

Amos 1

Verse 1

The words of Amos, who was among the shepherders from Tekoa, which he saw in visions concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam son of Joash, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake.

God provided the visions and Amos recorded what he saw in the visions. These visions took place during the reigns of Uzziah and Jeroboam.

See chart 105

Reigns of the Northern Kings					
	King	Began	Ended	Years	Co-reign
10	Jehu	841	814	28	
11	Jehoahaz	814	798	17	
12	Jehoash (aka Joash)	798	782	16	
13	Jeroboam II	793/782	753	41	11 years
14	Zechariah	753	752	6 months	
15	Shallum	752	752	1 month	

Reigns of the Southern Kings					
	King	Began	Ended	Years	Co-reign
7	Joash (aka Jehoash)	835-796	796	40	
8	Amaziah	796-767	767	29	
9	Uzziah (aka Azariah)	791/767	740	52	24 years
10	Jotham	750/740	731	16	10 years
11	Ahaz	743/731	715	16	12 years
12	Hezekiah	728/715	686	29	13 years

Therefore the visions took place sometime between 793 BC and 767 BC.

Amos was a herdsman of Tekoa and a dresser of sycamore trees.

See Amos 7:14

¹⁴ Then Amos replied to Amaziah, “I am not a prophet, nor am I the son of a prophet; for I am a herdsman and a grower of sycamore figs. ¹⁵ But the Lord took me from following the flock, and the Lord said to me, ‘Go prophesy to My people Israel.’

"Tekoa" was a village about twelve miles south of Jerusalem.

See pic 110



Amos saw the visions two years before the earthquake. Some scholars believe that this earthquake was the one mentioned by Josephus who gave an account of a great earthquake in the reign of Uzziah. According to Josephus, it made a breach in the temple, ruined the gardens and palace of the king, and occurred simultaneously with the smiting of Uzziah with leprosy.

Zechariah refers to this earthquake in his book.

See Zechariah 14:5

⁵ **And you will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the Lord, my God, will come, *and* all the holy ones with Him!**

Verse 2

² And he said,
“The Lord roars from Zion,
And from Jerusalem He utters His voice;
And the shepherds’ pasture grounds mourn,
And the summit of Carmel dries up.”

The phrase underlined above is the same that was spoken by Joel.

See Joel 3:16

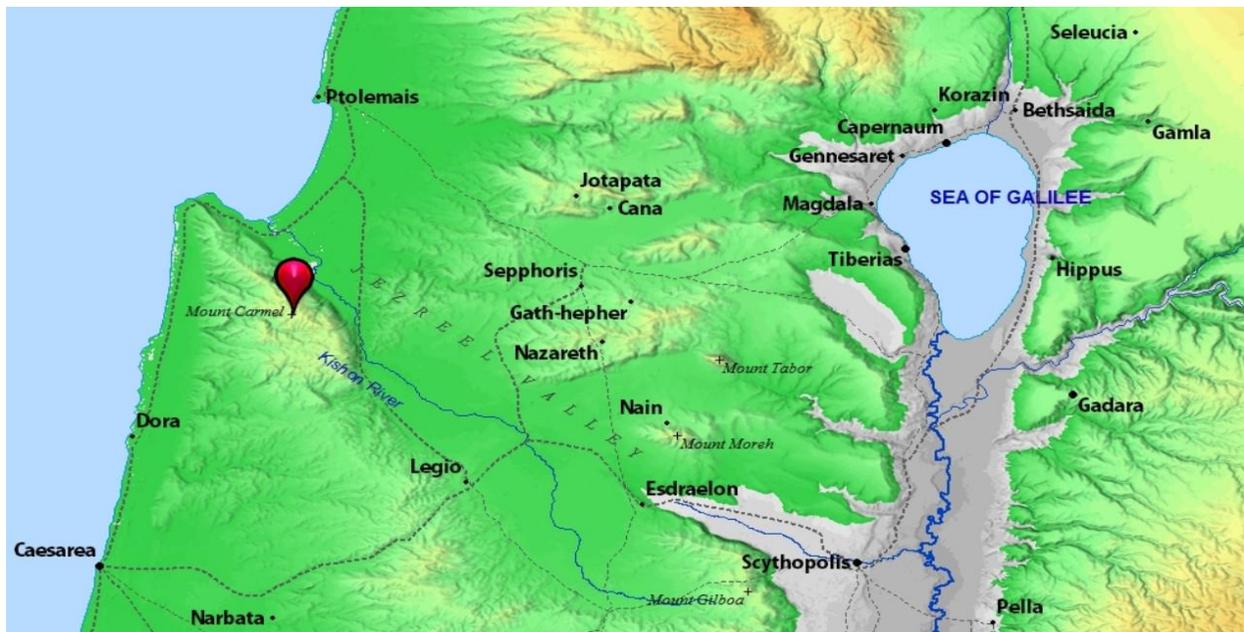
¹⁶ **The Lord roars from Zion**
And utters His voice from Jerusalem,
And the heavens and the earth quake.
But the Lord is a refuge for His people,
And a stronghold for the sons of Israel.

Whether this happened by chance or was done on purpose is not as clear. The two prophets lived around the same time but we have no idea if they ever met or when their visions were written down and passed around.

In Joel 3:16, God roars on behalf of Israel, but in the book of Amos, He is seen as roaring against Israel. The reason for this will become apparent.

Amos says the land will mourn and Mount Carmel will dry up.

See map 115



The name of Mount Carmel means "the orchard, or fertile land" and it was known for being productive even in times of drought. So if Mount Carmel dried up this was a sign that the drought was very severe.

God had told Israel that He would bless or curse them depending on whether they obeyed His law. Deuteronomy 28 outlines these blessings and curses in great detail. It should be noted that God cursed the people so they would see the error of their ways and come back to Him.

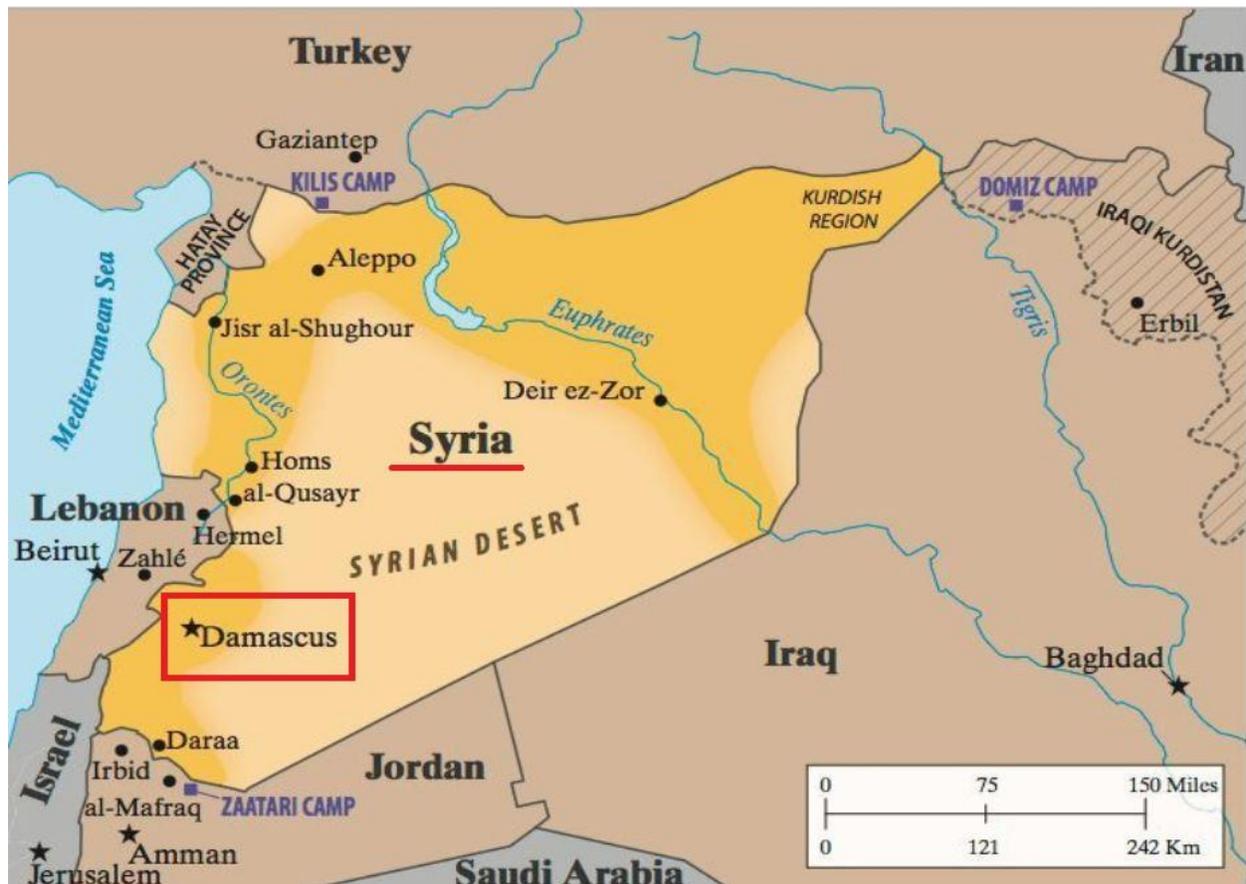
Verse 3

³ This is what the Lord says:

"For three offenses of Damascus, and for four, I will not revoke its punishment, Because they threshed Gilead with iron sledges.

Damascus was the capital of Syria which was one of Israel's principal adversaries.

See map 120



"For three transgressions... and for four" is an expression meaning committing crimes of a severe nature that demand a response from God.

Gilead was an area of Israel that was east of the Jordan River that stretched from the Yarmuk River by the Sea of Galilee down to the Arnon River by the Dead Sea.

See map 125



Syria threshed Gilead with instruments of iron in the Syrian war against Israel during the reign of Jehu.

2 Kings 10:32 - 33

³² In those days the Lord began to cut off *pieces* from Israel; and Hazael defeated *them* throughout the territory of Israel: ³³ from the Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, the Reubenites, and the Manassites; from Aroer, which is by the Valley of the Arnon, that is, Gilead and Bashan.

Verse 4

**⁴ So I will send fire upon the house of Hazael,
And it will consume the citadels of Ben-hadad.**

Hazael was a high-ranking court official or military officer under King Ben-hadad II. The prophet Elisha met Hazael in Damascus and prophesied that Ben-hadad II would die and that Hazael would become the next king of Syria. Upon returning from his meeting with Elisha, Hazael murdered Ben-hadad II by suffocating him with a wet cloth. After seizing the throne, Hazael established his own dynasty. He was succeeded by his son, who adopted the dynastic name Ben-hadad III. Although Ben-hadad III shared a name with the previous dynasty, he was the son of Hazael and had no blood relation to Ben-hadad II.

See chart 130

King	Reign
Ben-Hadad I	885 - 865 BC
Ben Hadad II (Hadadezer)	865 - 842 BC
Hazael	842 – 796 BC
Ben-Hadad III (son of Hazael)	796 - 792 BC
Rezin	754 – 732 BC

God was saying that He was going to judge the two dynasties of Ben-Hadad and Hazel.

Verse 5

**⁵ I will also break the gate bar of Damascus,
And eliminate every inhabitant from the Valley of Aven,
As well as him who holds the scepter, from Beth-eden;
So the people of Aram will be exiled to Kir,”
Says the Lord.**

Ancient cities used a bar to lock their gates; and the breaking of the bar was the same as leaving a city defenseless.

The Valley of Aven means "valley of wickedness" or "vanity," referring to a place of idol worship. Many scholars identify it as the Valley of Baalbeck (Heliopolis) in Lebanon, known for massive Roman temples dedicated to sun worship.

Beth-eden means "house of delight" or "house of pleasure" in Hebrew, it is believed to be a Syrian city or region located near the Euphrates.

The people of Aram were exiled to the land of Kir following the Assyrian conquest of Damascus in 732 BC when the Assyrian king Tiglath-Pileser III captured the city of Damascus.

See 2 Kings 16:9

⁹ So the king of Assyria listened to him; and the king of Assyria went up against Damascus and captured it, and led the people of it into exile to Kir, and put Rezin to death.

Verse 6

**⁶ This is what the Lord says:
"For three offenses of Gaza, and for four,
I will not revoke its *punishment*,
Because they led into exile an entire population
To turn them over to Edom.**

**⁷ So I will send fire on the wall of Gaza
And it will consume her citadels.**

See Psalm 83:4 - 8

**⁴ They have said, "Come, and let's wipe them out as a nation,
So that the name of Israel will no longer be remembered."**

**⁵ For they have conspired together with one mind:
They make a covenant against You:**

**⁶ The tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites,
Moab and the Hagrites;**

**⁷ Gebal, Ammon, and Amalek,
Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre;**

**⁸ Assyria also has joined them;
They have become a help to the children of Lot.**

Nine nations made a covenant to wipe out the people of Israel. However, the Philistines (here in verse 6) and the people of Tyre (verse 9) were also guilty of carrying away the captives of Judah and selling them to the Edomite's.

Gaza was 1 of 5 major cities in the land of the Philistines.

See Map 135



Verse 8

**⁸ I will also eliminate every inhabitant from Ashdod,
As well as him who holds the scepter, from Ashkelon;
And I will direct My power against Ekron,
And the remnant of the Philistines will perish.”
Says the Lord God.**

At this point 4 of the 5 major cities of Philistia have been cited for destruction and then God says the remnant of Philistia will perish so it is clear that the fate of the whole nation is slated for destruction.

The Philistines suffered a number of key events before they disappeared as a nation.

1. The Philistine city of Gath was destroyed around 830 B.C. by Hazael, king of Aram.
2. The Philistine's were heavily weakened by the Assyrian Empire and the Egyptians.
3. Philistia was destroyed by the Babylonian Empire under Nebuchadnezzar II in 604 BC. The people were then exiled to Mesopotamia (Babylon) and over the next 100 years they lost their identity as a distinct ethnic group.

Verse 9

**⁹ This is what the Lord says:
“For three offenses of Tyre, and for four,
I will not revoke its *punishment*,
Because they turned an entire population over to Edom
And did not remember *the* covenant of brotherhood.**

It seems that Tyre committed the same sin as the Philistines (see verse 6). They sold the Hebrews people to the Edomite's. They did this despite the long friendship between Israel and Tyre dating back to the days of David and Solomon.

See 2 Samuel 5:11 The time of David

¹¹ Then Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David with cedar trees, carpenters, and stonemasons; and they built a house for David. ¹² And David realized that the Lord had appointed him as king over Israel, and that He had exalted his kingdom for the sake of His people Israel.

See 1 Kings 9:11 The time of Solomon

¹⁰ Now it came about at the end of twenty years in which Solomon had built the two houses, the house of the Lord and the king's house ¹¹ (Hiram king of Tyre had supplied Solomon with cedar and juniper timber and gold, satisfying all his desire), that King Solomon then gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee.

Because of this long friendship there was a "covenant relationship," between these two nations as indicated by this verse. However, it had been over 200 years since the time of Solomon and both nations had undergone a lot of change. Perhaps this and their desire to make a profit in the slave trade incited them to forget their past relationship.

Before we move on to verse 10 an important point should be made. The language used in verses 6 and 9 doesn't make sense in the **NAS**.

⁶ This is what the Lord says:
"For three offenses of Gaza, and for four,
I will not revoke its *punishment*,
Because they led into exile an entire population
To turn them over to Edom.

⁹ This is what the Lord says:
"For three offenses of Tyre, and for four,
I will not revoke its *punishment*,
Because they turned an entire population over to Edom
And did not remember *the* covenant of brotherhood.

How could the Philistines and Tyre both turn the entire population of Israel over to Edom? The translation in the **NIV** is much better.

See verses 6 and 9

⁶ This is what the Lord says:
"For three sins of Gaza, even for four, I will not relent.
Because she took captive whole communities and sold them to Edom,

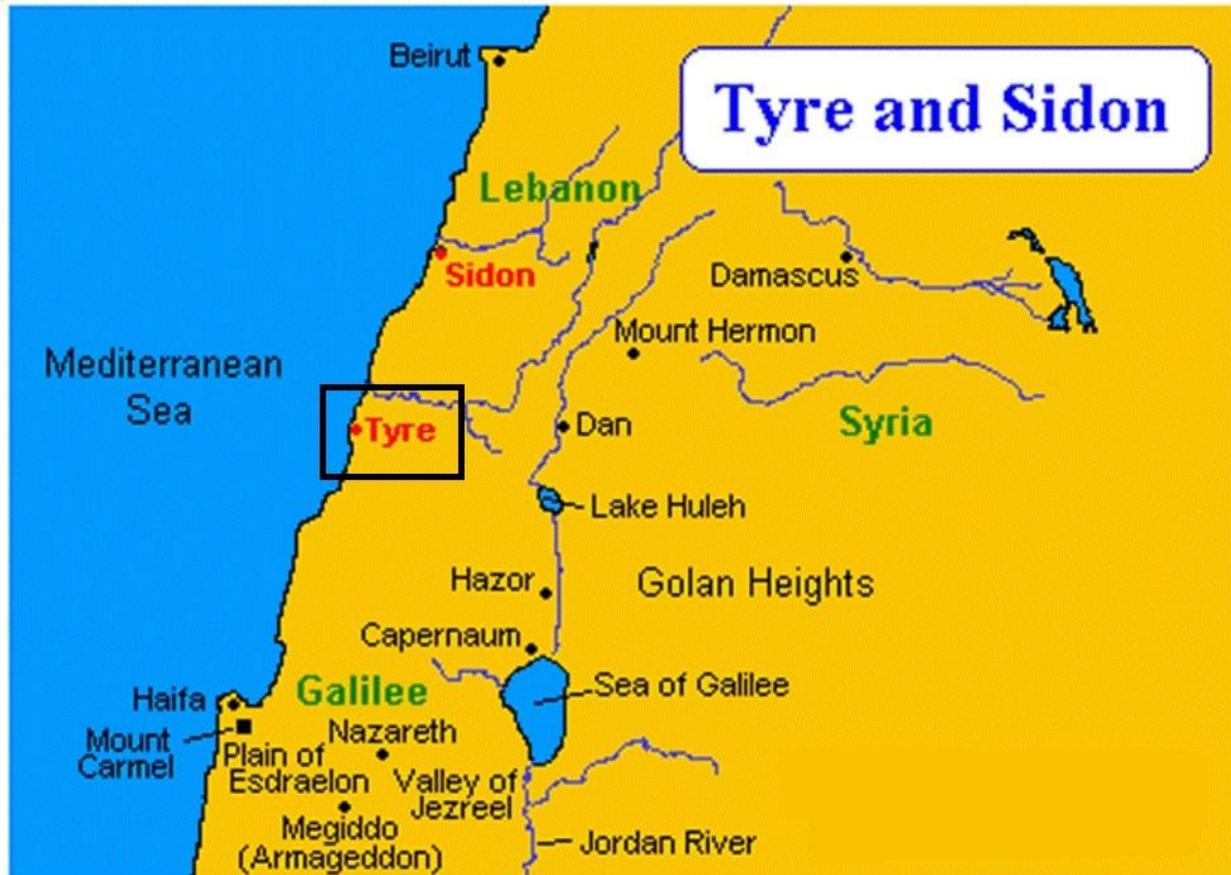
⁹ This is what the Lord says:
"For three sins of Tyre, even for four, I will not relent.
Because she sold whole communities of captives to Edom, disregarding a treaty of brotherhood,

Why would the translators of the NAS not notice this obvious problem?

Verse 10

**¹⁰ So I will send fire on the wall of Tyre,
And it will consume her citadels.”**

See map 145



The Book of Ezekiel has a very detailed account (prophecy) of what would happen to Tyre. Part of it is quoted below.

See Ezekiel 26:2 – 5, 10 - 14

²“Son of man, because Tyre has said in regard to Jerusalem, ‘Aha! The gateway of the peoples is broken; it has opened to me. I shall be filled, *now that* she is laid waste,’ ³ therefore this is what the Lord God says: ‘Behold, I am against you, Tyre, and **I will bring up many nations against you**, as the sea brings up its waves. ⁴ They will destroy the walls of Tyre and tear down her towers; and **I will sweep her debris away from her and make her a bare rock.** ⁵ **She will become a dry place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea**, for I have spoken,’ declares the Lord God; ‘and she will become plunder for the nations.

¹⁰ Because of the multitude of his horses, the dust raised by them will cover you; your walls will shake from the noise of cavalry, wagons, and chariots when he enters your gates as *warriors* enter a city that is breached. ¹¹ With the hoofs of his horses he will trample all your streets. He will kill your people with the sword, and your strong pillars will go down to the ground. ¹² Also they will take your riches as spoils and plunder your merchandise, tear down your walls and destroy your delightful houses, and throw your stones, your timbers, and your debris into the water. ¹³ So I will put an end to the sound of your songs, and the sound of your harps will no longer be heard. ¹⁴ I will turn you into a bare rock; you will become a dry place for the spreading of nets. You will not be rebuilt, for I the LORD have spoken,” declares the Lord God.

See video 140 The city and prophecy of Tyre

<https://www.levickfamily.com/8.10.html>

God used many nations to destroy Tyre

1. Tyre was made a vassal city of Assyria,
2. Besieged and captured by "Nebuchadnezzar (585 - 573 BC)
3. Destroyed by Alexander the Great in 332 B.C.

Verse 11

¹¹ This is what the Lord says:
“For three offenses of Edom, and for four,
I will not revoke its *punishment*,
Because he pursued his brother with the sword
And stifled his compassion;
His anger also tore continually,
And he maintained his fury forever.

The Edomite's were descended from Esau, the brother of Jacob, but they had become enemies of the Jews despite their close family ties. Jacob had stolen the birthright of Esau but 20 years later Esau had forgiven his brother and there was peace between the two of them. However, it seems this attitude of forgiveness was lost over the years and the descendants of Esau held a grudge against Israel.

See map 150



Verse 12

**¹² So I will send fire upon Teman
And it will consume the citadels of Bozrah.”**

As was the case with the other nations, important cities are mentioned as representatives of the entire country. According to Jerome, Teman was the capital of Idumea (the Hellenized name for the region of Edom), and Bozrah was also an important city and possibly an earlier capital of Edom.

See Genesis 36:33

³³ Then Bela died, and Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah became king in his place.

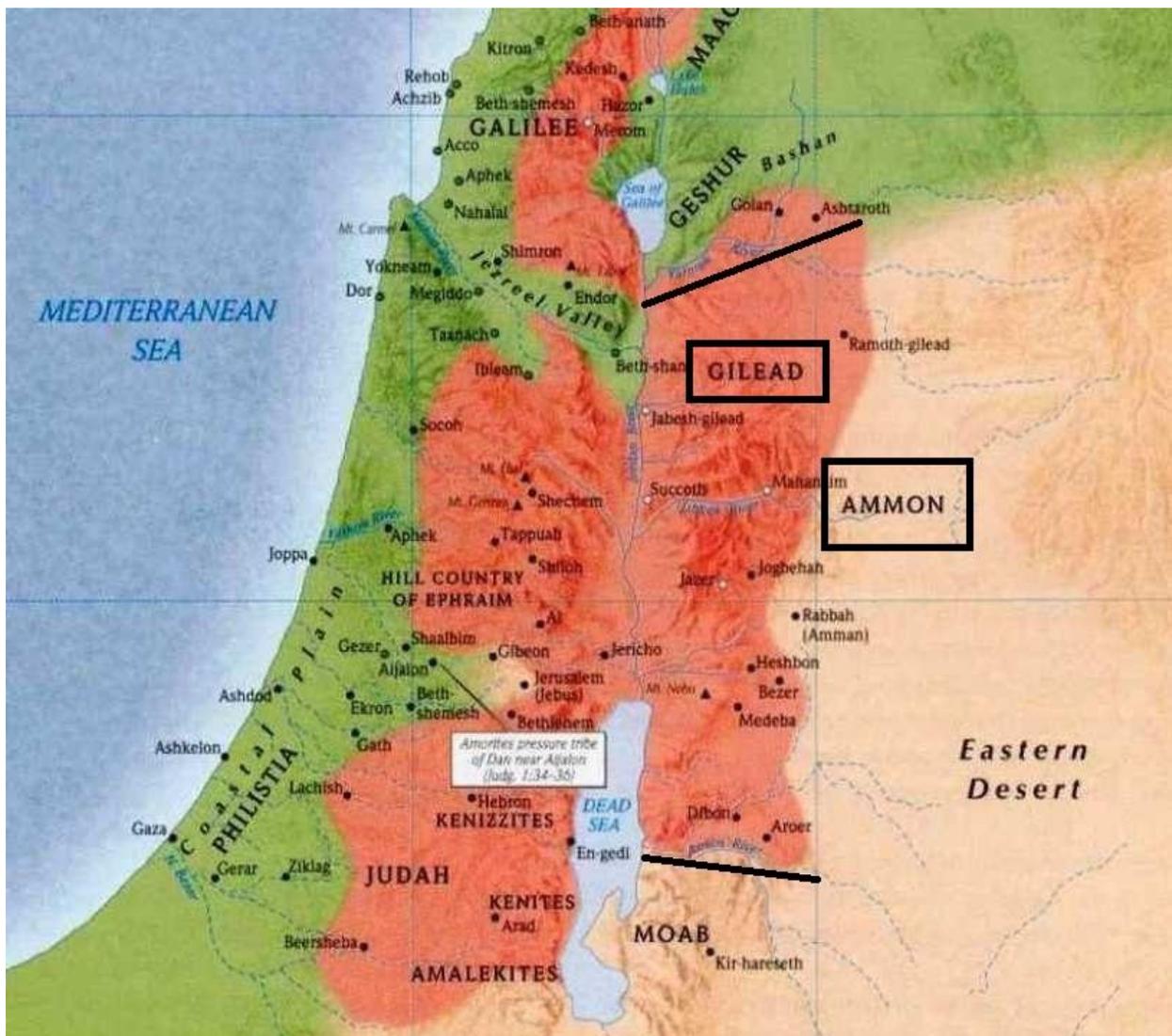
Verse 13

¹³ This is what the Lord says:

“For three offenses of the sons of Ammon, and for four, I will not revoke its punishment, Because they ripped open the pregnant women of Gilead In order to enlarge their borders.”

Ammon shared a border with Gilead.

See Map 155



The Ammonites were descendants of Ben-Ammi who was the son of Lot and his younger daughter.

The chief god of Ammon was "Malcam, or Milcom, a name meaning king but they also worshipped Molech, a god that was appeased with the sacrifices of living children.

See 1 Kings 11:7

7 Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh, the abhorrent idol of Moab, on the mountain that is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abhorrent idol of the sons of Ammon.

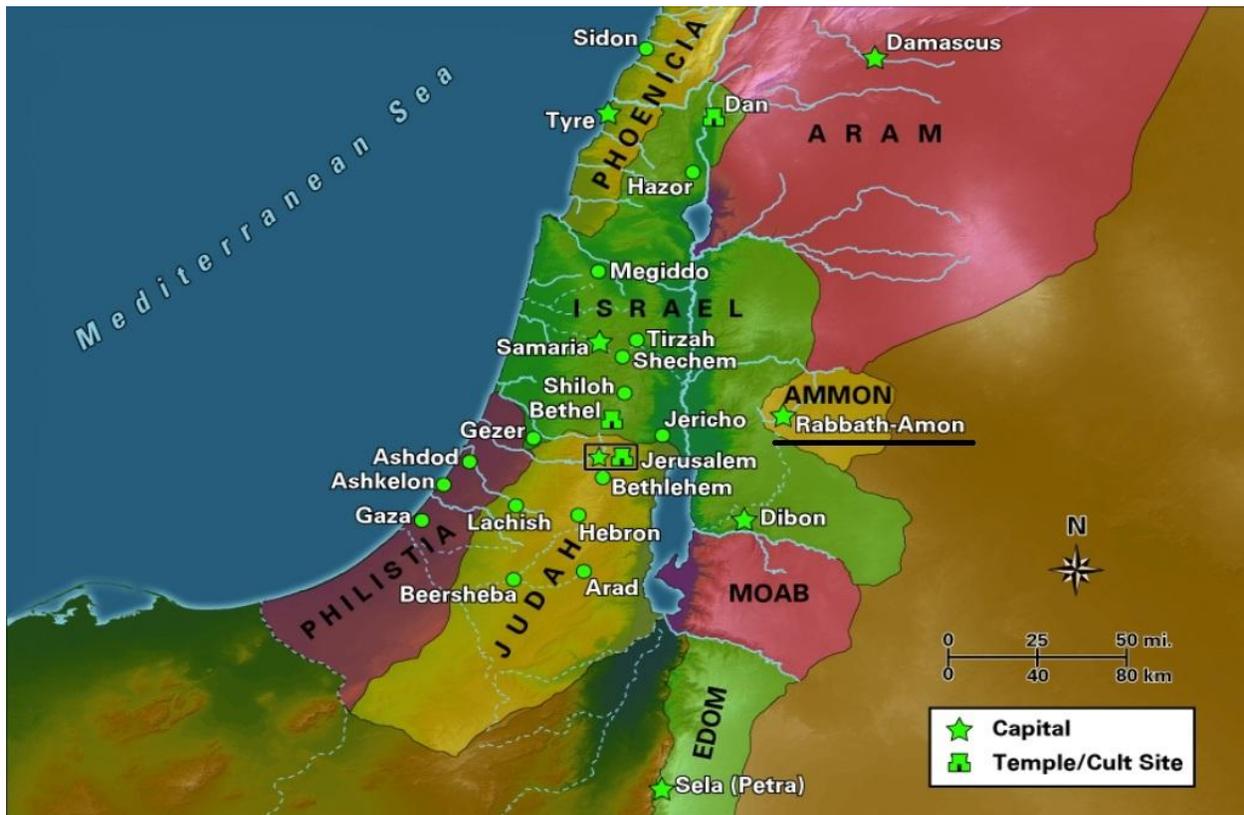
Verse 14

14 So I will kindle a fire on the wall of Rabbah,
And it will consume her citadels

Amid war cries on the day of battle,
And amid a storm on the day of tempest.

15 Their king will go into exile,
He and his princes together," says the Lord.

See map 160



The war cries and the storm is used to convey the fierceness of the Assyrian army.

The nation of Ammon was defeated by a number of enemies throughout the time of the Old Testament.

1. The cuneiform inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser, the Assyrian king, relate how Ahaz of Judah and the king of Ammon appear in a list of kings who paid tribute to him.
2. The Babylonian Empire under Nebuchadnezzar II defeated the Ammonites around 580 BC, turning Ammon into a Babylonian province.
3. Judas Maccabeus fought many battles against Ammon and in the end he defeated and killed them.

See 1 Maccabees 5:6

6 Afterward he passed over to the children of Ammon, where he found a mighty power, and much people, with Timotheus their captain. **7** So he fought many battles with them, till at length they were discomfited before him; and he smote them. **8** And when he had taken Jazar, with the towns belonging thereto, he returned into Judea.

While this text does not have the inspiration of scripture it is some reliable history.

As a summary of chapter 1 of the book of Amos the following map shows the nations around Israel that would be judged for their sin.

See map 165

