

EPILOGUE

YHWH IS FAITHFUL

AMOS 9:11-15

¹¹On that day I will raise up the fallen booth of David, and repair its breaches, and restore its ruins, and rebuild it as in the days of old; ¹²in order that they may dispossess the remnant of Edom and all the nations who are called by my name, says YHWH who will do this.

¹³The time is surely coming, says YHWH, when the one who plows will overtake the one who reaps, and the treader of grapes the one who sows the seed; the mountains will drip sweet wine, and all the hills will flow with it.

¹⁴I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel, and they will rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them; they will plant vineyards and drink their wine, and they will make gardens and eat their fruit. ¹⁵I will plant them upon their own soil, and they will never again be uprooted from the soil that I have given them, says YHWH your God.

Since the primary focus of the prophet is on YHWH we should not be surprised to find him conclude his words of judgment (based on the failure of Israel to observe the covenant) with a statement of his overarching belief in YHWH's faithfulness.

Some scholars interpret the reference to 'the fallen booth of David' (the only time we find this expression in the Bible) as reflecting a view that was possible only after the fall of Jerusalem in 598. However, Amos would surely see the collapse of Israel as affecting the kingdom of David, which incorporated north and south. He envisages a return to the golden years of a united kingdom, the kingdom of David and Solomon (see verse 11). The focus is eschatological.

Amos's oracle against Edom (1:11-12) is based on a long history of rivalry. Amos foresees a time when, 'as in the days of old', Edom will once again come under the authority of the house of David. Even in Amos's time King Uzziah had incorporated the port of Elath into Judah (2Kings 14:22).

This is the only text in the Hebrew Bible that speaks of 'all the nations that are called by my name' (verse 12). It fits with the dream of Isaiah (see Isaiah 19:23-25) where he states:

Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my heritage.

YHWH wants his special possession to know peace and to enjoy abundant prosperity (verses 13-15; see 3:2).