

Course ID:	Course Title:	Winter 2018
BL 622	Advanced Hebrew Exegesis (Amos)	Prerequisite: BL 512
		Credits: 3

Class Information		Instructor Information		Important Dates	
Days:	WEDNESDAYS	Instructor:	R. REMIN	First day of classes:	Thu, Jan. 4
Time:	9:45 – 12:30	Email:	rremin@ambrose.edu	Last day to add/drop, or change to audit:	Sun, Jan. 14
Room:	L 2100	Phone:	404 410 2000 ext. 7906	Last day to request revised exam:	Mon, Mar. 5
Lab/Tutorial:	None	Office:	L2081	Last day to withdraw from course:	Fri, Mar. 16
		Office Hours:	See below! By appointment.	Last day to apply for coursework extension:	Mon, Mar. 26
Final Exam:	None			Last day of classes:	Wed, Apr. 11

Course Description

BL 622 An advanced study of Hebrew grammar for the purpose of gaining insight into the meaning of the Old Testament text. This study will enable the student to understand a text in more detail as well as how the grammatical structures of Hebrew may have lent themselves to different interpretations. This course may be repeated for credit depending on the biblical books selected for study. **Prerequisite:** BL 512

The Old Testament book for study this semester is Amos.

Expected Learning Outcomes

The aim of the course is that students acquire or improve the following skills:

1. The student will review and learn more of the grammatical elements of biblical Hebrew.
2. Each student will develop and improve their ability to read, understand and explain the Hebrew text of the prophet Amos

3. The student will begin to learn how to analyze Hebrew poetry in terms its literary and rhetorical characteristics so as to understand how Hebrew poetry communicates and what it communicates. This study includes an analysis of the various sub-genres of the prophetic literature.
4. The exegesis of Amos by various “Theologies from the Margins (Liberation, Feminist and Black),” will be discussed..

Textbooks

Students are required to have regular access to the following texts.

Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia, ed. K. Elliger and W. Rudolf (Stuttgart, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1967-1977).

Brown, Francis, Driver, S.R., Briggs, Charles A. *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Clarendon Press, 1907).

John Joseph Owens, *Analytical Key to the Old Testament* (Baker, 1989) or **an equivalent in electronic format**.

Recommended Resources:

Bruce K. Waltke, M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (1990).

Gesenius, E. Kautzsch, A. E. Cowley, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* (various). *GKC* is also available on line (someone retyped the whole book) – <http://www.biblecentre.net/ot/ges/gr/hegr-Index.html>

Ronald J. Williams, John C. Beckman, *Hebrew Syntax* (2007).

Ronald J. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax* (1992).

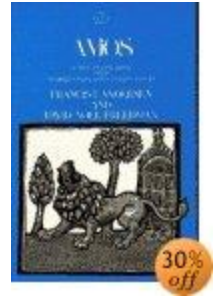
Gesenius, E. Kautzsch, A. E. Cowley, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* (various). *GKC* is also available on line (someone retyped the whole book). <http://www.biblecentre.net/ot/ges/gr/hegr-Index.html>

Douglas Stuart, *Old Testament Exegesis: A Primer for Students and Pastors* (Westminster Press, 1984).

Walter Kaiser, *Toward an Exegetical Theology* (Baker, 1981).

These commentaries are highly recommended and with others will serve their purpose at various points in the course. (This is primarily a Hebrew reading course and not a reading the commentaries course.) Pay particular attention to Anderson and Friedman because of the detailed information it contains on Hebrew prose particles, etc. See appendix one in this syllabus for more details. Beware that, although sometimes you need commentaries for information as is the case here, commentaries are for the greatest part “thought stoppers.”

F.I. Andersen & David Noel Freedman, *Amos* (Anchor Bible, 1989) pp.977.



Andrew MacIntosh, *A Critical and exegetical commentary on Amos and Hosea* (International Critical Commentary, 1997).

W.R. Harper, *A Critical and exegetical commentary on Amos and Hosea* (International Critical Commentary, 1905, 1990) and is still considered very useful.

Do not neglect to read the articles in the best of the “bible dictionaries.” Start with the articles on Amos and the other suggested articles there. Read articles on prophets, prophetic literature, genres, textual criticism, and the geography, flora, fauna of Amos.

New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis, 5 vol., VanGemeren, Willem A. ed. (Zondervan, 1997). **DOTTE** includes the only published dictionary of semantic domains for Hebrew. Includes a “Guide to OT Theology and Exegesis” which amounts to a 215 page hermeneutics course which includes among other things details on how to do word studies. Includes a topical dictionary and numerous indices. cf. Colin Brown DNTT

Theological Dictionary of the OT, 10 vol., G. Johannes Botterwick, Helmer Ringgren, eds. (Eerdmans, 1974-1981). **TDOT**

Anchor Bible Dictionary, 6 vol., Noel D. Freedman, et al. eds. (Doubleday, 1992). **ABD**

Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible, 5 vol., George A. Buttrick, ed. (Abingdon, 1964). **IDB**

Dictionary of Biblical Imagery, Leland Ryken, et al. ed. (IVP, 1998). **DBI**

Course Schedule

The members of this class meet every Wednesday, except February 22 (Reading Week), until the end of the semester’s scheduled classes on April 11. This course’s last class is April 4.

April 20 is the absolute last day for the submission of assignments for this course.

We begin by reading, translating and discussing the Hebrew text of Amos chapter one and the first verse.

Interspersed with each class's discussion of a section of Amos will be lectures on the nature of Hebrew poetry, sub-genres of prophetic literature, Hebrew grammar and lexicography as well as opportunity to reflect on relevance of Amos to Christian theology and the church today.

For each class we will begin by reading, translating and discussing the Hebrew text of Amos.

Requirements:

In order to successfully complete this course each student will complete the following.

1. Attend all sessions of this course. Each class builds on the previous and so missing a class leaves the student at a disadvantage and questions raised because of an absence inconvenience the rest of the class. Moreover the purpose of this course is not to facilitate "an information dump" from a textbook. Learning language requires repetition, hearing, and learning from other students, all of which cannot be done in isolation. Moreover Hebrew exegesis is a skill and an art both of which improve as a result of the interaction in class between instructor and students and between students. It is in the class that students learn the methodology and catch the passion for the task at hand.
2. Read and prepare selected portions of Amos for translation and discussion in class. Discussion in class will focus on points of grammar, characteristics of Hebrew poetry, the meaning of the individual oracles, as well as a strategy for effective communication of this message to a modern audience.
Preparation for these classes means working through the text's vocabulary and syntax so that the student understands the same and must never be so simplistic as to be equated with "remembering to bring your computer and have the text set with an interlinear display or some such equivalent.
3. Read in Hebrew those portions of Amos which are not read in class. Students taking this course for credit as advanced Hebrew exegesis are expected to read more in Hebrew than in the secondary literature.
4. Reading for this course is expected to be appropriate for the program in which the student is enrolled. Read at least 1,000 pages in the secondary literature on Amos if enrolled in the MABTS program. Your reading must include one good authoritative critical commentary. *The Anchor Bible Commentary* and the *Word Biblical Commentary* are of the sort which meets the criteria. Be sure to learn something of the political, cultural and religious situation into which Amos was speaking. Include in your reading various articles from journals, the *Anchor Bible Dictionary* and the *Interpreter's Bible Dictionary*. Keep a record of your reading.
5. Written assignments and oral presentations. The level of writing, type of writing and subject matter will be appropriate for the program in which each student is enrolled. Presentations in class may be substituted for written assignments. Further details will be distributed.

Attendance:

1. **Absences** are intolerable because of the nature of the subject being learned and the manner in which this course is taught, namely a modified inductive method. If you must miss a class please work through the

lesson(s) missed and then come to the instructor with any problems or questions. In the event you cannot be prepared, you are better being in class unprepared than not in class at all. Too many absences will affect your final grade (either by examination or adjustment by the instructor.)

2. Please do not ask for permission to be absent from class for one class or a series of classes. The student has to do what the student has to do. The instructor will do what the instructor has to do. The instructor will not give permission to any student to act in a manner which is not in the student's best interest. Nor will I be an enabler to your addiction to absenteeism.

Grade Summary:

The final grade for this course will be calculated as follows:

- 30% -- preparation and participation in class
- 30% -- reading
- 40% -- written assignments and or oral presentations.

Although no points are given for attendance, absences will result in deductions.

The available letters for course grades are as follows:

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Description</u>
A+	
A	Excellent
A-	
B+	
B	Good
B-	
C+	
C	Satisfactory
C-	
D+	
D	Minimal Pass
F	Failure

Because of the nature of the Alpha 4.00 system, there can be no uniform University-wide conversion scale. The relationship between raw scores (e.g. percentages) and the resultant letter grade will depend on the nature of the course and the instructor's assessment of the level of each class, compared to similar classes taught previously.

Please note that final grades will be available on student registration system. Printed grade sheets are not mailed out.

Other:

Additional Policies Imposed by the Instructor:

1. Office Hours. These office hours on campus are subject to meetings called by higher authorities (president, dean, registrar), previously scheduled meetings with other students, the instructor's health (doctors' appointments, medical emergencies), snow storms, ice storms, highway closures, automobile failure, and/or "the crick rose." Book an appointment via email to ensure that I'm here, that you will receive notification of cancelation or you will not be pre-empted by another appointment (the above notwithstanding).

- Monday Mornings by appointment and/or not in meetings
- Tuesday Not on campus. By appointment only.
- Wednesday Before class or after class
- Thursday After chapel after my morning class.
- Friday Not on campus. By appointment only.

2. Electronics in Class.

- Except for the legitimate purposes of this course, all laptops and electronic devices are prohibited in this course. Students must learn to write and print the languages; typing keys will not facilitate the learning of writing and printing the alphabet. Writing and printing will make your learning more efficient.
- The recording of class sessions by any means is absolutely prohibited under all circumstances.

3. Classroom Etiquette. The following activities are considered poor classroom etiquette:

- Coming in late,
- Talking while someone else is talking,
- Disruptive behavior,
- Consumption of meals as opposed to minor snacks, (Definition of a meal. If a knife, fork, spoon or sticks are required, it's a meal!)
- Consumption of snacks in a noisy, smelly and/or disruptive manner,
- Personal grooming,
- Use of electronic devices such as cell phones, i-pods, etc.,
- Use of laptops for purposes (e.g. watching videos, playing solitaire) not directly connected to the class, and
- The practice of any behaviours considered impolite in adult company or in contravention of the laws of Alberta, specifically those prohibited while driving a motor vehicle.

Depending on the degree and/or frequency of the breach(es) of etiquette, the professor may display his displeasure in any one or more of the following manners:

- Frown, scowl, rolling eye balls (his not yours),
- Utterance of sounds of disgust,
- Sarcastic comments,
- Utterance of specific prohibitions,

- Dismissal of a student from the class,
- Ending the class prematurely, or
- In extreme cases the professor's immediate departure from the classroom.

In extreme cases, in cases where the professor determines that a student's behaviour, attitude or consumables are affecting other student's negatively, the offensive individual and "theirs" will be summarily dismissed from the classroom for a "time out" the length of which will be determined unilaterally by the professor.

Ambrose University Academic Policies:

Communication

All students have received an Ambrose e-mail account upon registration. It is the student's responsibility to check this account regularly as the Ambrose email system will be the professor's instrument for notifying students of important matters (cancelled class sessions, extensions, requested appointments, etc.) between class sessions. If students do not wish to use their Ambrose accounts, they will need to forward all messages from the Ambrose account to another personal account.

Registration

During the **Registration Revision Period** students may enter a course without permission, change the designation of any class from credit to audit and /or voluntary withdraw from a course without financial or academic penalty or record. Courses should be added or dropped on the student portal by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. After that date, the original status remains and the student is responsible for related fees.

Students intending to withdraw from a course after the Registration Revision Period must apply to the Office of the Registrar by submitting a "Request to Withdraw from a Course" form or by sending an email to the Registrar's Office by the **Withdrawal Deadline**; please consult the List of Important Dates on the my.ambrose.edu website. Students will not receive a tuition refund for courses from which they withdraw after the Registration Revision period. A grade of "W" will appear on their transcript.

Students wishing to withdraw from a course, but who fail to do so by the applicable date, will receive the grade earned in accordance with the course syllabus. A student obliged to withdraw from a course after the Withdrawal Deadline because of health or other reasons may apply to the Registrar for special consideration.

Exam Scheduling

Students, who find a conflict in their exam schedule must submit a Revised Examination Request form to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. Requests will be considered for the following reasons only: 1) the scheduled final examination slot conflicts with another exam; 2) the student has three final exams within three consecutive exam time blocks; 3) the scheduled final exam slot conflicts with an exam at another institution; 4) extenuating circumstances. Travel is not considered a valid excuse for re-scheduling or missing a final exam.

Electronic Etiquette

Students are expected to treat their instructor, guest speakers, and fellow students with respect. It is disruptive to the learning goals of a course or seminar and disrespectful to fellow students and the instructor to use electronics for purposes unrelated to the course during a class session. Turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices during class. Laptops should be used for class-related purposes only. Do not use iPods, MP3 players, or headphones. Do not text, read, or send personal emails, go on Facebook or other social networks, search the internet, or play computer games during class. Some professors will not allow the use of any electronic devices in class. The professor has the right to disallow the student to use a laptop in future lectures and/or to ask a student to withdraw from the session if s/he does not comply with this policy. Repeat offenders will be directed to the Dean. If you are expecting communication due to an emergency, please speak with the professor before the class begins.

Academic Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Academic Calendar. Personal information (information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual) may be required as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.

Extensions

Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period unless they have received permission for a course Extension from the Registrar's Office. Requests for course extensions or alternative examination time must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise "due to circumstances beyond the student's control."

Appeal of Grade

An appeal for change of grade on any course work must be made to the course instructor within one week of receiving notification of the grade. An appeal for change of final grade must be submitted to the Registrar's Office in writing and providing the basis for appeal within

30 days of receiving notification of the final grade, providing the basis for appeal. A review fee of \$50.00 must accompany the appeal. If the appeal is sustained, the fee will be refunded.

Academic Integrity

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to acknowledge to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university college. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

Note: Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.

Appendix One

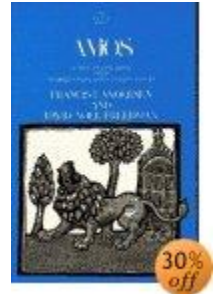
An annotated and illustrated list of commentaries on Amos.

Source: <http://www.bible.gen.nz/books/prophets/amos/commentaries.htm>

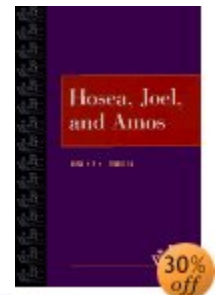
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Amos: Commentaries

F.I. Andersen & David Noel Freedman, *Amos* (Anchor Bible) Doubleday, 1989. pp.977.
With 979 pages of smallish print this is probably the biggest ever commentary on Amos. With full and thorough discussion of most of the important issues. It majors on the ideas that Andersen and Freedman are best known for promoting, giving for example lots of information about the use of "prose particles" in different short units of the book. This is a real reference work, with nearly complete reference to scholarly debate.



Bruce C. Birch *Hosea, Joel, and Amos* (Westminster Bible Companion) Westminster John Knox, 1997. pp.280.



[Peter C. Craigie, *Twelve Prophets: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, and Jonah* \(The Daily Study Bible Series\) Westminster John Knox, 1984. pp.252.](#)



[Jan De Waard, William A. Smalley *A Handbook on the Book of Amos* \(UBS Handbook\) United Bible Societies, 1979 \(Reissued 1994\)](#)

Though originally titled "A Translator's Handbook..." this volume is useful for students with no Hebrew, as well as to those who read the original. It provides details discussion of the meaning of each small section of the book, as well as De Waard & Smalley's interesting proposal to see a powerful chiasmic structure to the book.

[William Rainey Harper, *Amos and Hosea* \(International Critical Commentary\) Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1990. pp.608](#)

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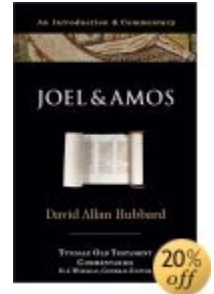
[John H. Hayes, *Amos, the Eighth-Century Prophet : His Time and His Preaching* Abingdon, 1989.](#)

Hayes offers a short but distinctive reading of Amos. Based on this detailed reconstruction of the history of (Northern Kingdom) Israel's last years the book accurately reflects the prophet's preaching at the New Year festival in 750BCE.

The style is straightforward and Hayes provides the reasons behind his conclusions. Though out of print it could well be worth trying to get a copy from Amazon's "Out-of-Print" service.

[D.A. Hubbard, *Joel and Amos* \(Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries\) Leicester: IVP, 1989. pp.245.](#)

Tyndale commentaries aim to provide the best of Evangelical scholarship. Hubbard's on (Joel &) Amos arrives at conservative conclusions, but shares the historical focus of the older style of biblical scholarship.

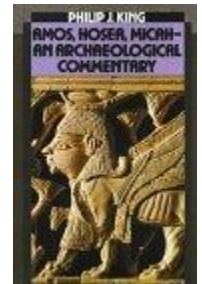


Jorg Jeremias, *The Book of Amos : A Commentary* (Old Testament Library) Westminster John Knox, 1998

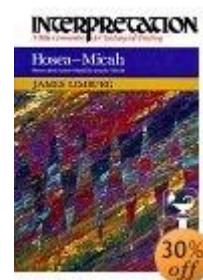
A hot new commentary from a respected scholar, not the last word, but the latest thing in printed Amos commentaries. "Replaces" [Mays'](#) volume, but only as [Paul](#) "replaces" [Wolff](#)

Philip King, *Amos, Hosea, Micah: An Archaeological Commentary* Westminster John Knox, 1988. pp.180

Though out of print, this book tries to do what others do partially, discuss Amos from an Archaeological perspective. If you are serious about Amos, or keen on discovering more about Archaeology and the Bible this book is worth ordering.

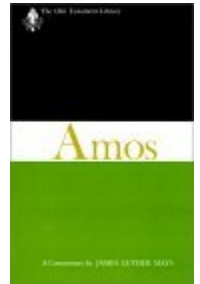


James Limburg, *Hosea-Jonah* (Interpretation) John Knox, 1988. pp.201



H. McKeating, *Amos, Hosea, Micah* (Cambridge Bible Commentary) Cambridge University Press, 1971.

J.L. Mays, *Amos* (Old Testament Library) Westminster, 1999. pp.176
Slimmer, and easier to read, than most of the other "solid" scholarly commentaries, Mays' Old Testament Library volume discusses questions that many readers either ask, or ought to ask, about Amos.

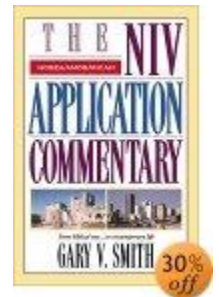


Alan Motyer, *Amos: The Day of the Lion*, new edn. (The Bible Speaks Today) Leicester: IVP, 1984. pp.208
This series seeks to focus on the message of the biblical book, rather than on its historical and literary features for their own sake. Could be useful as stimulus to meditation and reflection, perhaps as a complement to all that detailed study the most of the other tomes listed here will provide!

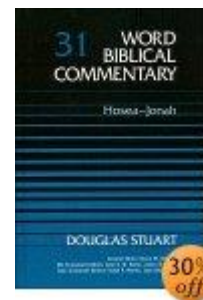
Shalom M. Paul, *Amos* (Hermeneia) Fortress, 1991. pp.409
The big pages of the Hermeneia series contain a wealth of well organised information and ideas. (Paul's "Amos" has 409 pages.) Less strong on scholarly debate, but with an approach which by being more sensitive to the literary feel of the book offers more balanced commentary than [Wolff's](#) earlier classic in the same series.



Gary V. Smith, *Hosea/Amos/Micah* (NIV Application Commentary) Zondervan, 2001. pp.608.



Douglas Stuart, *Hosea-Jonah* (Word Biblical Commentary 31) Waco, Texas: Word, 1987.



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Bruce Vawter, *Amos, Hosea, Micah, with an Introduction to Classical Prophecy* (Old Testament Message)
Michael Glazier, 1981. pp.169

H.W. Wolff, *Joel and Amos* (Hermeneia) Fortress, 1977. pp.393

Translation of a magisterial German commentary, illustrates the best and worst of biblical studies of that period, solid form-critical questioning arrives at over skeptical conclusions about how the book came to be. The careful and well-documented discussion of every issue is not out-dated. (Though "replaced" by Paul's volume in the series.)



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Appendix Two

R & R Projects

These “research and report” segments will be researched and reported (15 minutes) in class. Each student is expected to complete at least three R & R projects in the semester. A written report is not required.

The following topics are in the approximate order of presentation. Others will be added.

- a. What or who are $\{\psi\wedge\iota\delta:\theta\mid N\alpha\beta$ in Amos 1.1? Compare the ancient translations with the Hebrew. What was proposed as an emendation and why? What is the correct translation and how do you know this? Use *BDB*, *ICC*, a Hebrew concordance, *etc.*
- b. What’s a “minor prophet?” When was the term first used? Why are they in the order they are? *Etc.*
- c. What did Amos do when he wasn’t a prophet? 1.1 and 7.14 How has “this career” affected the interpretation of Amos?
- d. Why does Amos deny being a prophet? Or does he? What’s a son of a prophet? Look carefully at the priest, Amaziah’s “rebuke” and what it means.
- e. Genre of “oracles against the nations” Describe the genre and it’s purpose among the prophetic oracles.
- f. $x, x + 1$ formula and other formulas such as 7, 7x and x, x^{11} . “Paid double” in Isaiah 40.1.
- g. Amos has oracles against eight nations. Each constitutes one R & R. For each one, identify the geography and explain the historical incident referred to in the oracle (if we can).

Damascus	Gaza	Ashdod	Edom
Ammon(ites)	Moab	Judah	Israel
- h. Day of Yahweh, darkness not light, 5.18
- i. Is God rejecting the cult system which he instituted? Evangelicals usually want to distinguish the cult from the worshippers’ attitude. (God rejects the attitude but not the cult which he instituted.) Or is God actually and already rejecting the cult which is ultimately prorogued

with the death of Jesus (Hebrews) and the Council of Jerusalem (Acts). Compare similar oracles in other prophets (e.g. Isaiah, Jeremiah).

5:21 I hate, I despise your festivals, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. 5:22 Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them; and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals I will not look upon. 5:23 Take away from me the noise of your songs; I will not listen to the melody of your harps. 5:24 But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever flowing stream.

- j. Amos is quoted in Acts. Amos 5.25-26 is quoted in Acts 7.41-43 (Stephen). Stephen's Greek isn't anything like the Hebrew. What happened? To which event is Stephen referring?
- k. What are the modern definitions of war crimes and/or crimes against humanity? Compare the crimes committed by the nations in the oracles against the nations at the beginning of Amos? Are these the equivalent of the Nuremburg Trials but in Amos' day? Or, do these oracles in Amos serve a different rhetorical purpose?