having plenty, take no thought of the sad social and religious state of their country. These persons are absolutely indifferent to the threatened ruin of their people. The prophet indicates (6:1–8, 11–14) that exile is to be their portion, that the nation is to be destroyed because its inhabitants pervert truth and righteousness and trust in their own strength.” (Sperry, *Voice of Israel’s Prophets*, p. 313.)

Thus, Israel’s destruction was made sure by her own choice. Horses cannot run on rocks without slipping, nor can a man plough rocks in order to plant (see v. 12). By the same token, rebellious Israel could not expect to prosper in her state of evil. Verse 13 is an indictment against Israel, who rejoiced in casting off the Lord’s power and feeling sufficient in and of herself. What Amos had predicted came to pass within thirty years.

(8-16) Amos 7–9. The Visions of Amos

The last three chapters of Amos deal with five visions Amos had. The first four of these visions begin with a phrase such as “Thus hath the Lord God showed me” (see Amos 7:1, 4, 7; 8:1). The fifth commences with the words “I saw the Lord” (Amos 9:1). The first four visions show the various judgments of the Lord upon Israel, while the fifth vision portends the overthrow of their apostate theocracy and the restoration of fallen Israel. The visions are (1) a swarm of locusts (Amos 7:1–3); (2) devouring fire (Amos 7:4–6); (3) the master builder with the plumbline (Amos 7:7–9); (4) the basket of summer fruit (Amos 8); and (5) the smitten sanctuary (Amos 9:1–6). Each has a symbolic meaning that clearly shows that the Lord intended to bring the kingdom of Israel to an end if His people did not repent. The meaning of each vision will be considered individually.

A swarm of locusts (Amos 7:1–3). “The king, who has had the early grass mown, is Jehovah; and the mowing of the grass denotes the judgments which Jehovah has already executed upon Israel. The growing of the second crop is a figurative representation of the prosperity which flourished again after those judgments; in actual fact, therefore, it denotes the time when the dawn had risen again for Israel (ch. iv. 13).” (Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary*, 10:1:306–7.)

Devouring fire (Amos 7:4–6). The fire that devoured the great deep (presumably the ocean) is symbolic of the partially destructive wars that Israel was later involved in. Like the fire which “did eat up a part” of the great deep, Israel’s land was partly despoiled and many of its people led away.

The master builder with the plumbline (Amos 7:7–9). A plumbline is used to obtain exactness and accuracy in construction work. Here it seems to symbolize that God’s strict justice will prevail in judging Israel for her evil ways. All wickedness will be sought out, measured (judged), and destroyed.

The basket of summer fruit (Amos 8:1–9). The harvest of summer fruit symbolized the ripening of Israel. Just as summer fruit must be eaten when picked or it will spoil, Israel was ripe for picking and spoiling by enemies.

The sun going down at noon (Amos 8:9–14). A man’s sun can be said to set at noon if he is taken by death during the prime of his life. A nation’s sun figuratively sets at noon when the country is destroyed in the midst of prosperity. But Amos’ dual prophecy is also a reminder that before the Second Coming of the Lord, the sun will be darkened and refuse to give her light. Indeed, it will be a sign for the wicked of the latter days that their sun is about to set at noon. (See Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary*, 10:1:317.)

The smitten sanctuary (Amos 9:1–6). From His dwelling place, the Lord will smite the wicked. There is none to escape, hide where they may. Only the Second Coming