

קדשים

Amos, chapter 9, verses 7 to 15

Introduction

Connection of haftarah and sidra:

Opinions are divided over the reasons for the selection of this haftarah.

According to one view, the sidra deals prominently and memorably with the ethical prerequisites of the kingdom of priests that Israel was meant to be, while the haftarah shows how widely, at the time of Amos, Israel diverged from its destined path.

Another opinion finds the reason for the selection at the end of the sidra, which contains the warning that a sinful nation will be plucked from its land. Amos speaks in like tones, though in the end he holds out the vision of a brighter future.

The setting:

Though Amos was a native of Tekoa, a little place near Jerusalem, he moved north, to the kingdom of Israel, and preached in Samaria (its capital) as well as in Bethel, where a shrine existed that featured immoral practices under the guise of religion. He was deeply shocked at what he saw: moral laxity, legal and social corruption, and religious rites that had little to do with the God of Israel. Conspicuous wealth and social injustice lived side by side.

For more on Amos and his time, see our *General Introduction*.

The message:

1. The universal God has not lost sight of Israel's misdeeds, and its punishment is inevitable. (9:7-10)
2. But after the punishment will come a glorious reversal and restoration. This ends the book of Amos. (11-15)