and that we may be rescued from the miseries of hell and their conflicts and worrisome disturbances.

## READ AND REVIEW

Read Amos 7:2-6.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION

1. This section covers five verses. In comparison to some of the other sections, we had little doctrinal exposition. We had to use some “derived doctrinal” application. Is this an appropriate thing for us to do? What are the positive and negative aspects of this approach?  
If you are interested in this question, get a copy of W.F. Pendleton’s *The Science of Exposition*. Starting on page 194, he has a chapter on making comparisons of words and passages that is very helpful and encouraging to the researcher.
2. Prayer groups form to pray for someone in the congregation or community. They “seem” to pray so as to get the Lord to relent over some difficulty or illness. Who is helped the most with prayer? Do you think your praying will help the problem a friend is facing? How?
3. What is your reaction to the quotation about mercy? “It is of mercy to be punished,” and mercy has its name “from the fact that it delivers us from miseries and from hell.”
4. The teachings on “repetition” make a statement about the Word. The Word is not superfluous and vain. When I reflect on this, I wonder about courses that teach the Bible as poetry or for literature appreciation. What spiritual effects might come from this kind of instruction? What effect will there be on organized religion if it doesn’t recognize the spiritual reasons for repetition?
5. What are some other things in the Word that appear on the surface to make no sense? What might be present “under the surface”? How can you find out?

## AMOS 7:7-9

*Thus He showed me: Behold, the Lord stood on a wall made with a plumb line, with a plumb line in His hand. And the Lord said to me, “Amos, what do you see?” And I said, “A plumb line.” Then the Lord said:*

*“Behold, I am setting a plumb line  
In the midst of My people Israel;  
I will not pass by them anymore.  
The high places of Isaac shall be desolate,  
And the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid to waste.  
I will rise with the sword against the house of Jeroboam.”*

## PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS

### *P&P*

- “...when the [corruption of] inmost things were reached, then all things were destroyed, because they were against God, vers. 7-9...”

### *Coronis 56*

- This number quotes Amos 7:9 and simply says, “‘Land,’ here is for the church.”

## DERIVED DOCTRINE

*The Lord standing on a wall “made with a plumb line, with a plumb line in His hand.”*

- A wall has the following representations:
  - That which withholds falsities on all sides. See AC 8206.
  - The walls of Jericho signify the false reasonings that defended evils. See AC 8815.
  - Walls signify the Word in its literal sense, which protects the doctrine of the Lord’s New Church. See AR 898.
- Spiritual character and integrity are important to the Lord. His ways are straight and uncompromising with falsity. He seeks to protect all with His walls of truth. His walls are there for our protection so as to withhold, or keep out, evil on all sides.
- Honest mistakes are pardonable when we have the resolve to correct mistakes when we find them. That is not what Israel was doing. They took the literal sense of the Word and were “leaning” or “bending” the walls of the Lord to suit their own ends. The Lord could not “pass by.” He couldn’t pretend He didn’t see their unfaithful use of the literal sense. Nothing slips by His Divine awareness, and that is a comfort for our souls. The falsity of hell will not catch Him sleeping or being inattentive.
- Accountability, estimations, and measurements were needed to show how foolishly unstable their spiritual walls were. “...for all measures and weights, in the Word, signify the estimation of truth and good.” (AR 313)

*The plumb line is in the Lord’s hand, and Amos is asked to acknowledge it.*

- I’m emphasizing this passage because it is a powerful concept and image to reflect on.
- When there is mention of the Lord’s hand, AR 55 gives a general principle to follow:
  - “...the presence of the Lord with man is adjunction, and thus conjunction by contiguity; and this contiguity is near and fuller in

proportion as man loves the Lord, that is, does His commandments....by 'laying His right hand upon him,' is signified inspiring him with His life."

- The principle here seems to be that the Lord wanted Amos to see and recognize what was in His hand. Measurement was needed, and the spiritual wanted to bring about a state of adjunction through some natural means (Amos, as His prophet) for the purpose of contiguity and inspiring new life among the people.

*"The high places of Isaac shall be desolate."*

- It seems we get a hint about this passage when we use the principle, taught in AC 85, that explains the meaning of being "'borne over the lofty things of the earth, and [being fed] with the heritage of Jacob.' Isaiah 53:14. This represents enjoying internal peace and happiness...and at the same time external tranquility and delight..."
- Isaac represents spiritual love, or charity. See AC 1025[2].
- Isaac represents the "rational man" within every person. See AC 1893.
- Isaac represents the Lord's interior man, or His Divine Rational. See AC 1950.
- The loss of Isaac's high places (using the doctrine as explained in AC 85) seems to indicate the loss of an inner peace of rationality and the desolation of clear thinking.

*The Sanctuaries of Israel Laid to Waste*

- Sanctuaries signify the truth of heaven and the church. See AC 8330.
- Sanctuaries signify the Word. See AE 724.
- Sanctuary signifies the mercy of the Lord. See AC 57.
- AE 632[8] says that when the sanctuary is trampled down, this signifies "to destroy the truths of doctrine from the Word..."

## **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

1. We worked hard on these passages. It appears to me that our summary is pretty clear. The church and the children of Israel were in deep trouble. What had been intended to protect them and to wall out evil from every side was so compromised with falsity that the Lord saw that it was time to bring measurement and accountability upon His people. True love would not turn its back on their disorders. The Lord would not pass by. His plumb line was going to be in the midst of them.
2. P&P teaches us that when corruption reaches to inmost things, all things are destroyed. Israel had reached that point, and the Divine needed to confront the hells.

## READ AND REVIEW

Read Amos 7:7-9.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION

1. Do you know what a plumb line is? How is it used? Have you heard a sermon on the plumb line? What do you think about the meaning of walls and their spiritual applications to your life?
2. We use the expression "mental walls" in conversation. Have you ever "walled someone out" or been "walled out" by someone close to you? How is this like or unlike what the Lord does with His walls?
3. Spiritual integrity, being morally straight, being level with everyone are necessary and useful qualities in a person. Are you able to mentally picture yourself being level with the Lord? Do we sometimes try to pretend that He doesn't see or know about our disorders? Why is that dangerous?
4. There is a saying that goes like this: A mistake is not a mistake unless we refuse to correct it. If we find a crooked wall, are we likely to tear it down or make excuses why it is crooked and necessary that it be that way?
5. People sometimes talk about the difference between healthy boundaries, or walls, and unhealthy boundaries. Earlier, we talked about being "walled out" by someone you love. This kind of wall can hurt. What are some examples of healthy walls? How can we maintain them?

## AMOS 7:10-13

*"Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, "Amos has conspired against you in the midst of the house of Israel. The land is not able to bear all his words. For thus Amos has said:*

*"Jeroboam shall die by the sword,  
And Israel shall surely be led away captive  
From their own land."*

*Then Amaziah said to Amos:*

*"Go, you seer!  
Flee to the land of Judah.  
There eat bread,  
And there prophesy.  
But never again prophesy at Bethel,  
For it is the king's sanctuary,  
And it is the royal residence.""*

## PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS

### *P&P*

- “[Those things that are against God will also be]...against all things pertaining to doctrine, vers. 10-13.”

### *AC 1453[3&4]*

- “...for man is a Bethel, that is a House of God, and also a gate of heaven, when he is in the celestial things of knowledges. When a man is being regenerated, he is introduced by means of the knowledges of spiritual and celestial things...After Jeroboam had profaned Bethel...it had an opposite representation....” Amos 7:12-13 are cited.

### *AC 2832[10]*

- “‘Bethel’ is the Divine Good, and is therefore called the ‘king’s sanctuary,’ and the ‘house of the kingdom’ (Amos vii. 13).”

## DERIVED DOCTRINE

### *Amaziah*

- Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, represents the perverted church. (AE 624[10]) Historically, Amaziah was a priest who backed Jeroboam II when he instituted a nationalistic, idolatrous cult at Bethel. The prophecy spoken through Amos must have troubled him greatly. He feared that Amos’ words might rally certain rebels who would cause trouble to him and his authority and wealth. As is the way of evil, Amaziah sought to discredit and silence the Lord’s truth with lies, distortion, and subtlety.
- Amaziah called Amos a traitor and claimed his words were proof of his conspiracy against the king of Israel.

### *Jeroboam*

- Jeroboam’s reign as king of the northern kingdom was filled with excesses. He ignored the plight of the poor, justice was ignored, luxury was worshiped and morality was a sham.

*“The land is not able to bear all of his words.”*

- In AC 620, we are taught that “land” signifies various things depending on the preceding correspondence. For instance, AC 2571 explains that land may signify the internal man of the church; the region where the church is; the

church itself; the doctrine of love and charity where the faith of the church resides.

- Amaziah the priest spoke these words. A priest's use is to lead others to the good of life. Therefore, we might assume that this preceding correspondence is speaking about the charity of the church having no room in its idolatrous system to "bear" the words of the Lord. The church had no room for love of the Lord and love of the neighbor.

*"Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall surely be led away captive...."*

- A sword signifies self-love "with its insane cupidities and persuasions, [and such]...are carried away to corporeal and earthly things...[a sword] signifies the desolation of man such that he sees nothing that is good and true, but mere falsities and things contrary..."(AC 309)
- If the "king," as a representative of ruling loves, is killed by self-love, then sadly, he leads his people into captivity, too. His insanity removes them from "their own land." He leads them out of the region where the church's faith, love, and charity reside.

*"Go, you seer!"*

- What are we to do with this term "seer"? Is it synonymous with "prophet"? I can't find a direct teaching on the difference between "seer" and "prophet". However, here is an interesting teaching to consider: "We read of the prophets that they were in vision, and that Jehovah spoke to them. When they were in vision they were not in the body, but in their spirit, in which state they saw things such as are in heaven. But when Jehovah spoke to them, they were in the body, and heard Him speaking. These two states of the prophets should be carefully distinguished. In their state of vision, the eyes of their spirit were opened, and those of their body shut...." (Doctrine of the Lord 52, emphasis added)
- Could Amaziah, not realizing what he was saying, have been used by the Lord to testify that the words of Amos were really of things such as are in heaven?

*"Flee to the land of Judah. There eat bread."*

- Amaziah felt a great deal of indignation against Amos. When we despise someone, we want them out of our sight. The rational and emotional feelings of Amaziah willed to subjugate the Divine truth for its own comfort and would not humble itself to the Lord. See AC 1923 for a fuller explanation.
- Amaziah, even though he was a corrupted priest, was used by the Lord for good. It reminds us of the story of the Wisemen losing sight of the star. They went to the corrupt priests of Herod and got the help necessary to find the star again.

- Telling Amos to flee to the land of Judah has wonderful correspondences. AC 3880 and 3881 explain the inner meaning of Judah. Judah signifies the Lord and the Divine of His Love; the Word as it relates to the Lord's celestial kingdom; and the doctrines of the Word.
- Eating bread in Judah means to appropriate every good that would provide for man's reciprocity to the Lord, and to the neighbor. These were the essentials missing in Bethel.

*"...never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is the royal residence."*

- Behind this bold statement, we have a recurring question for all times. Who will serve you as king? Is this life mine or the Lord's? Is the world our sanctuary? Are pleasures in the royal residence?

## **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

1. Hell is not willing to look on the face of prophecy. It wants to banish it from its presence.  
Hell is afraid that if we listen to the teaching of doctrine, we might rally our forces to expel it from the sanctuary of idolatry.
2. Literally, we need to use the sword of truth to kill the self-love leadership of Jeroboam. The "seer" of heavenly doctrine needs to share the vision of the spirit to restore within us the reciprocal and mutual love to the Lord and the neighbor.  
"If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever." (John 6:51)

## **READ AND REVIEW**

Read Amos 7:10-13.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## **QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION**

Please note that there are questions throughout the "Passages From the Writings" section. Please use them for this section, and add at least two questions of your own to practice your Word-study skills.

## **AMOS 7:14-16**

*Then Amos answered, and said to Amaziah:  
"I was no prophet,  
Nor was I a son of a prophet,*

*But I was a sheepbreeder  
And a tender of Sycamore fruit.  
Then the Lord took me as I followed the flock,  
And the Lord said to me,  
'Go prophesy to My people Israel.'  
Now therefore, hear the word of the Lord:  
You say, 'Do not prophesy against Israel,  
And do not spout against the household of Isaac.'*

## **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

### ***P&P***

- "...so that there was no longer any doctrine, vers. 14-16."

### ***AE 624[10]***

- "In Amos...(vii. 14-17) 'To prophesy against Israel, and to drop against the house of Isaac,' signifies to refute those of the church who are in the falsities of evil, 'to prophesy' signifying to teach and refute, and 'Israel' and 'the house of Isaac' signifying the church. Because the falsities of evil are what must be refuted, this is said to Amaziah, who represented the perverted church..."

## **DERIVED DOCTRINE**

### *Refuting of the Falsities of the Church: Amos Answering Amaziah's Rebuke*

- To illustrate the demise of enlightenment in the church, Amos tells them that he is neither a prophet nor one of the sons of the prophets. Those who would have been chosen by the Lord were so far into disorder that "there was no longer any doctrine." So the Lord called a man whose uses would signify the needs of the church.
- We mentioned Amos' two uses in the introduction. A shepherd represents one who exercises charity and is protects innocence. The Israelites as a flock were not being cared for by the priests of the church. They were vulnerable to spiritual predators of all kinds.
- Amos, as a "pincher" or pruner of the Sycamore tree, illustrated what a poor quality of fig tree (obedience) Israel represented: poor quality, tasteless figs that most people ignored. The Lord sought to refine them and turn their evil into something good, in spite of their stubborn and rebellious nature. The Lord, through Amos, spoke words of truth that refuted the contempt and intolerance of Amaziah.

## READ AND REVIEW

Read Amos 7:14-16.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

1. Do we need to draw this section to a fuller summary? Are the two quotes from *P&P* and *AE 624[10]* enough of an explanation? The Lord replied and refuted Amaziah's stout defense of the falsities in the life of the church. The doctrine of the church was gone. Its demise was the result of all the things the Israelites had allowed their king, their priests, and their hearts to destroy within the church.

## QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION

1. As I wrote that last paragraph, I felt a deep sense of sorrow. The children of Israel had the great use of being a representative church to the world. Instead of fulfilling this commission, they tried to turn it to self-love. What lessons may we draw from these chapters that we can apply to our church and uses?
2. The Lord answered Amaziah, "Do not...Do not..." This is a stern warning. It is an evaluation of the priesthood. What I hear behind these passages is that the Lord was telling Amaziah not to speak words that dishonored Him. I found myself wishing the Lord would speak similar things to our age. (Of course, I believe He is speaking through His Second Coming) What would you list as the most important things we hear Him saying to us? Where and how do we hear them?
3. As we know, when someone does not want to hear you, they will think of many reasons why they shouldn't. Amaziah did not want to hear Amos, and he came up with reasons why Amos should be silent. The reasons were not true, but they must have seemed plausible to Amaziah. What happens when we mix anger, or disorder, with "plausible" reasoning? What makes the reasoning "plausible"? What is the greatest danger to us when we think this way? What are some other dangers?

## AMOS 7: 17

*Therefore thus says the Lord:  
"Your wife shall be a harlot in the city;  
Your sons and daughters shall fall by the sword;  
Your land shall be divided by survey line;  
You shall die in a defiled land;*

*And Israel shall surely be led away captive  
From his own land."*

## **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

### ***P&P***

- "...that the church with all things belonging to it will perish, vers. 17."

### ***AE 624[10]***

- "[Amaziah's wife] 'shall be a harlot' signifies the falsification and adulteration of the Word; 'his sons and daughters shall fall by the sword' signifies that the truths and goods of the church will be destroyed by the falsities of evil; and 'the land shall be divided by line' signifies that the church and everything belonging to it will be scattered." Amos 7:14, 17 are cited.

### ***AC 9854[3]***

- "...in the Word 'cords' (lines) also signify portions of inheritance and of land, for the reason that measurements were made with cords...." Amos 7:17 is one of the references cited.

## **DERIVED DOCTRINE**

### ***Dying in a Defiled Land***

- Dying in a defiled land seems to speak of a place where goods and truths are adulterated, namely, hell and its land of bogs, quicksand, and its awful stench, which are well documented for us in *Heaven and Hell*. Those who live there love the dank abodes, and they could not think of being elsewhere.
- Those who follow the likes of Amaziah will find themselves enslaved to falsity, and they will lose that spot in heaven that the Lord had reserved for them, a spot that only they could have filled. Each of them is "led away captive from his own land."

## **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

1. Have you ever heard someone talk about "victimless acts"? The premise of this idea is that if two people freely consent to be sexually intimate, and they are discrete about it, no harm has been done. The reasoning, to them, is clear: What one does with one's body should not be of concern to others if "no harm" is done. Are such acts truly "victimless"? Who or what might be the victim?

2. Amaziah's wife, the adulteration of the Word, is still a harlot on the streets of the doctrinal city. People are being defrauded and lied to. Being "street smart" is lauded as a virtue when in fact it is often a hardness of heart that lacks compassion for the neighbor. "Do others before they do you" is a twisting of the Lord's Golden Rule. Innocence is always a target of hell.
3. Sons and daughters represent the "births" out of the conjugal principle: the conjunction of good and truth applied to use. When we ignore the Word of the Lord our "births" become casualties of the sword of self-love. If we fail to be "keepers" of the Word, we will eventually be divided by the cord of measurement, and we will lose the eternal inheritance the Lord would lovingly give us. It is hard to believe that some prefer, and allow, the slavery of the mind to lead them to a land that is defiled.

## **READ AND REVIEW**

Read Amos 7:17.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## **QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION**

1. Does the theme "Paradise Lost" seem to be an ageless experience that must repeat itself? Why doesn't the experience of one loss of paradise cure the rest of us from risking paradise again?
2. Think of someone you love very much. Imagine this person preparing a special gift for you, deciding what would suit you best, and spending love and effort preparing it. Imagine this person's happy, excited face as you begin to open this gift. Imagine what that face would look like if you threw down the gift and trampled it. Think of the Lord in those personal terms, and imagine His grief at any rejection of the special places He has made for us in heaven. Talk about this image and your special place in heaven.
3. Has the Lord begun His work with the "remnant" to build the New Church?
4. Have you dealt with a "there's no harm..." attitude toward this or that license or liberty the proprium seeks to foist on the conscience? What makes this simple or difficult?

## Chapter Eight

### AMOS 8:1

*Thus the Lord God showed me: Behold, a basket of summer fruit.*

### PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS

#### *P&P*

- “That some new [element] of the church will arise, vers. 1...”

### DERIVED DOCTRINE

*“Thus the Lord showed me... a basket of summer fruit.”*

- We read in AC 9996 that a “basket” has a signification “...as being the sensuous because the sensuous is the ultimate of man’s life, and in the ultimate are stored up all the interior things in order...”
- “Summer” indicates that this is representative of the fullness of the church. (DLW 73)
- For “fruit,” we need to look at its positive meaning: “...good works are the fruit of faith in the external sense...but that these good works have no life unless they proceed from charity; and that thus the fruit of faith in the proximate interior sense is charity. But as charity or love toward the neighbor ought to proceed from love to the Lord, this love is the fruit of faith in the internal sense; and as all love is from the Lord, it is the Lord Himself.” (AC 1873)

### PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

1. This verse describes, not so much the fullness of Israel’s potential, but what will come from the establishment of the New Church. It will be a basket of summer fruit. The fruits of the New Church will be beneficial to the neighbor and most importantly to the Lord. How much potential will the New Church have? Its “sensual ultimates” will be full. Its good works and its “summer” will enhance the ripening of all the fruits of faith. It will bring all manner of fruit and the healing of the nations with its leaves.
2. When the Lord told Amos to look and tell Him what he saw, we have a clue that the Lord was about to pronounce or reveal a judgment, an evaluation or accountability to see what they had done with what they had. How would their charity measure up? Would it be a charity proceeding from the influx of the Lord? Would their charity, or fruit, be sweet, or lifeless and tasteless?

3. "The Lord showed me." We will get the answers to all of these questions from the penetrating light of the Lord. There will be no darkened corners where things escape His notice.  
"In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." (John 1:4-5)

## **READ AND REVIEW**

Read Amos 8:1.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## **QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION**

1. How well do we handle evaluations? Do we feel most of our ratings are fair? Are evaluations necessary?
2. Don't we like to hear our strengths lauded but dislike hearing our weaknesses mentioned? Is this also true when we evaluate ourselves?
3. What about our spiritual baskets? Do we feel they have summer fruits in them?
4. Some people will have smaller baskets than others. Does the size of the basket matter, or is it what we do with what we have?
5. While Joseph was in prison, he interpreted the dreams of the butler and the baker. The butler's life was spared. The baker was hanged. The baker's dream had birds eating bread out of his "three white baskets" (or "three baskets with holes in them"). The Writings tell us that these two men represent the understanding and the will. The butler represents the understanding and the baker represents the will. The understanding (butler) could have its ways corrected. The perversion of the will (baker) is not as easily corrected. In AC 5077-5078, we read that the baker represents the external sensual, the internals of which did not terminate in use to the Lord or the neighbor. Love of self robbed what was spiritual from the will.  
Does any of this story from the Word seem to apply to this prophecy given to Amos?
6. Our understanding of this verse requires a positive prayer. We need to invite the Lord to show us our baskets so that we can bring the "sensuous" things of life to the higher order of the Lord's priority.

## **Amos 8:2-3**

*And He said, "Amos, what do you see?" So I said, "A basket of summer fruit."  
Then the Lord said to me:*

*The end has come upon My people Israel;  
I will not pass by them anymore.*

*And the songs of the temple  
Shall be wailing in that day,  
Says the Lord God  
Many dead bodies everywhere,  
They shall be thrown out in silence.*

## **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

### ***P&P***

- “...that then will be the end of the old church, vers. 2, 3...”

### ***Doctrine of the Lord 4***

- “...the expressions ‘that day,’ ‘in that day,’ and ‘in that time;’ in which, by ‘day,’ and ‘time,’ is meant the Lord’s advent.” Among the many illustrations of these phrases, Amos 8:3, 9, and 13 are cited.

### ***Scripture Confirmations N. IX 4***

- Amos 8:2-3 are quoted in here, referring to how the day of Jehovah shall be upon every one that is proud and haughty.

## **DERIVED DOCTRINE**

*“The end has come upon My people Israel”*

- These words seem to say that the Israelites had so far removed themselves from the truths and goods of the Lord that they were destroying their vital internals. Their hearts were hardened to the prompting of the Lord. The Lord did not create this ending. This rebellious nation brought about its own end. The Lord constantly wants His children to live, but if they refuse to listen, He has to tell them that their end is here. Amazingly, He tells them without anger. Notice how this verse has a tender phrase, “My people Israel.” Anger would have omitted such tenderness.
- “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not!” (Matthew 23:27)
- “And you would not!” That attitude seems to capture the meaning of “the end has come upon My people.” It was this darkness that moved the Lord to make His first advent. If He had delayed any longer, it would have been all over, spiritually, for the human race.

*"I will not pass by them anymore."*

- The Writings offer us several passages where "to pass" represents positive experiences. To "pass by" means to receive Divine influx into the will and understanding. (AC 683) It also signifies to feel, and to have, peace. (AC 3170) It signifies having the ability to judge things from truth. (AC 6510) In another passage, it means to know and to perceive the quality of things. (AC 3992)
- Does "I will not pass by them anymore" mean that the Israelites had cut themselves off from the Lord's influx? Had they lost that inner peace? Were they so blind with ambition that they lost the ability to judge and to sense the inner quality of things?

*"...the songs of the temple shall be wailing in that day."*

- We cited the following number before in our study, and it is one we need to think more about when we sing in our worship services.
- This number, AC 8261, tells us that the nature of singing is let the heart pour forth its affection for the Lord's glorification so that we will be inspired to celebrate His victory over hell so we see and believe how much His liberation frees us from hell's slavery.
- That's the positive side. Israel's spiritual death took away the joyfulness of such singing. They saw nothing of the Lord's redemption. They thought only of the moment and had little assurance that there was spiritual life after death. To the ears of the Lord, their songs probably sounded like wailing, morbid, pessimistic, and monotonous tunes.

*"Many dead bodies everywhere"*

- Where might we begin with this quote? The body subsists through its soul; wherefore, everything in the body is representative of its soul. See AC 1807[3].
- Could we take this idea and apply it to our text? The soul of Israel was not in a living and vibrant use for the Lord. "Many dead bodies (souls) everywhere" seems to cry out that the light of truth was flickering, and almost extinguished, in the winds of falsity. The preponderance of indifference ruled for the time being.

*"They shall be thrown out in silence."*

- AE 687[11] seems to sum up the meaning of this passage when it quotes Isaiah 47:5 "Sit in silence and enter into darkness..." as meaning to be in falsities, and thence in damnation. Israel might have imagined their thinking was well-reasoned and powerful in its philosophical logic. But before the Lord, their best was silence. How sad for a people who had so much given to them. They were a full basket of summer fruit.

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

I feel we did this in the above section. We had so much to derive from the passages because we didn't have direct teachings to work with, and therefore the section carried itself in the way of summation throughout our research.

## READ AND REVIEW

Read Amos 8:2-3.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION

1. Does the Lord still "pass by" in your mind? Do we get a sense that influx flows into our will and understanding?  
Do we feel the peace that comes from trusting in His providence?  
Do we have the ability to judge "things" from truth?
2. Are we "singing" songs that sound like wailing or are excited about the Lord's redemptive work and spiritual liberation?
3. How can we keep ourselves from being like dead bodies everywhere? How can the soul keep its youth and vitality?
4. The voice of silence sounds so sad. What can we do to have voices that will be dignified and acceptable to the Lord's ears?

## AMOS 8:4-6

*Hear this, you who swallow up the needy,  
And make the poor of the land fail,  
Saying:  
"When will the new moon be past,  
That we may sell grain?  
And the Sabbath,  
That we may trade wheat?  
Making the ephah small and the shekel large,  
Falsifying the scales by deceit,  
That we may buy the poor for silver,  
And the needy for a pair of sandals-  
Even sell the bad wheat?"*

## PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS

### *P&P*

- “...when there is nothing but the adulteration of good and truth, vers. 4-6...”

### *AC 8540[2]*

- “...‘an ephah’ denotes good...because by it and by an omer were measured dry things that served for food, such as wheat, barley, fine flour; and by things that are used for food are signified goods...” Amos 8:5 is cited.

### *AE 373[5]*

- “As a just estimation and exploration of good and truth are signified in the Word by ‘measures,’ it was commanded that the measures should be just, with no fraud about them.... So justice, where it means the estimation and exploration of men in accordance with the quality of good and truth in them, is everywhere in the Word expressed by scales and balances of various kinds, and by ‘ephahs,’ ‘omers,’ ‘homers,’ ‘seas,’ ‘hins’...and injustice is expressed by ‘scales and balances of fraud and deceit’ (as in...Amos viii. 5...)”

## DERIVED DOCTRINE

*“Hear this, you who swallow up the needy”*

- In AC 5217, we find an explanation of the thin ears of corn “swallowing” up the seven fat and full ears in Pharaoh’s dream. “...this signifies that the memory-knowledges of no use banished the good memory-knowledges... the ‘fat and full ears,’ as being memory-knowledges into which the things of faith and charity could be applied...” (Emphasis added)
- The swallowing up of the needy indicates a diversion of spiritual things away from the soul. Instead of placing a priority on things of the spirit, they had a higher priority for self or the sensual comfort needs.
- When the quality of the spiritual life is in a state of “no use,” the “poor of the land” will feel the effect of this spiritual apathy. The “land” is representative of the mind. If the soul languishes in a state of need, the mind will fail to discriminate between what “is” and what “is not.”

*“When will the new moon be past...”*

- From research into the meaning of the “new moon,” it appears that the Israelites were involved in the worship of a pagan moon god. Monthly worship was made to a male deity named “Yarah.” The records of antiquity indicate that the followers of this cult were in Palestine and Syria. In spite of

the teachings of Deuteronomy 4:19 and 17:3 forbidding worship of the moon, or any other heavenly body, the Israelites practiced these pagan rites, ignoring the warnings. Some people offered sacrifices to “Yarah” in the midst of the temple when the “new moon” occurred, and no one seemed to object to this obvious disregard of the Lord’s directive.

- This prophecy uttered by Amos not only exposes their pagan worship, but highlights their superficial devotion to the pagan deity. They couldn’t wait to get the “new moon” sacrifice over with so they could get back to their profitable cheating system of false weight measurements.

### *Trading Wheat on the Sabbath*

- “Trading” represents the effort to secure knowledges for self and to communicate them. (AC 4453) In the good sense, the “Sabbath” represents a state of peace or rest from temptation. (AC 853) In Matthew 24:20, we find a reference to someone taking “flight from the Sabbath,” which represents an effort to remove one’s self from the good of love and innocence. (AC 3755[2])
- Trading “wheat,” in the good sense, represents trying to advance in the state of love and charity. (AC 3941)
- Might we derive from these teachings that this was representative of how the Israelites traded off the essentials of doctrine and soothed themselves with how “acceptable” their expanded worship of the “new moon” was because others were doing it, too? They sold, or talked, themselves out of the good of love and innocence the Lord offered them, in the true sense of trading on the “Sabbath day.”
- In the parable of the merchant seeking goodly pearls, when he found the pearl of great value, he “sold” all that he had to purchase the pearl. We are taught that this represents ridding ourselves of the self love that would prevent us from purchasing the pearl. The Israelites were not interested in offering this gift of sacrifice to the Lord. They saw no profit or advancement in such honest measurements. They only wanted to find or hear things that would confirm or affirm what they were doing.

*“Making the ephah small...the shekel large...and falsifying the scales by deceit...”*

- AE 373[5] calls our attention to the meaning of this passage. The Israelites’ sense of justice was gone. They were willing to go to any extreme to adulterate the good and truth of the Word. They lived by the “scales and balances of fraud and deceit.”

### *Weights and Measurements*

- While we are considering weights and measurements, let’s consider this teaching from AC 5658: “Weights and measurements are frequently mentioned in the Word, but, in the internal sense, they do not signify weights

and measurements, but...weights signify states of a thing as to good, and measurements, the states of a thing as to truth.”

- Those who cheated the poor and needy had a code of life that allowed them to buy the “poor” for silver and the needy for a pair of sandals and even sell inferior products such as spoiled wheat. Profit took precedence over love of the neighbor.
- Have you ever heard someone interviewing a famous person, and they ask them, “What words would you like to have on your grave stone?” Certainly, we would not want, “Here lies a person whose scales and balances were measured in fraud and deceit, who sold off truth for profit and the poor for a pair of sandals.”
- We should not forget as well the interview with the Lord’s angels when we arrive in the spiritual world. What is their first question to the newly arrived? **What did you love?** Where your heart is, there will your treasure be.

## **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

We summarized many points in the above section, but it would be valuable to you to engage in some reflection of your own about these verses and what summary you would construct to help you remember key elements of these verses. Use the space provided to write down at least two summary points you derived from the lesson.

## **READ AND REVIEW**

Read Amos 8:2-3.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## **QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION**

1. In some sense, can we identify with Israel being drawn into a pagan worship of the “new moon”? The moon represents faith. It is supposed to reflect the light of the sun. If the Lord is not the source of our light, what is? There are so many things trying to take the place of the Lord as the way to find an inner peace. It shouldn’t be hard for us to think of a similar issue.
2. Justice is the means of exploring the quality of good and truth. How often do we try to “tip the scales and balances” in our favor? Facing the intent of our actions is not always easy, and we look for others who are having trouble, too. It gives us comfort and a ready excuse for not taking on the unfair nature of self-love. What do you think about this issue?
3. What meaning or application can we make with the teachings about selling off the poor, or getting a pair of sandals as an even exchange for the life of the poor?  
Remember, the feet represent the natural, that which we walk on all day long. How do we apply true measurements to the practical events of our lives?

The sandal represents what we use to protect the feet from painful injuries. Is there a positive sense to purchasing “sandals”? Is there a negative sense of “sandals” we need to avoid?

4. It is interesting to note the representation of the weight system: ephahs, omers, homers, seas, and hins. The shekel is also mentioned. Isn't it awesome to think that in the spiritual world we will have all the “time” we need to study their fuller meaning and application to the spiritual and celestial sense? Do you think our modern systems of weights and measures have correspondences?
5. “Selling bad wheat” seems to indicate callousness toward good and truth. Is there anything that you can relate this to? Can the food for the soul be tainted with a spoiled quality?

### **AMOS 8:7-10**

*“The Lord has sworn by the pride of Jacob:  
'Surely I will never forget any of their works.  
Shall the land not tremble for this,  
And everyone mourn who dwells in it?  
All of it shall swell like the river,  
Heave and subside  
Like the River of Egypt.  
And it shall come to pass in that day,' says the Lord God,  
That I will make the sun go down at noon,  
And I will darken the earth in broad daylight;  
I will turn your feasts into mourning,  
And all your songs into lamentation;  
I will bring sackcloth on every waist,  
And baldness on every head;  
I will make it like mourning for an only son,  
And its end like a bitter day.”*

### **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

#### ***P&P***

- “...that therefore they will perish in the day of judgment, vers. 7-10...”

#### ***AR 503***

- “Egypt signifies the natural man in conjunction with the spiritual, and thus the affection of truth and thence science and intelligence; but in the opposite sense, it signifies the natural man separated from the spiritual, and then the pride of one's own intelligence, and thence insanity in spiritual things....[by

the plagues of Egypt] hell is signified.... Hence it is evident, what is meant by...'being drowned by the river of Egypt' (Amos viii. 8; ix. 5)."

***AE 654[75]***

- "All this describes how the natural man is vastated, which takes place when he casts away from himself all the truths and goods of the church, and imbibes falsities and evils, until there is no longer any truth or good of the church remaining....it can be seen what is signified by: -...'Being drowned by the river of Egypt' (Amos viii. 8; ix. 5)."

***AC 6693[5]***

- "...the 'earth' which shall be 'shaken' denotes the church...'to be overwhelmed as by the river of Egypt' denotes to perish by falsities..." Amos 8:8-9; Amos 9:5 are cited.

***AC 9642[4]***

- "In Amos (viii. 9) 'I will make the sun go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the day of light'...denotes the extinguishing of all the light of truth from the Word."

***AR 53***

- "In these passages by 'sun' is not meant the sun of this world, but the Sun of the angelic heaven, which is the Divine love and the Divine wisdom of the Lord; those are said to be 'obscured,' 'darkened,' 'covered,' and 'blackened' when there are evils and falsities with man. Hence it is evident, that similar things are meant by the Lord's words, where He speaks of the consummation of the age, which is the last time of the church..." Amos 8:9 is one of the references cited.

***AR 476***

- "...day and night, morning and evening, summer and winter, constitute time in this world, and when understood in the spiritual sense, they constitute the states of the church; therefore when these states no longer exist, there is no church; and when there is then no church, when there is no longer any good and truth, thus when the light of truth is thick darkness...'there is time no longer.'" Amos 8:9 is cited..

***AE 401[16]***

- “In Amos:- (viii. 9) ‘It shall come to pass in that day, that I will cause the sun to set at noon, and I will darken the earth in a day of light.’ This signifies that the church, where the Word is from which it might be known what is good and true, there is nevertheless nothing but evil and falsity. ‘To cause the sun to set,’ and ‘to darken the earth,’ signify the evil of life, and the falsity of doctrine in the church; for ‘the rising of the sun’ signifies the good of love, which is the good of the life, and ‘the setting of the sun’ signifies the evil of love, which is the evil of the life; and ‘the darkening of the earth’ signifies the consequent falsity of doctrine, ‘darkness’ signifying falsities, and ‘the earth’ the church; ‘at noon,’ and ‘in the day of light,’ signify when there might be the knowledges of good and truth, because they have the Word, ‘noon’ signifying where there are the knowledges of good, and the ‘day of light’ where there are the knowledges of truth.”

***AC 3693[2]***

- “In Amos:-...(viii. 9, 10) ‘to cause the sun to go down at noon’ denotes obscurity as to truth with those who are in the knowledges of good and truth....”

***AC 4779[2]***

- “In Amos:-...(viii. 10) where ‘bringing up sackcloth upon all loins’ denotes mourning over destroyed goods; ‘all loins’ denotes all the goods of love.”

***AC 7093[5]***

- “That there was to be gladness in the feasts, and thus that ‘to hold a feast’ is to worship from a glad mind...” Amos 8:10 is used as a representative verse.

***AC 8261[6]***

- “That the exaltation of Jehovah, that is, of the Lord, was performed by means of songs...” Amos 8:10 is cited.

***AC 9960[6]***

- “As mourning represented spiritual mourning, which is mourning on account of the loss of the truth and good of the church, therefore when mourning they made bald their heads...” Amos 8:10 is cited as one of the examples.

### ***Doctrine of Sacred Scripture 35[2&4]***

- "...it was a mark of deep mourning, and also a great disgrace, for any one to make himself bald, or to be seen bald....'baldness' signified the Word without its ultimate sense." Amos 8:10 is quoted as one of the examples from the Word.

### ***AR 47***

- This number has an almost exact quote of the above citation.

### ***AR 166***

- "...on account of transgressions against Divine truths, they put off their garments, and put on sackcloth.... Amos viii. 10..."

### ***AR 492***

- This number contains more information on the representations of "mourning" and "sackcloth."

### ***AE 66[5]***

- This number has more references to the meaning of baldness and how the bald are seen in the world of spirits. The bald there "...are such as have abused the Word, and have applied the sense of the letter...to wicked purposes, and therefore have been deprived of all truth. These are most malignant." Amos 8:10 is cited.

### ***AE 637[15]***

- "In Amos:- ( viii. 10) 'Sackcloth upon the loins' signifies mourning because the good of love is destroyed, for this is signified by the 'loins;' and 'baldness upon the head' signifies mourning because the understanding of truth is destroyed."

## **DERIVED DOCTRINE**

*"The Lord has sworn..."*

- When the Word says the Lord "swore," it is to signify an "...irrevocable confirmation from the Divine.... The Divine cannot confirm from any other source than from Itself; and what it confirms is irrevocable, because it is eternal truth.... The Lord never confirms anything by an oath; but when the

Divine truth...passes down to a man...it is turned into the semblance of an oath." (AC 2482)

*"The pride of Jacob..."*

- Jacob has many representations. Which of them are we to use? Looking at the literal sense, it appears that we must choose one that shows a troublesome or shallow external in its representation. Perhaps the description in AC 3548 would come close to the internal meaning. In this number, we read that "Jacob" represented truth that appears in its outward form like good and the truth of good but which is not such internally. Could this be the pride of Jacob that the Lord was going to irrevocably expose and remove from the church?
- Pride signifies the love of self. (AC 1306) Pride involves a process of false reasoning that seems to favor self-love. Pride wears a face of arrogance and projects self-assurance. (AC 1585[4]) Pride carries with it an attempt to wield the power of domination over the things of the church. (AC 8678)

*The Land Trembling*

- In the positive sense, trembling represents a great alternation and change of state when one is regenerating and truth gives place to good. (AC 3593)
- Holy trembling occurs in the presence of the Lord and prepares the way for the reception of good. (AC 8816)
- AC 2571 tells us that "land" signifies various things: the internal man of the church; the region where the church is; where the faith of the church is; the doctrine of love and charity where the faith of the church resides.
- The condition of the church—"the land"—seems to be the thing that needed to tremble before the Lord. The church and its faith had to have a way opened for the Lord to come in. The church needed to return to a state of holy fear to help it prepare and receive the good that it needed to be vibrant in spiritual things.

*"All of it shall swell like a river, heave and subside..."*

- AE 518[26] has a beautiful promise for all ages. "...although the church and all things thereof perish, still the Word and the Divine truth it contains shall not perish..." Though the falsity of the church swell, heave, and subside, the Word will not suffer injury nor "perish in any respect."

*Losses Experienced by People of a Corrupt Church*

- The Lord lists what losses the people of a corrupt church will experience:
  - "...the sun (will) go down at noon" represents a loss of love and heaven's intelligence and wisdom.

- "...darken the earth in broad daylight..." represents the mind losing its ability to see clearly in spite of the abundance of the knowledges of truth within the Word.
- "...feasts into mourning...songs into lamentations..." represents the loss of worshiping the Lord from a genuine, spontaneous joyfulness. They would lack the cordial union and felicity that banquets and singing would normally bring to the repentant worshiper of the Lord.
- "...sackcloth on every waist..." represents a state of sadness because their indifference and falsity was doing harm to the conjugal principle. There would be a loss of the spiritual birth of good and truth because they were severing, or preventing, new life from the Lord.
- "...mourning for an only son...its end like a bitter day." Having a son to continue the lineage of the family traditions was important to the Israelites. The Lord touches that nerve. He tells them in the spiritual sense that they have lost their link to the rise of a new church. Indeed, it is an end "like a bitter day."
- Their pride, their love of falsity brought about "baldness on every head."

## **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

1. As sad as this section seems, we must not allow the literal sense to discourage us. We need to focus on every one of these correspondences in their most positive sense regarding the Lord's New Church.  
 Let us with a sense of awe have the holy fear that keeps us from bringing any harm to the Lord and His Word. We need to pray that our river of knowledge might swell and heave in such a way as the river Nile spilled over its banks, to bring richness to the crops that the Lord plants within our minds.  
 We need to pray that our sun will not go down at noon. We need to long for the truths that give us the light to sort through the pitfalls of hell. May our feasts and our songs flow out of us like the joyous outbursts of happy children. We need the spontaneous enthusiasm of one who once was blind but now can see.  
 May we search for the conjugal principle so that we may have an ardent desire to spiritually procreate and to protect what is procreated. We need those heirs to further the cause of the New Church. May we not do anything to the sacredness of the Word that would bring baldness upon the head of anyone.  
 Let us sing the song, "This is the day that the Lord hath made. Let us be glad and rejoice in it." We can offer a prayer that, in spite of what hell tries to tell us, we are not going to have this day or any day "end like a bitter day."

## READ AND REVIEW

Read Amos 8:7-10.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION

1. Can we turn the darkness of Israel's failure into a ray of hope? What can we learn that could be useful to our church? Does the Lord always offer a source of hope, no matter how dark His words seem? How can we find it?
2. Negative thoughts, if given a chance to get out of control, rob us of our hope. What is dangerous about losing hope? How can we regain lost hope?
3. The description of "baldness" gives us a challenge not to play games with the Word. Do we need this "picture" as a reminder to be true to the Word and its spiritual sense? What does being true to the Word look like in everyday life?

## AMOS 8: 11-14

*"Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord God,  
That I will send a famine on the land,  
Not a famine of bread,  
Nor a thirst for water,  
But of hearing the words of the Lord.  
They shall wander from sea to sea,  
And from north to east;  
They shall run to and fro, seeking the word of the Lord,  
But shall not find it.  
In that day the fair virgins  
And the strong young men  
Shall faint from thirst.  
Those who swear by the sin of Samaria,  
Who say  
As your god lives, O Dan!  
And, As the way of Beersheba lives!  
They shall fall and never rise again."*

## PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS

### *P&P*

- "...that then there will be no longer any good and truth, vers. 11-14."

### **AR 323**

- “That ‘hunger’ signifies ignorance of the knowledges of truth and good arising from the deficiency of such knowledges in the church, is evident from various passages in the Word....” Amos 8:11-14 is cited as an example.

### **AE 386[11]**

- “In Amos:-...( viii. 11-13) ‘by famine’ and ‘thirst,’ namely, that a famine for bread is not meant, nor a thirst for water, but for hearing the word of Jehovah, thus that it is a lack of the knowledges of good and truth that is meant; and that these are not in the church or in its doctrine is described by the words, ‘they shall go from sea to sea, and from the north to the sunrise, seeking the word of Jehovah, and shall not find it,’ ‘from sea to sea’ signifying on every side, for the outmost boundaries in the spiritual world, where truths and goods begin and terminate appear like seas; consequently ‘seas’ in the Word signify the cognitions of truth and good, also knowledges ( scientifica) in general; ‘from the north to the sunrise’ signifies also on every side where truth and good are, ‘the north’ meaning where truth is in obscurity, and ‘the sunrise’ where good is. Because ‘famine and thirst’ signify a lack of the knowledges of good and truth, therefore it is also said ‘in that day shall the beautiful virgins’ meaning the affections of truth from good, and “youths’ the truths themselves that are from good, ‘the thirst for which they shall faint’ meaning the lack of these.”

### **AR 620**

- “...they [who] have loved truths because they are truths...are meant by ‘virgins’...because ‘a virgin’ signifies the church as a bride, who desires to be conjoined with the Lord, and to become a wife; and the church which desires to be conjoined with the Lord, loves truths because they are truths....all they who are such in the Lord’s church, whether they be virgins or young men, wives or husbands, boys or old men, girls or old women, are meant by ‘virgins’...” Amos 8:11, 13 are cited.

### **AR 956**

- “That by ‘thirst’ and ‘thirsting’ is signified to perish from lack of truth.... But by ‘not thirsting’ is signified not to have a lack of truth...”

### **AC 3081**

- “The ‘fair virgins’ denote the affections of truth; the ‘young men’ truths, or what is the same, those who are in them; concerning these it is said that ‘they shall run to and fro to seek the word of Jehovah, and shall not find it,’ and

consequently 'they shall faint for thirst.'" Amos 8:12, 13 are cited in this number.

### **AC 7668**

- "...where 'fair virgins' denote the affection of truth; 'young men' intelligence; 'to faint for thirst' denotes to be deprived of truth; therefore it is said, 'they shall run to and fro to seek the word of Jehovah and not find it.' That fair virgins are not meant, nor young men, nor faintness by reason of thirst, is plain." Amos 8:12, 13 are cited in this number.

### **AC 2723**

- "...by 'Beer-sheba' are signified the things of human reason...adjoined to the doctrine of faith; and because they are again adjoined...became adapted to human comprehension....and also in the opposite sense, Amos viii. 13, 14."

### **AC 3923[6]**

- "That there is signified the denial of all things of faith, is because Dan was the last boundary of the land of Canaan, and Beer-sheba the first, that is, the midst or inmost of the land..." Amos 8:13, 14 are cited in this number.

## **DERIVED DOCTRINE**

### *The Sin of Samaria*

- What is the sin of Samaria? Scholars say that this prophecy refers to the twin "calf altars" at Dan and Bethel. In various other references, the Writings identify the disorderly side of Samaria as various inner sins. For instance, AC 2466[4] says that Samaria had an affection for falsities. AC 10050[2] says it signifies those who are in external worship. AE 193[8] says Samaria signifies evils of the will. AC 223[20] says Samaria signifies the false doctrines of those who reject the Lord. Could any (or all) of these be the sin of Samaria the prophecy alludes to?

*"They shall fall and never rise again."*

- Is this prophecy referring to the fall and demise of a people or to the fall and demise of their false human reasoning that gave birth to the falsities within the church?

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

1. Several key words seem to draw this section to a summary: ignorance, deficiency, and confusion.
2. When the Word of the Lord is ignored, can there be any other outcome but ignorance and spiritual deficiencies? The virgins and the young men “sense” that they want and need something. Where can we find it? How can we satisfy this great thirst and famine?  
They have physical bread and water, but they need a “hearing” of the words of the Lord. From sea to sea, from north to east, they can find no one who can open the words of the Lord for them. There is a sense of loss. They feel a sense of not being conjoined to the Lord.
3. The sins of Samaria, the sins of sensual or external worship, prevail from inmosts to outmosts. The prophecy tells the Israelites that they have lost what they need most—conjunction with the Lord. Their pursuit of frivolous things will make them faint from a great lack of the “living bread” and the “living waters” that only the Lord could provide.
4. Why must this happen? Is it because Beersheba lives? The Writings tell us that Beersheba represents a human reason that is not adjoined to the doctrine of faith. The Lord lays before us the results of such a ruling love: Human comprehension will not be willing to receive divine guidance. “They shall fall and never rise again.”

## READ AND REVIEW

Read Amos 8:11-14.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION

1. Is there any evidence of a longing for good and truth among us today? Where do you see it?
2. Do you see a searching from sea to sea, from north to east for the word of the Lord? What are the signs of this search?
3. AR 620 reminds us that “virgins” and “young men” represent anyone desiring to be conjoined to the Lord. For the sake of discussion, is there a process here that tells us what to do as a parent or church? For instance, are we being taught that the individual must desire to be fed and given water before he or she can be helped? In some passages of the Word, we are taught to not throw our pearls before the swine because they will trample them into the ground. In other places, the “master” or the “king” sent his servants out into the streets and highways to find people to bring them to the banquet.

Which is it: people must desire to be fed, or people must be found and fed? Or are both true?

## Chapter Nine

### AMOS 9:1-5

*"I saw the Lord standing by the altar, and He said:  
Strike the doorposts, that thresholds may shake,  
And break them on the heads of them all.  
I will slay the last of them with the sword.  
He who flees from them shall not get away,  
And he who escapes from them shall not be delivered.  
Though they dig into hell,  
From there My hand shall take them;  
Though they climb up to heaven,  
From there I will bring them down;  
And though they hide themselves on top of Carmel,  
from there I will search and take them;  
Though they hide from My sight at the bottom of the sea,  
From there I will command the serpent, and it shall bite them;  
Though they go into captivity before their enemies,  
From there I will command the sword,  
And it shall slay them.  
I will set My eyes on them for harm and not for good.  
The Lord God of hosts,  
He who touches the earth and it melts,  
And all who dwell there mourn;  
All of it shall swell like the River,  
And subside like the River of Egypt.*

### PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS

#### **P&P**

- "Concerning the last judgment upon them, and that nowhere, withersoever they shall flee, will there be any escape, vers. 1-5...."

#### **AC 9552[2]**

- "In Amos:-...(ix.1) 'I saw the Lord standing upon the altar, who said, Smite the pomegranate that the posts may shake; that is, divide them in the head, all of them; I will slay the last of them with the sword.' where 'to smite the pomegranate' denotes to destroy the memory-knowledges of good by means of the falsities of evil; the posts are then said to 'shake,' because 'posts' denote the truths of the natural (n.7847); 'to slay the last with the sword' denotes in

this way to destroy the ultimate things; for a 'sword' denotes truth fighting against falsity and destroying it: and the converse (n. 2799, 4499, 6353, 7102, 8294)."

### ***AC 9125[2]***

- "...to dig through into hell' denotes to hide themselves there, thus in falsities from evil; for 'hell' denotes falsity from evil, because this reigns there. The falsities there are called 'darkness,' within which they hide themselves from the light of heaven; for they flee from the light of heaven, which is Divine truth from the Lord." Amos 9:2 is cited.

### ***TCR 62***

- "...it is clear that God is omniscient in hell as well as in heaven, and in like manner with men in the world; thus that He perceives, sees, and is cognizant of the evils and falsities from the good and truth in which He Himself is, and which in their essence are Himself...." Amos 9:2 is cited.

### ***AE 581[7]***

- "The malice and craftiness of infernal spirits...are meant by 'serpents' in the following passages." Amos 9:3 is a verse cited as an example.

### ***AE 811[4]***

- "If they have gone into captivity before their adversaries' signifies, if they have suffered evils to take possession of them; 'adversaries' meaning evils, and 'to go into captivity' meaning to be possessed by them. 'Thence do I command the sword that it may slay them' signifies that falsities will shut them out from the understanding of truths, and will destroy them." Amos 9:4 is cited.

### ***AC 6693***

- "...the 'earth' which shall be 'shaken' denotes the church (n. 6649); 'to be overwhelmed as by the river of Egypt' denotes to perish by falsities; and because falsities are signified, it is said that 'the sun shall set at noon,' and that 'the earth shall be darkened in the day of light.'... As the 'river of Egypt' signifies falsity, therefore Moses was commanded to smite with his staff upon the waters...they consequently turned into blood, every fish died, and the river stank...." Amos 8:8, 9 and Amos 9:5 are cited in this number.

### **AR 503**

- There is a vague reference to Amos 9:5 in *AR 503*. “‘Egypt’ signifies not only intelligence but also insanity in spiritual things....” Such is represented by ‘being drowned by the river of Egypt.’”

### **AE 654[75]**

- “All this describes how the natural man is vastated, which takes place when he casts away from himself all the truths and goods of the church, and imbibes falsities and evils, until there is no longer any truth or good of the church remaining.” Amos 9:5 is one of the references used to illustrate this teaching.

### **DERIVED DOCTRINE**

#### *The Lord Standing by the Altar*

- How beautifully this illustrates the Lord visiting the holy “element” that was provided to worship Him. The customs, the rituals, the songs, the sacrifices. What did these elements do for the quality of worship in the hearts of His people? He knew, but now it was time for them to “see” what they were doing.

#### *Strike*

- To “strike” means to bring, or apply, holy truth so that a contrast of judgment may be seen. The Lord’s presence brought innocence and all the holiness of His Love and Wisdom. Of course this would be “striking.” It would be awesome and frightening. The Lord’s striking was going to break away the veneer of Israel’s monotonous (vain) worship services.

#### *Door*

- A door, or doorposts, signifies that which has the potential to introduce the Lord and His good and truth. The Israelites’ love of falsity had to be exposed so that order might be restored. The Lord would do this by opening the arcana of heavenly truths. As with a mighty wind, the pollution of falsity was about to be cleaned away.

#### *“That thresholds may shake”*

- When winter comes to earth, it provides that many useful things occur to the soil or ground. There is a period of “rest” when vegetation does not draw from the soil’s nutrients. The ground freezes and cracks. The hardened

ground, with frost heaves, cracks open and thus allows for the aeration of the soil. The soil rejuvenates so as to provide for the coming splendor of spring. Shaking the threshold seems something like that. We get in ruts of thinking. We miss the opportunities of new growth. Could this shaking of the threshold be a positive thing the Lord “permits” for our benefit? Is the message here a reminder that it all happens so new spiritual beginnings may replace the states of indifference?

### *The Lord's Hand, Sight, Eyes*

- Throughout these first five verses the Lord mentions His hand, His sight, and His eyes. Let's look at some of their correspondences so we can understand their importance in this prophecy:
- Hands represent ability, power, communication, and confidence.
- Seeing means that He knows all and everything from eternity; the Lord's conscience spurring man on to regeneration.
- Eyes represent His great powers of intellection and lucid perception that go beyond human comprehension.
- These Divine attributes are not listed merely to impress us. They are stated to show that nothing escapes the Lord's notice. He is the Power, the Wisdom, and the Everlasting Father of all. Hell, in its fantasy world, thinks that it is able to fool or deceive the Lord with its bag of illusions. This prophecy shakes the very threshold of hell and strikes the head of them all.

### *Leaving the Lord's Presence*

- It is an illusion to believe one has left the Lord's presence. These verses refer to the illusion of leaving His presence by digging into hell, climbing up to heaven, hiding on top of Mount Carmel, or hiding at the bottom of the sea.
- The attempt to dig into hell has an interesting possibility. To “dig” represents to search for, to investigate, or to apply truths to false ends. (AC 7343)
- Climbing up to heaven pictures those who think they can force their way into heaven through their intellectual ability to reason apart from receiving good from the Lord. (AC 5497)
- Hiding themselves on top of Mount Carmel: Here again we have a very interesting contrast. As there is a problem with emphasizing reason apart from the affections, we now see a concerted effort to obtain good through the truths of the church from a natural application of the Word. This goal seems worthy to seek but lacking in discrimination and prudence. The truths of the Word were turned to the convenience of the moment as directed by the natural mind.
- To hide from the Lord at the bottom of the sea seems to be explained in this number from the *Arcana*: “...the hells of some appear...as deeps and as seas.... From those hells come the evil spirits that devastate... their phantasies...pour

in.... That hell is called the 'deep' and that the foul emanations therefrom are called 'rivers'..." (AC 756[2])

- Through all these conditions, it appears from the literal sense that the Lord is angry and is intent on slaying the Israelites. We know that it is not the Lord who is doing these things. It is the evil within them that is destroying them. The evil, in the Lord's presence, is in anguish because of the purity of His Love and Wisdom, and it turns on itself and finds how empty and void its choices have been. For a brief moment, evil sees the horror of its insanity.

## **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

1. Psalm 139 beautifully reminds us that there is no place where we can escape the presence of the Lord. This chapter mentions ascending into heaven, having a bed in hell, taking the wings of the morning, the uttermost parts of the sea, tells us that darkness shall be as light to the Lord, and repeats the phrase, "You [the Lord] are there." The words of this Psalm are offered in a comforting way. Now contrast that Psalm with this chapter from Amos. Is there a different message or tone? We may claim that we don't feel Him near us, but the "distance" or absence of the Lord is our choice. If we move away from the Lord, we close ourselves off from His providential leading. However, the bottom line is that we can't escape Him, and there will be a final judgment for each of us. "He will be there."
2. The insanity of those who reject the Lord's Word must be "shaken." The series of moments to eternity has to be considered more carefully. The choice made in each moment will carry consequences. Prayerfully, we need to ask the Lord to guide our decision-making methods. We need to make corrections as soon as we see our mistakes. But spiritual insanity gets so deeply imbedded in us, with the ill-fated logic of our proprium, that the "door posts" of the mind get log-jammed with falsity. Like a thick cloud, falsity cuts off the light of heaven. The Lord never ceases in His effort to restore us to our rightful mind. Will we allow Him to do that, or will we work in every way to run away from this necessary task?
3. The message of these verses seems to say, "Don't ignore the way of the Lord. Take care of spiritual things as a priority of the highest order."

## **READ AND REVIEW**

Read Amos 9:1-5.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## **QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION**

1. How easy is it for us to imagine we act independently from the Lord? It appears that we do everything alone. The striking, the shaking, the being

knocked down may seem like a mean act of the Lord. Being bitten by serpents, slain with swords, made captives, and made to mourn seems hard. Instead of meanness, there really is love. Spiritual reality has to remove evils. We must be shaken and humbled so that our selfish proprium will be put aside and replaced with the Lord's Proprium. Such things must happen if the New Church is to come to us.

2. Do you feel comfortable explaining passages like this one to someone who says that God is a hard taskmaster? How would you explain them?
3. Do you remember the story of the man possessed with demons? (Mark 5:2-14) He lived among the tombs, no chains could hold him, and no man could tame him. He cried in turmoil and cut himself with stones. When he saw Jesus, he ran to him for help. The Lord took pity on him and cast all of the demons into the swine. Can we see any application of that lesson to our text?
4. It is hell that does the hurting. Hell enjoys the misfortune of others. The Lord has infinite mercy and He wishes no one harm. It is our imperfect perception that leads us to picture the Lord as a hard taskmaster. What are some ways to correct that misperception?
5. We would do well to remind ourselves of this truth. Every day in thousands of ways the Lord's Divine Providence seeks to help us. If we could but see one way fully, we would be amazed at the care and detail He puts into caring for us. Not once does He try to frustrate or punish.
6. Instead of punishment, the Lord wants order. He wants to imprint His faith and charity in each of our hearts. Not everyone will cooperate with this goal, and the Lord seems unreasonable, hard, and cruel to them. They draw this conclusion because He seems to be interfering with their desire to avoid His influence and direction. What conversation might you have with someone who is in this state? How does it feel when you are in this state?

## **AMOS 9:6**

*"He who builds His layers in the sky,  
And has founded His strata in the earth;  
Who calls for the waters of the sea,  
And pours them out on the face of the earth-  
The Lord is His name."*

## **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

### ***P&P***

- "...from the Lord, who causes the church to be, ver. 6..."

### **AC 8945**

- “It is said ‘go up on steps,’ for the reason that elevation to interior things appears in the world of spirits, where celestial and spiritual things are presented in forms like those of the world, as an ascent by steps. This representative it has often been given me to see. For this reason also it was that angels were seen by Jacob in his dream going up to the Lord by steps of a ladder (Gen. xxviii. 12). Therefore also by ‘steps’ in the Word is signified ascent to higher things, that is, to interior things...” Amos 9:6 is quoted as a reference.

### **AC 9408[3]**

- “...when mention is made in the Word of ‘the heavens,’ and also of ‘the heavens of heavens,’ in the internal sense are meant the angelic heavens....for in the other life a heaven with stars appears, yet not the heaven that appears to men in the world; but a heaven that appears in accordance with the state of intelligence and wisdom of the spirits and angels. The stars there are knowledges of good and truth; and the clouds which are sometimes seen beneath the heaven are of various signification according to their colors, their translucence, and their movements; the blueness of heaven is truth transparent from good.” There are many passages cited, one of which is Amos 9:6.

### **AR 238**

- “It has also been granted me to see the seas which are at the boundaries of the heavens, and to converse with those who were therein, and thus to know the truth of this matter from experience. They seemed to me to be in the sea, but they said that they are not in the sea, but in the atmosphere; from which it was manifest to me, that the sea is an appearance of the Divine proceeding from the Lord in its boundaries....therefore ‘the seas,’ in the Hebrew language, is called ‘the west,’ that is, where the light of the sun declines towards its evening, or truth into obscurity.” Amos 9:6 is one of various other passages cited to illustrate these teachings.

### **AE 275[10]**

- ““The steps that Jehovah buildeth in the heavens’ signify interior truths which are called spiritual; ‘the waters of the sea’ signify exterior truths, which are natural because they are in the natural man; ‘to pour them out upon the faces of the earth’ signifies upon the men of the church, for the ‘earth’ is the church.” Amos 9:6 is quoted.

## DERIVED DOCTRINE

*"His strata in the earth..."*

- We are given an explanation of the Lord building His layers in the sky but nothing about the meaning of His "strata in the earth." A reference in AC 2162 might help us see what this means. This number tells us that the heavens denote celestial and spiritual things "...thus all things which are of internal worship.... But the 'earth' is all lower things that correspond to... the lower rational and natural things, whereof also things celestial and spiritual are predicated from correspondence....also those in the church and in external worship, and in the literal sense of the Word; in short, all such things as proceed from things internal and are presented in things external...."

*Pouring the Waters of the Sea on the Face of the Earth*

- The order of the Lord is imprinted on everything created. Everything that has being owes its very existence to the finition of His Divine Love and Wisdom.
- How can we illustrate this from the teachings of the Lord? The Pharisees came to the Lord to ask Him to quiet, or discipline, the people when they shouted, "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest." (Luke 19:38)
- The profoundness of the Lord's answer is awesome when we allow it to touch our hearts. He said, "I tell you that, if these [the disciples] should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." (Luke 19:39)
- Earthly wisdom may seek to silence the beauty of the Lord's glory. Spiritually blind eyes may refuse to see the truths that are all about them. But the Lord has poured out His truth over the whole earth so that even the "stones" give evidence of the infinite planning and order of the Lord. The denial of humanity will not quiet the work of the Lord.
- Speaking of evidence, let's consider this quote from *The Canons of the New Church*: "At this day nothing else than the *self-evidencing reason of love* will reestablish [the church], because they have fallen." The hope for our internal church is that we will rekindle our love for the Lord so that our eyes will see the self-evidencing proof of God all around us, even in the "stones" of the earth.
- "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

1. *P&P* reminds us that it is the Lord who gives life and vitality to the church. It is not the buildings, not the priesthood, not the people nor the size of the congregation. "The whole of religion is founded upon [having as correct as

possible] an idea of God." If a church errs concerning its idea of God, it will err concerning matters of faith. It will also err concerning charity and will know nothing of eternal life. Thus, the church will be in a thick darkness. (This is a summary of the introduction to The Canons of the New Church.)

2. The meaning of this verse seems so clear now. The Lord has ordered the heavens. He has given us the literal, spiritual, and celestial sense of the Word. He has eternal truths that will keep us in a state of growing forever. The power of His order may be seen in all the things of earth. He pours out His loving benefits to the whole universe. Our "cup runneth over." Those who choose to miss the benefits of the Lord are like people who starve in the midst of spiritual plenty.
3. Our verse of study asks: "Who has done all of this?" We are given the answer: "The Lord is His name." This closing sentence of our study verse calls us back to basics. "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted...in all the earth." (Psalm 46:10) Let the contrite acknowledge the Lord's endeavors by saying, "Amen," for the word "amen" means "so be it." In the Doctrine of Faith 6, we read "...the ancients...instead of saying Faith, were accustomed to say Truth. For the same reason truth and faith are one word in the Hebrew language, namely Amuna or Amen." Let the order of the Lord lead us into the mysteries of faith with understanding so that we may say Amen.

## **READ AND REVIEW**

Read Amos 9:6.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## **QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION**

1. How do you understand the meaning of the phrase "self-evidencing reasons of love"? The Canons indicate it is a necessary element of faith to reestablish the light of the Lord within the church. Have you ever heard a doctrinal class on this subject?
2. See if you can pick out some examples of how self-evidencing reasons of love make all the difference in understanding the truths of the Lord. Think about your own experience with this.
3. What "stones" cry out, the truths of the Lord, when skeptics deny His glory and power?
4. How can we best assist the layers in the sky to be founded in the strata of the earth? Do we do this when we unfold the inner sense of the Word?
5. If you were to pick the most important elements of your internal church, what would you choose and how would you rank them in importance? How can each of us keep our human "prudence" from over-riding the Lord's will?

6. Did you note the difference in the quote of Amos 9:6 in the Writings? Our New King James translation says, "He...builds His layer..." and the Writings have the words "...go up on steps..." Any idea why there is such a difference in translations?

## **AMOS 9:7**

*"Are you not like the people of Ethiopia to Me,  
O children of Israel?" says the Lord.*

*"Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt,  
The Philistines from Caphtor,  
And the Syrians from Kir?"*

## **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

### **P&P**

- "...that there were also churches before, which have been laid waste, ver. 7..."

### **AC 1197**

- "...all those were called 'Philistines' who talked much about faith, and declared that salvation is in faith, and yet had no life of faith.... That the 'Philistines' signify in general a mere memory-knowledge of the knowledges of faith, and specifically those who make faith and salvation consist in knowledges alone, which they make matters of memory..." Amos 9:7 is offered as one of many references.

### **AC 9340[6]**

- "...the perversion and destruction of the church after it had been set up is here treated of; 'the sons of the Ethiopians' here denote those who are in the knowledges of good and truth, but who apply them to confirm evils and falsities (n. 1163, 1164); 'the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt' denote those who have been initiated into spiritual truths and goods by means of memory-truths. (That 'the sons of Israel' denote those who are in spiritual truths and good, thus in the abstract sense spiritual truths and goods, see n. 5414, 5801, 5803, 5806, 5812, 5817, 5819, 5826, 5833, 5879, 5951, 7957, 8234; and that 'the land of Egypt' denotes memory-truth, has been shown above.) The like is signified by 'the Philistines from Caphtor,' and by 'the Syrians from Kir,' to whom they are therefore likened. 'The Philistines from Caphtor' denote those who have been initiated into interior truths by means of exterior, but who have perverted them and applied them to confirm falsities and evils (n. 1197, 1198, 3412, 3413, 3762, 8093, 8096, 8099, 8313); and 'the Syrians from Kir' denote those who are in the knowledges of good

and truth, which also they have perverted (n. 1232, 1234, 3051, 3249, 3664, 3680, 4112).” This number is in explanation of Amos 9:7.

## DERIVED DOCTRINE

### *Children of Israel*

- Is there a reason the Lord addresses them, “O children of Israel...”? Children signify innocence, charity, good, truth, and the remains stored up in a person from infancy.
- It seems appropriate to assume that the Word uses children to show us how the Lord from our childhood has touched that part of our heart that will listen and want to obey His gentle, wise, caring ways. The Lord is not absent from us for the least of a moment. “O children...” touches remains and tries to soften us to listen.
- Churches before the Israelites had made serious spiritual mistakes. The Lord wished the Israelites to take heed of them and not follow their folly. It was as if He said, “Do you need examples? If I point out the folly of earlier churches, will you listen and make appropriate changes?” This is what I hear in this verse. How about you?
- “Look at the Ethiopians! Look at the Philistines! Look at the Syrians! Do you want to be like them?”
  - Ethiopians, in the “bad sense, signify the interior knowledges of the Word applied to confirm false principles.” (AC 1164)
  - Philistines “represent those who conceive false principles and reason thence concerning spiritual things which overflow man.” (AC 705)
  - Syrians, in a “bad” sense represent the abuse and misuse of the knowledge of good. (AC 3762)

### *A Reminder of the Escape from Egypt*

- The Lord also reminds the Israelites that He brought them out of the land of Egypt. Could the reminder of this fact indicate that the Israelites thought that they had won their own strength and accomplishments? Were they on the brink of ingratitude?
- Bringing up Israel from the land of Egypt signifies leaving behind memory-knowledges that had no feeling or meaning to them. Put another way, the Lord wanted them to move from historical faith toward a true faith that was drawn from the Word. The Lord wanted them to have a commitment to the things of faith so that they would honestly appreciate them. (See AC 1541, 4735[15], AE 654 for further illustration of these ideas.)

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

1. The words that ring out in my mind about this verse are these: (They) “talked much about faith...and yet had no life of faith.” The Lord, in this verse, reminds us that prior churches talked much about faith. They emphasized the idea that knowing many things would bring about salvation. There were those who talked about how much they knew, but there was no life in what they knew because they twisted the truth to confirm evils and falsities to justify their ends. There was no life in their faith. This is a sad commentary on the former churches. Israel, too, was on the brink of meeting the same end. The perversion of truth for selfish ends stifles the spiritual life. The corrupt external initiates a series of consequences that layer over the wonderful potential of interior things. The outer lies prevent the inner conatus (endeavor) from manifesting itself in uses for the Lord and the neighbor.
2. The concern of the Lord and His mercy is forever recorded in His words, “O children of Israel.” These words are a loving Divine appeal to the innocence in the souls of all His children. It is a reminder to all that we each have the potential to become an angel of the Lord if we become like “little children.”
3. This verse asks a question of great importance. Will we learn from the mistakes of those who tried to gain salvation from cold and indifferent facts passed on by tradition or lore? Are we in a state to learn these things?

## READ AND REVIEW

Read Amos 9:7.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION

1. In Amos 9:7, there is a series of nations (churches) mentioned: the Ethiopians, the children of Israel, the Egyptians, the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir. Have you taken notes on the meaning of that series from AC 9340[6]? What downward progression of each church did you note?
2. To get a glimpse of Ethiopia in its prime, turn to AC 116 and 349 to read about the wonderful things they possessed in the beginning of their church. As a contrast read, AE 780[5] to see what they were like after they turned away from the Lord. Can you get any sense of what went wrong with them?
3. The Philistines represent those who hold false ideas and then reason about spiritual things from those false ideas. (AC 705) Have you ever done this? How easy is it to do? How may we avoid making the same mistakes?
4. Syria signifies those of the second Ancient Church in respect to their knowledges of good and truth. (AE 195[8]) The Ancient Word existed in Syria. (Doctrine of Sacred Scripture 102) How did they lose such gifts? With their knowledge of the Ancient Word, it is both sad and perplexing to read

- that they falsified the Word for selfish reasons. What do you think we must do to keep from repeating the mistakes of the prior churches?
5. Do we as a church talk about what we know but have no life in our faith? Or do we feel the indescribable power of the Word and Lord to lift us to spiritual heights where we see the dazzling spectrum of the Lord's beauty and order? Is this a personal or organizational state?
  6. Look up the word "enthusiasm" in a dictionary. Note that we are told the word means: to be inspired; to be possessed by God; transported; to have an ardent zeal or fervor. It seems that we would do well to seek the right kind of enthusiasm for the Lord that would inspire us to invite Him into our lives so that we might be "possessed" by His order. Does this sound like evangelical or "born again" type of thinking? I think the New Church could use some feeling of excitement or enthusiasm. What do you think?

### **AMOS 9:8-10**

*"Behold, the eyes of the Lord God are on the sinful kingdom,  
And I will destroy it from the face of the earth;  
Yet I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob,"  
Says the Lord.  
"For surely I will command,  
And will sift the house of Israel among the nations,  
As a grain is sifted in a sieve;  
Yet not the smallest grain shall fall to the ground.  
All the sinners of My people shall die by the sword,  
Who say, 'The calamity shall not overtake nor confront us.'"*

### **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

#### **P&P**

- "...that nevertheless the church will not perish, but that those perish who are in the church, vers. 8-10..."

#### **AC 7051**

- "They who know nothing of the internal sense of the Word cannot believe otherwise than that the Israelitish and Jewish nation was chosen above every other nation, and hence was more excellent than all the rest, as also they themselves believed....Hence also it is that most persons in the Christian world also believe that that nation will again be chosen, and will then be brought back into the land of Canaan, and this also according to the sense of the letter, as in many passages...." Amos 9:8, 9 are cited among the many passages given in this number.

- In the closing paragraph of this number, we read: “From all of this it can now be seen that the Israelitish and Jewish nation was not chosen, and still less that it will be chosen; and also that there was not anything of the church with it, nor could be, but only the representative of a church; and that the reason why it has been preserved even to this day, has been for the sake of the Word of the Old Testament.”

## DERIVED DOCTRINE

*“The eyes of the Lord are on the sinful kingdom...”*

- AR 48 gives us a wide range of correspondences for “eyes” in the Word. When a human being’s eyes are mentioned, it refers to human understanding and intelligence. “...when spoken of the Lord, the Divine wisdom is meant; but by a ‘flame of fire,’ is signified spiritual love, which is charity; wherefore, when spoken of the Lord, the Divine love is meant...that by ‘eye,’ when predicated of the Lord, His Divine wisdom...His Divine omniscience and providence....” are signified.
- Using this quote, we can understand that it was not Divine anger at work but Divine Love, Wisdom, Omniscience, and Providence looking at the sinfulness of Israel. They were focused on finite goals whereas the Lord wanted them to focus on eternal goals. To those with finite priorities, it appears that God is angry and vindictive. “Hence I (the Lord) will destroy it from the face of the earth....” describes the way an unregenerate person perceives the operation of the Lord’s love.

*The Face of the Earth*

- What is meant by “the face of the earth...”? There is an interesting teaching expressed in AC 358: “The face, with the ancients, signified internal things, because internal things shine forth through the face; and in the most ancient times men were such that the face was in perfect accord with the internals.... They considered it a monstrous thing to show one thing by the face and think another.”
- Could the above quote be a direct teaching from the Lord that the Israelitish church would not be allowed to continue its practice of saying one thing with the lips and believing another thing in their hearts? Was the Lord telling them that the reign of hypocrisy was over?

*The House of Jacob*

- Why was the “house of Jacob” not utterly destroyed? A house in its positive sense represents a mind in which there is intelligence and wisdom. A house also contains affections which are of the will. (AC 1488) But in reality,

whenever one church comes to an end, the Lord provides that a remnant is saved so as to continue, or build, His church anew. (AE 407 & 676)

- Also Micah 5:7-8 speaks of "...the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass...the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people..." (AE 278)
- The "house of Jacob" represents the "external church" and the "house of Israel" represents the "internal church." (AC 5550)
- What then is the Lord teaching us about the "house of Jacob"? As we might expect, the meaning is deep and fully involved with all of the history of Jacob and his children. But consider the following quote as a possible indicator of the core of deeper things: "...Jacob represented...the Lord's natural; and as where Jacob is treated of...in the internal sense the Lord is treated of, and how He made His natural Divine..." Is the promise that the "house of Jacob" would not be destroyed a promise that the Lord's advent would overcome the idolatrous worship of the previous churches so that the New Church might become the "crown of all churches"? Is it a story of His natural serving a use prior to being glorified? Later in Jacob's life, he was told, "Thy name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel." (Genesis 32:26) This is a movement from being a representative of the external church to becoming a representative of the internal church.

#### *"Sifting" the House of Israel Among all Nations*

- Let's first consider the meaning of "all nations." AC 249 says that a passage from Micah 7:16 where "nations" is mentioned represents those who trust in their own proprium. In AC 622, "nations" represents evils that are of the will, or of cupidities. Nations therefore seems to represent a vast network of proprial desires that are so integrated into the lives of people that only the Lord can "sort things out." It is comforting to know that the Lord will not be fooled by appearances. He can distinguish between what is and what is not. He will sort out things that confound the wisest civil laws and the best human prudence. True justice in the hands of the Lord will be given to everyone. No one will be able to claim that the Lord treated him or her unfairly. Our emotional "Gordian knots" will be unwrapped, and there will be nothing left unattended among "all nations."
- These insights give us a clearer picture of why the Lord said He would sift the nations, the mind, the proprium, the cupidities, to remove the "chaff from the wheat."
- AC 9726 explains a passage from Exodus 27:4, "And thou shalt make for it a grating, a network." The grating represents "...as it were (sifting and separating) the things which enter into man and are presented to the understanding and the will, thus truths and goods."

*“...not the smallest grain shall fall to the ground.”*

- This is like the verse in the Word that reminds us that nothing escapes the Lord’s notice. Even the hairs of our head are numbered. There is not a sparrow that falls to the ground but the Lord knows. We might wish otherwise so that we could escape accountability, but the Lord’s omniscience is beyond human comprehension. Not even the smallest grain shall fall to the ground. The Divine sieve works to remove the useless and to protect the potential of the smallest seeds, just as He did for the mustard seed. It was able to grow beyond expectations.

*“All the sinners of My people shall die by the sword”*

- To get help with the internal sense, we can read AC 2799[20&21]. “...the ‘sword’ denoting the punishment of falsity.... The angel of Jehovah standing in the way against Balaam with a drawn sword (Numbers xxii. 31) signified the truth which resisted the falsity in which Balaam was; and for that reason also he was killed with a sword.... That a ‘sword’ in the genuine sense signifies truth combating, and in the opposite sense falsity combating, also the vastation of truth, and the punishment of falsity....”
- Those who are opposed to the Lord’s truth see nothing of what is good and true. When they are shown the error of their ways, they prefer falsity and defiantly demonstrate a contrary spirit against the Lord. (AR 309)
- The mental picture I get is that they are so angry with the Lord’s truth that they rush upon the “sword” to destroy themselves instead of admitting their falsity. They prefer to die by the sword then to be defended by the Lord.
- How do we see that the explanation above might be so? Listen to the words of the people. “The calamity shall not overtake nor confront us.” Their haughty, contemptuous, proud words seem to defy the Lord’s prophecy.
- These words speak a form of “denial” that seems so human. Turning away from issues, refusing to admit them, or blaming others just doesn’t work. Eventually we have to deal with the results of unbridled behavior. Evil seeks to hurt and destroy us. Ignoring disorder is not a part of regeneration.

### **Putting It All Together**

1. The summary of this section, by now, should be pretty clear. Those in the church (any church) who refuse to obey the Lord’s Word will “perish” spiritually. The Lord will not be fooled with any teaching or tradition about “specialness.” There are no chosen people. Salvation is not a “right” earned by giving money to build ornate houses of worship. From the beginning of this study, we have been made mindful of the need to love the Lord and His ways. Love truth for truth’s sake, and do not twist the Word to excuse or justify the desires of self.

2. The correspondence of the sifting of nations through the Divine sieve so that nothing (the smallest grain) goes to waste is a wonderful reminder that the Lord sees and knows all. The story of the widow's mite is a worthy example of this.

The thought, the look, the touch, the kind word we offer might be the small grain that becomes the mustard tree that provides branches for the birds to build nests and to hatch their young. As a secular song says, "Little things mean a lot."

## **READ AND REVIEW**

Read Amos 9:8-10.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## **QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION**

1. The Writings teach that the advent of the Lord takes place every time the Word is read with love. Do you see these verses as a theme of the Lord's advent and glorification?
2. We have considered this theme before: What can we do to break down or soften our stubbornness? Why is it that we have a love for what is forbidden? Some have described this as a "command-resistance" act to demonstrate our proprial freedom. Is our insistence on "freedom" all bad? Couldn't that longing to be free also come from a "healthy urging" that is planted by the Lord? "As of self" is a useful tool in regeneration. Discuss the different types of freedom.
3. How do you picture life's emotional "Gordian knots" being unwrapped by the Lord's loving Wisdom? Have you ever been frustrated with situations that seem to offer no solvable answers to troublesome issues? Do you look forward to the "time" when all will be settled with no "backlash" effects?
4. The quote from *P&P* says the "church will not perish, but that those perish who are in the church." Does this remind you of what happened to the children of Israel in the wilderness? Those who sinned against the Lord roamed and roamed for 40 years. When they had all died, then the Lord led the remaining generations into the Promised Land. What are some ways that we distinguish between the church and its members? How about the distinction between the spiritual church and the human organization on earth?

## **AMOS 9:11-12**

*"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;  
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.*

## **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

### ***P&P***

- "...that a new church will be instituted, which will acknowledge the Lord, vers. 11, 12..."

### ***AC 414[2&3]***

- "...the 'tabernacle'...denotes what is celestial and the holy things thereof....in ancient times they performed the holy rites of worship in their tents. But when they began to profane the tents by profane kinds of worship, the tabernacle was built, and afterwards the temple, and therefore tents represented all that was subsequently denoted first by the tabernacle, and afterwards by the temple. For the same reason a holy man is called a 'tent,' a 'tabernacle,' and a 'temple' of the Lord." Amos 9:11 is cited as one example.

### ***AC 3322 [4]***

- "In Amos: (ix. 11, 12)...the 'tabernacle of David' denotes the church and worship of the Lord; the 'remnant of Edom,' those who are in good within the church; the 'nations that were called by His name' those who are in good out of the church."

### ***AC 4391[4]***

- "...in Amos ix. 11...to 'set up the tent of David that is fallen,' denotes to restore the holy of truth after it has perished; 'David' denotes the Lord relatively to Divine truth...for a 'king' denotes Divine truth.... As a 'tent' signified the holy of truth, and 'dwelling in tents,' the derivative worship..."

### ***AC 4926[3]***

- "In Amos ix. 11...[this passage is] describing the church which is in good, the 'tent of David that is fallen' being the good of love and charity from the Lord....and that 'David' is the Lord.... To 'fence up the breaches' means to amend the falsities which have entered by the separation of truth from good; 'to build it according to the days of eternity' denotes according to the state of

the church in ancient times; that state and those times are called in the Word the 'days of an age,' and also 'of generation and generation'..."

**AC 9163[5]**

- "...In that day will I raise up the tent of David that is fallen, and close up the fractures thereof; I will set up again its ruins, and I will build them as the days of eternity (Amos ix. 11); 'the house of David,' and 'the tent of David,' denote the church of the Lord, for 'David,' in the prophetic Word, denotes the Lord..."

**AC 10248[8]**

- "...where by 'the days of an age' is meant the time of the Most Ancient Church, which was celestial." Amos 9:11 is the verse being explained.

**AC 10545[7]**

- "...the 'tent of David' denotes the church of the Lord and what is holy of the worship of Him; 'to close up the breaches, and restore the ruins' denotes to restore these by removing falsities. That 'David' in the Word denotes the Lord...hence it is that 'the tent of David' denotes the church of the Lord, and that which is holy of worship." This passage is in explanation of Amos 9:11.

**AE 799[19]**

- "That a 'tent' signifies the church in respect to the truths of doctrine...." Amos 9:11 is cited.

**AR 704**

- In AR 704, a long series of quotes from the Word are given "...in which the Lord's coming and the New Church from Him at that time are meant by 'the day of Jehovah'..." Amos 9:11, 13 are within that series of references given from the Word.

**DERIVED DOCTRINE**

*"On that day I will rise up..."*

- Let's focus on the words "on that day..." because they differ from "the days of old," the "day of vengeance," or the "day of wrath." Checking the correspondence of to "rise up" might give us a clue. AC 4160 tells us that "to rise" signifies to reveal or to discover. AC 2218 teaches us that when people "rise up," it signifies that perception has come to an end.

- Could this portion of the prophecy be a combination of both things mentioned in the quotes above? The Lord saw Israel's movement away from Him. He witnessed the flickering light of inner perception fading away until darkness filled the mind. "On this day," the Lord was going to reveal (let them discover) just how far they had moved away from Him.

### *Gentiles*

- The Writings describe Gentiles as "...various forms of worship among those remote peoples who lived in mutual charity." (AC 1158) In another quote, Gentiles "signify all who are in the good of love to the Lord." (AE175[2]) Gentiles also represent "those who are in good out of the church." (AC 3322[4])

## **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

The Lord's words are quite plain and straightforward. He tells us that:

- A New Church will be instituted that will acknowledge Him.
- The tabernacle of celestial and holy things of worship will be restored.
- The Lord will raise the church up from the mental and spiritual ruins.
- The church will be built like the days of the Most Ancient Church.
- The New Church will have the restored truths to work with.
- The church's love will be freed of self-love.
- The church fences will have the breaches (infractions of Divine order) mended.

Most of all there is given a prophecy, a new song, of hope. There is a call for a rally of the faithful to come around Him. A beginning. A church whose kingdom will be forever and ever. "Come and taste and see that the Lord is good."

## **READ AND REVIEW**

Read Amos 9:11-12.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## **QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION**

In Revelation 6:10, we find a picture of those who had been slain for the Word of God gathered for the opening of the fifth seal. They were yearning for the day when the Lord would avenge their abuse. They asked the Lord, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"

1. After reading this prophecy in Amos, do you feel the same kind of modified question forming in your mind? "How long, Oh Lord, holy and true, until..." You bring the promised New Church to those who dwell on the earth?
2. We seem so small and so diversified as a church organization We long for the truths to take hold and spread. The delay, we are taught in the Writings, is for a purpose. Slow growth is necessary. Growth of the church must occur for the right reasons. Yet how long will it be?

### **AMOS 9:13-15**

*"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  
 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.*

### **PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS**

#### ***P&P***

- "...that in it (the church) there will be the doctrine of truth and its understanding, vers. 13-15..."

#### ***AR 704***

- "That 'the great day of God Almighty' signifies the coming of the Lord, and then the New Church, is evident from many passages in the Word, as from these:- [Amos 9:11, 13 are cited among the many references.]"

#### ***AE 433 [27]***

- "From this it can be seen how far from the truth those have wondered, who believe that at the end of time the Jews will be converted to the Lord and brought back into the land of Canaan. Those who have hitherto so believed are excusable, because they have known nothing of the spiritual sense of the Word, and therefore have not known that the 'land' signifies the church, 'Jerusalem' the church in respect to doctrine, 'Israel' those who are of the spiritual church, and 'Judah' those who are of the celestial church; also that

bringing them into the land of Canaan is treated of in the prophets, bringing the faithful into heaven and into the church is meant. This took place when the Lord came into the world, for then all those who lived in the good of charity and had worshiped God under a human form were brought into heaven; these had been preserved under heaven until the Lord came, and when He glorified His Human they were brought in. These are the ones meant in many passages in the prophetic Word that treat of the captivity of the sons of Israel and Judah, and their being brought back into their land." Among the many passages offered, Amos 9: 12-15 is cited.

***AC 6435 [10]***

- "...‘mountains’ denote celestial love, and ‘hills’ spiritual love...in these passages the goods of celestial love are signified by ‘mountains;’ and likewise by ‘hills,’ but in a lower degree." Amos 9:13 is cited as one reference.

***AC 5117[7]***

- "In Amos...it treats here of the setting up of the spiritual church, which is thus described—the conjunction of spiritual good with its truth by the ‘ploughman reaching the reaper;’ and the conjunction of spiritual truth with its good by the ‘treader’ of grapes reaching him that draweth the seed;’ the goods of the love and charity therefrom are signified by the ‘mountains dropping new wine and the hills melting;’ ‘bringing back the captivity of the people’ denotes deliverance from falsities; ‘building the waste cities’ denotes rectifying the falsified doctrinals of truth; ‘inhabiting them and planting vineyards’ denotes cultivating those things which are of the spiritual church; ‘drinking the wine thereof,’ appropriating the truths of that church which are of charity; and ‘making clusters and eating the fruit of them,’ appropriating the goods thence derived. Every one can see that ‘building cities,’ ‘planting vineyards,’ ‘drinking wine,’ ‘making clusters,’ and ‘eating the fruit of them,’ are merely natural things, in which there would be nothing Divine unless they contained a spiritual sense." Amos 9:13, 14 are cited.

***AC 6377 [8]***

- "That ‘wine’ denotes the good of love and of faith, is plain from the Lord’s words which He said of wine when He instituted the Holy Supper...which He would give to those who are of His kingdom." Amos 9:13, 14 are cited.

***AR 316***

- "...that ‘wine’ signifies truth from...good, is evident from the following passages..." Amos 9:13, 14 are cited.

### **AR 336**

- “It is because the habitations of the angels are upon mountains and hills, that ‘mountains’ and ‘hills’ in the Word signify heaven and the church, where there exists love to the Lord and love to the neighbor, and, in the opposite sense, hell, where there exists self-love and the love of the world...[this] is evident from the following passages...” Amos 9:13, 14 are cited.

### **AE 405[19]**

- “In Amos...‘The mountains’ are said ‘to drop sweet wine,’ and ‘the hills to dissolve,’ because ‘mountains’ signify the good of love to the Lord, and ‘hills’ the good of charity towards the neighbor, and ‘sweet wine’ truths; therefore these words signify that from these two goods they shall have truths in abundance, for the bringing back of the people from captivity, about which this is said, signifies the establishment of a new church.” Amos 9:13, 14 are cited.

### **AE 376[6]**

- “In Amos...ix. 13-15...This chapter treats first of the vastation of the church, and then of its restoration by the Lord; and ‘the people Israel’ do not mean that people, but those with whom the church was to be established; and ‘the ploughman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that draweth forth the seed,’ signifies that he who receives good and truth shall also perform uses, or bear fruit, thus that with the man of the church the two shall be present at the same time; ‘the mountains shall drop down sweet wine, and all the hills shall dissolve,’ signifies, as just above, that from the good of love to the Lord and from the good of charity towards the neighbor there shall be truths in abundance, ‘sweet wine’ here, or ‘wine,’ meaning truth; that ‘the captivity of the people Israel shall be brought back’ signifies the restoration of the church among the Gentiles, for ‘captivity’ means spiritual captivity, in which those are who are remote from goods and truths, and yet in a desire for them (see A.C., n. 9164). ‘The waste cities that they shall build’ signify the doctrinals of truth and good from the Word, before destroyed and at that time to be restored; ‘the vineyards which they shall plant,’ and ‘the wine of which they shall drink,’ signify all things of the church from which there is intelligence, ‘a vineyard’ signifies the spiritual church, and therefore ‘vineyards’ signify all things of the church; ‘wine’ signifies the truth of the church in general, and ‘to drink it’ signifies to be instructed and become intelligent, thus intelligence; and ‘the gardens which they shall make, and the fruit of which they shall eat,’ signifies wisdom, ‘gardens’ meaning all things of intelligence, and their ‘fruit’ signifying the goods of life, thus ‘to eat their fruit’ signifies the appropriation of good, thus wisdom, for wisdom comes when truths are committed to the life; and because this is what is meant, therefore it is said of Israel, ‘I will plant them upon their ground.’”

### ***AC 1069[3]***

- “‘Planting vineyards’ denotes the planting of the spiritual church; thus a ‘vineyard’ means the spiritual church, or Israel.” This quote follows the citing of Amos 9:14.

### ***AC 1071[5]***

- “In Amos...ix. 14...This is said of the spiritual church, or ‘Israel,’ of which planting vineyards and drinking the wine thereof is predicated, when it becomes such as to have faith from charity.”

### ***AR 90***

- “Wisdom and intelligence are also signified by ‘garden’ in...Amos ix, 14...The man of the church is also like a garden as to intelligence, when he is in the good of love from the Lord, because the spiritual heat which vivifies him is love, and the spiritual light is intelligence therefrom. It is known that gardens in this world flourish by means of heat and light; it is the same in heaven.”

### ***TCR 467[4]***

- “Elsewhere in the Word ‘garden’ signifies intelligence (as in...Amos ix. 14...)”

### ***AE 811[25]***

- This number mentions Amos 9:14 but tells the reader to see the explanation in AE 376, 405.

### ***AE 919***

- “That a ‘vineyard’ signifies the spiritual church is evident from the passages in the Word where ‘vineyard’ is mentioned (as in...Amos ix. 14...)”

## **DERIVED DOCTRINE**

1. It would appear that we have little need to turn to derived doctrine for help. We have enough direct teachings as our source to help us with our summary and application section. Our sixteen references explain just about all of the major points of the verses, helping us to frame up the internal sense. Once again, if anyone finds additional reference numbers, please share them in the discussion period.

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

1. Contrasts are an essential part of any learning process. If you were to read books about Amos written by people who are not members of the New Church, the commentary on this last chapter would be filled with statements like this one:

Israel will in that day be restored from centuries-long captivity to rebuild her cities and inhabit them with the enjoyment of her vineyards and her gardens...Then Israel will be planted and rooted in her own land...never more plucked up and uprooted from her God-given land. The day of exile, thank God, will be past.... God's heart is full of good things in store for Israel. (This quote is taken from page 124 of *The Minor Prophets*, by Charles L. Feinberg, Moody Press.)

2. The Writings, on the other hand, remark that Israel (and the Jewish nation) "was not chosen, and still less that it will be chosen..." Israel was only "the representative of a church..." (AC 7051)

Instead, the closing prophecy in Amos is about the Lord. It is about His coming into the world to glorify His Human. Those who had been preserved (the remnant), those who had remained faithful, are the ones who are to be brought back into the land. This closing prophecy is about the New Church. The promise of sweet wine, the hills flowing with the abundance of wine, the planting, the gardens, being fed, refer to the gifts the New Church will enjoy. Put simply, the Lord is promising to restore the spiritual gifts of love and wisdom. Balance, conjunction, and elevation of heart and mind will help us see what is planted in the restored land of our captivity. We are to see the beauty and order of the gardens. We will taste the wine of the mountains. No longer will Hell be able to pull up the resources of the Lord. The New Church will be the crown of all churches whose kingdom shall reign forever and ever. Amen!

## READ AND REVIEW

Read Amos 9:13-15.

Read the summary from *P&P*.

## QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE REFLECTION

1. Have you heard recently anyone speaking about Israel being the chosen people? Have you ever heard someone describe the chaos in the Middle East as a sign that the end of the world is coming? What do you think about this?
2. How might this "chosen people" concept interfere with our understanding of the internal sense? When we understand the internal sense, how is this concept a part of it?
3. Is there a sense of excitement as you read this final section of Amos? Why?

4. After reading all of the hard messages directed to the unfaithful, isn't it wonderful to end with an uplifting message about the Lord coming to our rescue with a permanence and victory? The hells do not prevail. The hells are not stronger than the Lord. The effort to remain faithful pays off. What were we worried about? Should we have been so unsure of ourselves and the Lord? How can we hold onto this triumphant state during times when it doesn't seem visible?
5. Doesn't this final chapter do a lot in restoring our confidence in the inevitability of the New Church? Let's talk about this.

## Epilogue: A Summary of the Nine Chapters of Amos

*The following summaries draw and expand on the outline given in "Summary Exposition of the Prophets and Psalms."*

### CHAPTER ONE

The message of this chapter outlines what happens to a church (or individual) when it *perverts the Word* and turns aside the goods of spiritual knowledge. Those who intend to "turn aside" the Word do violence to the literal sense. Those who "turn aside" the Word are likened to an army that flees in the day of combat and capitulates because it does not use the Lord's resources.

### CHAPTER TWO

*Adulterating the good of the literal sense* will corrupt the church. The fatalities of adulteration are both the celestial (love) and spiritual (wisdom) that are within or available to the church. Adulteration of the things of the church is like a person who is in "possession of truth and yet is without truth." Adulterating the good of the literal harms the sense of judgment for the church, or person, and ultimately, that church or person will perish.

### CHAPTER THREE

*A church cannot serve two masters.* It cannot peacefully coexist with truths and falsities. To want to live with both and to seek a compromise will cause the church to be laid to waste. The church will perish, and the goods and truths of the Word will be taken away from it.

### CHAPTER FOUR

Compromise will *pervert doctrine* of the church. The "sensual scientifics" that result from such perversions will obfuscate external worship to give the appearance that all is well. Seemingly plausible reasons for the perversions were woven into the externals of worship. But when the Lord looked at the heart of things, He saw death and told the Israelites there was no "power" in their truths. The Lord exhorted them to turn back to Him before they became like people with "no teeth."

## CHAPTER FIVE

*Self intelligence* will lay the Church to waste. The Lord, once again, exhorted the Israelites to return. If they continued in their ways, it would lead them into all ruin. He told them their worship was not acceptable. If they would turn back to the essentials, He would lead them to “acceptable” worship, and they would once again possess the good and truth. Otherwise, they would be deprived of every knowledge of truth and good.

## CHAPTER SIX

*Israel's choices* had made it the worst religious system among the nations. What made this so sad was that they possessed an “abundance [of] all things of the church.” To continue as they were would cause all spiritual things to perish, insomuch that “nothing would remain.” The Lord told them that they had no one to blame but themselves. “...they have acquired these things *to themselves from self.*”

## CHAPTER SEVEN

The organized church was *increasing from externals to externals*. The course of their actions could lead but to one thing: corruption and breaches that would end with the destruction of internal or inmost things. Their decisions were against God and doctrine. The church with all things belonging to it would “perish.”

## CHAPTER EIGHT

The Lord was not going to sit by and watch the church die. He revealed to the Israelites that He was going to bring about a change. Here is the promise made: a “*new [element] of the church will arise.*” The old church would end, but with a remnant, the coming of the Lord and the glorification of His Human would successfully establish a New Church.

## CHAPTER NINE

*The Last Judgment* would be thorough. None of the perpetrators of evil responsible for the demise of the church would escape the Last Judgment. Prior churches had followed a similar path of spiritual ruination. But this time, the new church would not degenerate as the others had. The Lord announced to Israel that a church would arise that will not perish. This New Church will worship and acknowledge the Lord. It will have soundness of doctrine and understanding, new wine, new gardens, and the abundance and beauty of the Lord’s restoration of His Church.