p-ISSN 2302-5476
e-ISSN 2579-3934

DIVINE DEMANDS FOR JUSTICE: AN EXEGETICAL READING OF AMOS 5, 18-27

Paulus Halek Bere [a,1]

[a] *Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, Roma-Italia*

[1] *helekbere@gmail.com*

Submitted: 13-05-2023
Accepted : 29-09-2023
Published : 01-11-2023

ABSTRACT

The book of Amos is one of the prophetic literatures to be read in every context of human life. While reading Amos 5,18-27 we may ask the question: What is the reason for God to hate Israel's worship and not accepting their offering? This selected text shows a contrasting movement of relationship between God and Israel. God chooses and makes Israel his own, in order that they would be an instrument of his blessing for others. However, the Israelites failed to practice it in their daily life. In this exegetical paper, I would suggest that neglecting justice for the poor in the society provokes God's anger to hate Israel's worship and reject their sacrifice. Concerning the wickedness of Israel, Amos declared that even though Israel desires for the day of Yahweh, it is darkness and not light for them (v.18) and because of their sins, God will send them into exile beyond Damascus (v. 27). God hates their attitude but still loves them as his chosen people. The purpose of Amos's announcement is to change the hearts of ruling class's behavior and his basic concern on socioeconomic injustices. Amos's oracles suggest that the officials got rich in dishonesty. The exile is the consequence of the failure of Israel leaders in leading the people to live in divine will. It becomes the moment for Israel to purify themselves before God and being trained for strengthen their good relationship with Yahweh, their God.

KEYWORDS:
Woe,
desire,
day of Yahweh,
hate,
exile,
justice

ABSTRAKSI

Kitab Amos merupakan salah satu literatur kenabian yang dapat dibaca dan dipahami maknanya dalam setiap konteks kehidupan manusia. Secara khusus, Amos 5:18-27 menyerukan tentang motif Allah membenci doa orang Israel dan menolak persembahan mereka. Teks yang dipilih ini menunjukkan dinamika hubungan yang kontras antara Allah dan Israel. Allah memilih dan menjadikan Israel sebagai milik-Nya, agar

DOI: 10.24071/jt.v12i02.6365
W: http://e-journal.usd.ac.id/index.php/jt | E: jurnal-teologi@usd.ac.id

This work is license under CC BY-SA
Creative Common Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

mereka menjadi sarana saluran berkat-Nya bagi orang lain. Namun, pada kenyataannya orang Israel gagal menghidupinya dalam praktik kehidupan sehari-hari. Dalam makalah eksegetis ini, saya akan menyarankan bahwa tindakan mengabaikan keadilan bagi orang miskin di masyarakat memprovokasi kemarahan Tuhan untuk membenci ibadah umat Israel dan menolak kurban persembahan mereka. Amos menyatakan bahwa meskipun Israel menginginkan keselamatan, tetapi yang akan mereka alami adalah kegelapan dan bukan terang (ayat 18) dan sebagai akibat dari dosa-dosa mereka, Tuhan akan membuang mereka ke tempat pengasingan di Damaskus (ayat 27). Tuhan membenci sikap mereka tetapi terus mengasihi mereka sebagai umat pilihan-Nya. Tujuan dari pembuangan dalam konteks Amos adalah Allah hendak mengubah hati dan perilaku para penguasa dan memberikan perhatian mendasar pada ketidakadilan sosial ekonomi. Amos menyerukan bahwa para pemimpinan Israel menjadi kaya karena mereka bersikap tidak jujur. Dalam konteks Amos, Pengasingan merupakan konsekuensi dari kegagalan para pemimpin Israel memimpin bangsanya untuk hidup dalam kehendak Ilahi. Hal ini menjadi momen bagi Israel untuk menyucikan diri di hadapan Tuhan dan dilatih untuk memperkuat hubungan yang erat antara mereka dengan Yahweh.

All rights reserved.

1. INTRODUCTION

The oracles of Amos are the lessons in the usage of God's language itself concerning the nature of justice. Reading Amos 5,18-27, we may ask the question: What is the reason for God to hate Israel's worship and do not accept their offering? This chosen text shows the contrasting movement of relationship between God and Israel. God chooses and makes Israel his own, in order that they would be the instrument of his blessing for others. However, the Israelites failed to live it out in their daily life. It provokes the anger of God toward them, especially the ruling class of Israel. Even though, they long for the day of Yahweh, it would be darkness for them. Yahweh hates and rejects their worship and offering in their assemblies. In our context today, we find that the anger of God in Amos is still relevant. The spirit of option for the poor is written and formulated well by the church leaders in varied documents. However, many dioceses and parishes still focus only on liturgical celebration rather than giving more attention to pastoral ministry for the poor. So, in this exegetical paper, I will argue that neglecting justice for the poor in society provokes God's anger to hate Israel's worship and reject their sacrifice.

2. METHOD

I will develop this paper by using an exegetical method to read Amos 5,18-27. Using this approach, I will use a critical interpretation and explanation upon the text. It is the process of discovering the original and intended meaning of a passage of text: in its literary context, its message for the reader, and theological reflection. Some questions to be asked: What is the book of Amos? What is the genre of our selected text? who is the main character of the text and how the main character plays his role in the dynamic of the text? and who is God in this text? These series of questions will become the guide line to understand deeper the biblical context and the whole of what was happening in the text. An overview of the book of Amos and the close reading on Amos 5,18-27 will point out the divine demands for Israel and the motif of God's anger in Amos 5,18-27.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Overview the Book of Amos

The book of Amos is one of prophetic literature to be read in every context of human life. The name of Amos appears 7x in the whole book (1,1; 7,8,10,11,12,14; 8,2). Among these occurrences, there are two passages that give a special information about the identity of Amos compared to other prophets. Amos is identified as one of the shepherds from Tekoa and not as the prophet nor prophet's son (Amos 1,1; 7,14). The text gives the basic information to the readers that "Amos was called to prophecy from his home in Tekoa, a town in the highlands of Judah during the reigns of Jeroboam II, king of Israel (789–748), and Uzziah, king of Judah (785–733)."[1] Jeremias argues that "the more precise determination time of prophecy is the decade between 760 and 750 B.C.E."[2] In agreement with Jeremias on dating the time of prophet's prophecy, Eidevall said that "there is no reason to regard Amos from Tekoa as an entirely fictitious character. But from a scholarly point of view, it is important to keep in mind that all reconstructions of his life and career have to be based on one source only, namely, the book of Amos."[3]

Samuel Terrien was the first scholar who demonstrated wisdom influence in the book of Amos. In his essay, Samuel "proposed eight specific correlations (plus other general ones) between the prophet and the biblical wisdom literature."[4] Hans Walter Wolf has different perspective with Terrien. Wolf argues that "several rhetorical forms characteristic of Amos, including didactic questions, woe-cries, numerical sequences and speeches of exhortation, are being derived from clan wisdom, the teaching of elders in the rural communities of Israel."[5] Here, Wolff connects the origin of Amos

1 S. M. PaulShalom M. Paul, Amos. A commentary on the Book of Amos (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1991), 1.
2 Jeremias Jörg, The Book of Amos (Louisville, Kentucky: Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, 1998), 2.
3 Eidevall Göran, Amos. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary (New Haven – London: Yale University Press, 2017) 5.
4 Jhon L. Mclaughlin, "Is Amos (Still) among the Wise?," Journal of Biblical Literature 133, no. 2 (2014): 281.

himself from such a community. Recent scholars move to the idea that "it is not necessary to limit the book to the one of Searle's classes of illocutionary acts (assertive, directive, commissive, declaratives, and expressive); each play a part within the book. The book announces the end of Israel's existence as a nation by exposing its self-destructive behavior and beliefs in the past and in the present."[6]

Amos 5,18-27 is a piece of poetry[7] text in the second part of the book of Amos (Chap. 3 - 6). In this part, the prophet focuses on the acts of Israel and their consequences. The reader will listen to the divine monologues about condemnations toward the ruling elite. They live in the situation of life that are "indulging in a luxurious lifestyle (4:1; 6:1-6), which involves lavish cultic celebrations (4:4-5; 5:21-24), and allegedly fail to uphold justice, as they manipulate the courts and prey on the poor (3:9-10; 4:1; 5:7, 10-12; 6:12b)."[8] Concerning the wickedness of Israel, Amos declared that even though Israel desires for the day of Yahweh, but it is darkness and not light for them (v.18) and as the result of their sins, God will send them into exile beyond Damascus (v. 27). But at the end of the book, Amos promises new hope for Israel that God will bring Israel back in the promise land (9,15). This promise will come true, if Israel is able to fulfill Divine's demands from them: through Israel, God's justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream (5,24).

The flow of Amos 5,18-27 begins with the tone of "woe cry" and address the object in second person (vv.18-20). Here, the prophet speaks on behalf of God. Then, the subject is changed in first person singular. God express his anger toward Israel's worship and rejects their offering (vv.21-23). In v.24 Divine demands for Israel to be the instruments of justice and righteousness in society. This demand indicates that Israel, especially the elite (political and religious leaders) kept God's blessing just for themselves and oppresses the powerless. Then, with the two rhetoric questions (vv.25-26), God invites them to reflect on their past. The dark moment for Israel will come true at the time when God drives them into exile beyond Damascus (v.27). The flow shows to us that "The prophet's discourse begins from the clear-eyed perception of a concrete historical menace and the prophet, for his own monitory purposes, wants to evoke these actual threats as powerfully as he can with his own spiritual and political insight."[9]

---

5 Walter J. Houston, *Amos. An Introduction and Study Guide Justice and Violence* (London – New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2017), 11.

6 M. Daniel Carroll R., *The Book of Amos* (Michigan, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2020), 68.

7 Luis Alonso Schökel, *A Manual of Hebrew Poetry*. Subsidia Biblica 11 (Roma: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2000), 16. The poetry is about daily life and is illuminated by the wisdom and common sense of the teacher.

8 Göran, *Amos*,14.

9 Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2011), 189.

3.2. The Text ofAmos 5,18-27

הוי המתאוים את יום יהוה למה זה לכם	[18]Woe to you who long for the day of Yahweh!
יום יהוה הוא חשך ולא אור:	Why would you have the day of Yahweh?
כאשר ינוס איש מפני הארי ופגעו הדב	It is darkness, and not light! [19]As if someone fled from
ובא הבית וסמך ידו על הקיר ונשכו	a lion, but a bear met him; and then, as he comes
הנחש:	home, and leans his hand against the wall, a snake
הלא חשך יום יהוה ולא אור ואפל ולא	bites him. [20]Is not the day of the Yahweh darkness, not
נגה לו:	light, and gloom with no brightness in it?
	[21]I hate, I reject your festivals, and I do not delight in
שנאתי מאסתי חגיכם ולא אריח	your assemblies. [22]Even if you bring me burnt
בעצרתיכם:	offerings,
כי אם תעלו לי עלות ומנחתיכם לא	and your grain offerings, I will not accept them. I will
ארצה ושלם מריאיכם לא אביט:	not even look at the communion sacrifices of your
הסר מעלי המון שריך וזמרת נבליך לא	fatlings. [23]Take away from me the noise of your songs!
אשמע:	I do not want to hear the music of your harps.
	[24]But let justice roll down like waters,
ויגל כמים משפט וצדקה כנחל איתן:	righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.
	[25]Did you bring me sacrifices and grain offerings for
הזבחים ומנחה הגשתם לי במדבר	forty years in the desert, O house of Israel?
ארבעים שנה בית ישראל:	[26]Or did you carry around Sakkuth, your king, and
ונשאתם את סכות מלככם ואת כיון	Kaiwan, your images, your astral gods, which you
צלמיכם כוכב אלהיכם אשר עשיתם	made for yourselves?
לכם:	[27]I will drive you into exile beyond Damascus, says the
והגליתי אתכם מהלאה לדמשק אמר	Lord, God of hosts is his name.
יהוה אלהי צבאות שמו:	

3.3. Divine Demands for Israel

The division of the text depends on the main topic to be emphasized. Jeremias divides Amos 5,18-27 into two parts: day of the Lord (vv.18-20) and rejection of worship (vv. 21-27). Eidevall develops in three parts: Beware of the day of the Lord (18-20); rejected sacrifice (vv. 21-24); and desert wandering and deportation (vv. 25-27). Carroll R. approaches the text in chiasm pattern."[10] These three commentators have

[10] Carroll R., *The Book of Amos*, 331.

their own ways approach the text. I prefer to follow thematic chiasm that place the divine demand for justice as the centre of the structure to the entire ten verses:

A God's punishment: darkness in the day of Yahweh (vv.18-20)
B The despised cult: unacceptable rituals (vv. 21-23)
C Demands for justice and righteousness (v. 24)
B' The despised cult: unlike the past (vv. 25-26)
A' God's punishment: exile beyond Damascus (v. 27)

This structure shows very well concentric chiasm. It begins with prophet's alarm on the punishment for Israel and ends with its realisation in exile. Amos lists seven things that the God does not like form Israel: "feasts, solemn assemblies, burnt offerings, cereal offerings, peace offerings, noise of songs, and melody of harps. After this listing comes the climax, indicating what the Lord does desire: but let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream."[11] God hates their attitude but still loves them as his chosen people. Those lists indicate their life, so that Amos "directs his rebuke at the people who taste it."[12] Israel is invited to keep in mind about God's mercy for them in his covenant with them. I will point out the link and connection between the structure A-A'; B-B' and C as the central of the pattern:

A-A' : God's punishment (vv.18-20; v. 27)

For Israel, God is their savior. This idea is contradicted with the opening section of our text. A (vv.18-20) is introduced by a woe exclamation that begins a new section (v.18; cf. 6:1). Reading this text, "most of the exegetical discussion of Amos 5:18–20 has centered on the expression the day of Yahweh."[13] This expression has appeared 3x (v.18 2x; v.20 1x) with its function as the object of desire (המתאוים); as possessive (לכם); and predicate (חשך). The address (you) desires for the day of Yahweh, that is light, but in reality, it is darkness for them. Then, A' (v.27) God threatens the addressees with deportation and exile."[14] Here, we find the correlation between A and A'. The symbolic meaning of darkness in A is realized in A', that is the exile of Israel beyond Damascus.

[11] James Limburg, "Sevenfold Structures in the Book of Amos," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 106, no. 2 (1987): 220.

[12] Izabela Jaruzelska, *Amos and the Officialdom in the Kingdom of Israel. The Socio-Economic Position of the Officials in the Light of the Biblical, the Epigraphic and Archaeological Evidence* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, 1998), 161.

[13] Göran, *Amos*, 163.

[14] Göran, *Amos*, 169.

B-B' : The despised cult (vv.21-23; vv.25-26)

Israel continues to maintain their relationship with God in worship and give offering to him. The anger of God toward Israel in B (vv.21-23) has often been seen as a paradigmatic instance of cult-critical prophecy. We find that "Divine rejection of sacrifices is rather a common motif in the Hebrew Bible (Gen 4:4–5; Lev 10:1–2; Num 16:15; 1 Sam 15:13–23). The purpose of offering sacrifices was "as a way of maintaining a reciprocal yet asymmetric relationship. The deity would always have the possibility to either accept or refuse a sacrificial gift."[15] Then, B formulates a well-balanced composition that displays mathematical precision in its three-by-seven structure. For Eidevall, "These three verses consist of seven clauses, with seven verbs, and seven objects of divine rejection in tripartite thematic structure: v. 21, festivals; v. 22, sacrifices; and v. 23, music. Further, the expressions of divine dislike allude (anthropomorphically) to three different senses: smell (Hiphil of *ryḥ,* v. 21b), sight (Hiphil of *nbṭ,* v. 22b), and hearing (*šmʿ,* v. 23b)."[16]

B' (vv.25-26) "reverts to the topic of sacrifice, but from another angle altogether which develops the theme of 5:21–24 in a new direction, in a later historical situation."[17] Two rhetoric questions invite the addressees (you) to beware of their god or deity whom they desire to worship. Between B and B', we find the different way the subject introduces his identity to the object. In B, the subject speaks in 1st singular and gives the negative statement toward the act of the addressees (you). In B', subject speaks in rhetoric form to remind Israelites about the care of Yahweh toward their ancestors. Here, the speaker invites the addressees (you) in order to remember their golden memory with Yahweh in Exodus. B and B' is connected by the theme about the despised cult.

C : Demands for justice and righteousness (v.24)

After criticizing the false hope of Israel and pointing out the anger of God toward them, now the prophet declares to Israel about Divine's expectation from them. The changes of grammar in C (Weyigtol) indicates the new topic that contrasts with the former. C is a climatic oracle (v.24). Here, the divine communicates his demand for the address. He asks Israel to be the instrument for his justice and righteousness for others. These demands were the fundamental values which they had failed to do in their life and provoked God's anger.

[15] Göran, *Amos,* 166. The reason for rejection is not always stated (Gen 4:4–5). In some cases, it is about improper performance of the ritual (Lev 10:1–2); in others, the reason is (alleged) disloyalty toward the deity (1 Sam 15:13–23).

[16] Göran, *Amos*, 167.

[17] Göran, *Amos*, 169.

3.4. The Anger of Yahweh

Amos laments on the desire of Israel for "day of Yahweh". By using the familiar lament "alas, woe" for the dead, Amos addresses Israel as the people who are already dead. This "woe" is ironically directed against those who earnestly believe in and "yearn for" the "day of the Yahweh," a term that is repeated three times (v.18a, 18b, 20). By using the tone and the address to a second-person plural, Amos directly confronts his audience that the punishment "becomes a vivid part of the description of the "Day of the Yahweh" in prophetic literature."[18]

The addressees will be impossible to avoid themselves from the punishment. Amos illustrates the horrors of the coming day of the Lord by employing a simile of three-fold encounter animals: "The *biological dimension* corresponds to the real lions, bears and snakes that impinged on the experience of Amos's audience, assumed to be ancient Israelites. The *physiological dimension* deals with how the people of the time experienced them. The *conceptual dimension* is how they were represented in such realms as literature (simile, or any art and artefacts) that may be available for us to reconstruct something of the ancient Israelite view."[19] It seems that in Amos's time, the popular understanding of such event was that Yahweh would come to defeat the nation's enemies.

a. Human worship and relationship with God

Based on the prophet's thesis on v.18, Jeremias argues that "the day of Yahweh means dead for Israel grounded in the divine rejection of Israel's worship. Lacking any possibility of contact with God, Israel is already the living dead."[20] Yahweh addresses his next impassioned attack against the cult which were "popular assemblies for the purpose of prayer and sacrifice during holidays or times of trouble (Lev 23:36; Num 29:35; Deut 16:8; 2 Kgs 10:20; Isa 1:13; Joel 1:14; 2:15; Neh 8:18)."[21] The formulation of rejection (vv.21-23) indicates that "the words of rejection are directed against a specific group of addressees in a specific historical situation. In view of the context, it is probably the sacrificial cult in the kingdom of Israel that is condemned."[22] Ideally, "Yahweh would take with approval the offerings that his people bring, but they are warned that worship should be done properly, with both suitable procedure and suitable intent (Lev 7,18; 19,7; 22,25; Ps 51,16; Hos 8,13; Mal 1,10,13)."[23] Israel is being told that its worship activities are no longer reaching God in the first place. It is

[18] Paul, *Amos*, 185. See in Is 13,10; Ezek 30,3; Joel 2,1-2; Zeph 1,15.
[19] Anselm C. Hagedorn – Andrew Mein, *Aspects of Amos: Exegesis and Interpretation* (London - New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2011), 86.
[20] Jörg, *The Book of Amos*, 101.
[21] Paul, *Amos*, 189-190.
[22] Göran, *Amos*, 168.
[23] Carroll R., *The Book of Amos*, 341.

because "they do it without justice and righteousness. The inefficacy and meaningless of its worship is a manifest sign that Israel is only seemingly alive, and in reality is not only consecrated to death, but indeed is already spiritually dead."[24]

Then, in vv.25-26, Yahweh awakens Israel's awareness about their past experience with him. The expected answer to the rhetoric question in v. 25 "Did you bring me sacrifices and offering in the wilderness?" is an implied negative response to the question ("No, we did not bring sacrifices in the wilderness"). It is argued that: "the negative answer to Amos's question, namely that there were no sacrifices in the wilderness period, evidences the received belief in Amos's day that sacrificial worship was not Mosaic in origin. Amos relied on the traditions found in JE, which involved cultic activity prior to the exodus and at Sinai but not during the wilderness period."[25]

The rhetorical question in v. 25, expecting a negative answer, continues the theme of sacrifices from v.22 "The word order (beginning with the object rather than with the verb) also suggests that the stress is on the practice of offering sacrifices, not on the question to whom they are offered."[26] Israel should always keep in mind that "The period of the wanderings in the wilderness was to that extent the model living, actualized righteousness at that time, faith was not in danger of being overwhelmed by the cult of Baal. Israel was dependent solely on Yahweh."[27] The fact that the book repeatedly returns to the exodus and wilderness to rebuke Israel implies that "these traditions were important to the people and were part of their confidence in divine succor. This verse creatively utilizes the wilderness to undermine the rituals that celebrated Israel's social imaginary."[28]

b. Divine demands for justice and righteousness

Amos points out divine demand for Israel as the center point of his message. Here, we find that "The prophet does not go on to contrast the present cult with any proposals for reform. Ritual, with all its paraphernalia and panoply cannot substitute for the basic moral and ethical actions of humans. When these are lacking, religious life, with all its ritual accoutrements, becomes a sham. What is required above all else is justice and righteousness."[29] Eidevall suggest that "Moral behavior should be more important than sacrifice. Lack of this dimension in Israel provide the reason for Yahweh to reject all sacrifices the Israelites offered."[30]

Amos reminds Israel that "Justice and righteousness, for both Amos and the other

[24] Jörg, *The Book of Amos*, 103.
[25] Andrew M. King, *Eschatology and Social Identity in Amos: Social Identity and the Book of Amos* (London: T&T Clark, 2021), 87.
[26] Tchavdar S. Hadjiev, *The Composition and Redaction of the Book of Amos* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009), 165.
[27] Jörg, *The Book of Amos*, 105.
[28] Carroll R., *The Book of Amos*, 347.
[29] Paul, *Amos*, 192.
[30] Göran, *Amos*,168.

classical prophets are not some short of behavioral goals, but rather primarily gift from God which Israel can allow to flourish, can support, or can obstruct, indeed can overthrow."[31] The coming justice and righteousness are associated with the person of Yahweh, either as divine judgment merited by nation's sin or as God's establishment of a proper order. Yahweh's mandate, that "justice and righteousness constantly characterize Israel has the added connotation of their indispensability for nation's survival and prosperity."[32] Divine demands for Israel request that they should constitutes a balance between spiritual and moral life in order to keep the good relationship between him and Israel.

c. Exile: God's punishment for Israel

Amos announces about the future exile for Israel. The people will be driven into exile by "The Lord, the God of hosts" (v 27). This announcement of exile will be the moment for Israel to experience an "incapable of turning radically for Israel to its God-given righteousness."[33] It is the time of the purification of the relationship between Yahweh and Israel. For Amos "to do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to Yahweh than sacrifice (Prov. 21,3)."[34] Here, "the oracle now reaches its climax with the announcement of the imminent punishment of exile, a theme often repeated throughout the book. But the question that still remains as to what exactly did Amos intend by using such an ill-defined geographical term as beyond Damascus? Nevertheless, his allusion here can be comprehended in ironic tones."[35] The exile beyond Damascus without mention Assyrian indicated that "the captive Israelites will be taken in a certain direction, namely to the north."[36]

3.5. God fights for justice

Israel desires for the salvation in the day of Yahweh. But, in fact it will be darkness not light for them. In this way, Robert B. Coote looks at exile as "Yahweh's war against the ruling class to cut off the elite's power at its wellspring: military might. On Yahweh's day of battle, he will fight not for the military elite, but against them."[37] The purpose of Amos's announcement is to change the heart of ruling class's behavior and his basic concern on socioeconomic injustice. It shows to us that God fights for justice and life of the powerless. Amos suggests four theological premises: "*First*, an agent who stands beyond the world who acts in the world; *second*, the agent according to justice; *third*, the one who acts in the world chooses justice of life; and

[31] Jörg, *The Book of Amos,* 104.
[32] Carroll R., *The Book of Amos*, 343-344.
[33] Jörg, *The Book of Amos*, 106.
[34] Jörg, *The Book of Amos*, 107.
[35] Paul, *Amos*, 198.
[36] Göran, *Amos*,174. The motif of forced migration to or beyond Syria recalls Amos 4,3, which presaged deportation toward Hermon.
[37] Robert B. Coote, *Amos among the Prophets: Composition and Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), 38.

fourth, the one who acts in the world tilts the balance of power by giving leverage to human beings to make God's justice known."[38] These premises help us to understand who God is and how he plays his role in fighting for the meaning of the fundamental nature of justice. Here, God's identity as the speaker, prophet, and agent of justice are one.

Amos claims that unjust world is about to be turned on its head. The only way he could really make that assertion is by faith that God acts in the world. Amos does not say that God urges us to help the poor, or God favors the poor over the rich. What he says is this: those who take life from the powerless will lose their own lives. The primary mode of the revelation of justice is life itself. It is shown in Amos himself as "the true prophet who is closest to the reality."[39] Amos saw that in the context of the world, among all human beings, our kind of life is shared by only a few. We are far removed in space and time from social catastrophes and miseries out of which God's justice raises people. The challenge we face in our context call us "for a deep awareness of the injustice we are part of and the ardent search for alternative action and life-styles."[40]

4. CONCLUSION

In the history of salvation, Israel becomes the chosen people and nation before God. Israel maintains their relationship with God by hoping for the day of Yahweh. In that day, Yahweh will come to save them. So, they are obediently observing the liturgical worship. But they failed to put it into their daily practices by living in God's justice and righteousness. It provokes God's anger to hate their beautiful worship and best offering to him. Amos speaks against the religious practices in Israel. The prophet says that instead of light, it will be darkness for Israel. the reason is they failed to live out their identity as the chosen people and the instrument of salvation for the world. They are desiring for the day of Yahweh only for themselves. In 5,24 "justice and righteousness" are contrasted with worship. The rejection of the cult is indeed based on the injustice of society. Amos's oracles suggest that the officials got rich by dishonest. Exile is the consequence of the failed of Israel leaders in leading the people to live in divine will. It becomes the moment for Israel to purify themselves before God and being trained for strengthen their relationship with Yahweh, their God.

[38] Coote, *Amos among the Prophets*, 39-41.
[39] Coote, *Amos among the Prophets*, 42.
[40] Coote, *Amos among the Prophets*,129.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alter, Robert, *The Art of Biblical Poetry*. New York, NY: Basic Books, 2011.

Carroll, R.M. Daniel, *The Book of Amos*. Michigan, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2020.

Coote, Robert B., *Amos among the Prophets: Composition and Theology*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981.

Göran, Eidevall, *Amos. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. New Haven – London: Yale University Press, 2017.

Hadjiev, Tchavdar S., *The Composition and Redaction of the Book of Amos*. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009

Hagedorn, Anselm C., – Mein, Andrew, *Aspects of Amos: Exegesis and Interpretation*. London - New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2011.

Houston, Walter J., *Amos. An Introduction and Study Guide Justice and Violence*. London -New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2017.

Jaruzelska, Izabela, *Amos and the Officialdom in the Kingdom of Israel. The Socio-Economic Position of the Officials in the Light of the Biblical, the Epigraphic and Archaeological Evidence*. Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, 1998.

Jörg, Jeremias, *The Book of Amos*, OTL; Louisville, Kentucky: Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, 1998.

King, Andrew M., *Eschatology and Social Identity in Amos: Social Identity and the Book of Amos*. London: T&T Clark, 2021.

Limburg, James, "Sevenfold Structures in the Book of Amos." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 106, no. 2 (1987): 217-222.

McLaughlin, Jhon L., "Is Amos (Still) among the Wise?" *Journal of Biblical Literature* 133, no. 2 (2014): 281-303.

Paul, Shalom. M., *Amos. A commentary on the book of Amos*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1991.

Schökel, Alonso Luis, *A Manual of Hebrew Poetry*. Subsidia Biblica 11. Roma: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2000.