

# Amos 1:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because he did pursue his brother with the sword, and did cast off all pity, and his anger did tear perpetually, and he kept his wrath for ever:

## Analysis

Amos addresses Edom: "Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because he did pursue his brother with the sword, and did cast off all pity, and his anger did tear perpetually, and he kept his wrath for ever." Edom's crime was betraying kinship obligations. As Esau's descendants, they were Jacob's (Israel's) relatives, yet they "pursued with the sword" and "cast off pity" (Hebrew racham—maternal compassion/womb-love). The phrases "anger did tear perpetually" and "kept wrath forever" describe nurturing hatred, refusing forgiveness, cultivating vengeance. This sustained malice particularly angered God. The sin wasn't one-time offense but deliberate, perpetual hostility. Reformed theology recognizes degrees of sin—all sin deserves death, yet some sins are more heinous due to knowledge, relationship, or persistence (Luke 12:47-48, John 19:11, James 4:17).

## Historical Context

Edom's hostility toward Israel stretched back to Moses's time when they refused passage through their territory (Numbers 20:14-21). They celebrated Babylon's destruction of Jerusalem, cut off fleeing refugees, and looted the city (Obadiah 10-14, Psalm 137:7, Ezekiel 25:12-14, 35:5). This betrayal during Israel's darkest

hour earned devastating judgment—Edom was eventually displaced by Nabateans, forced into southern Judea (Idumea), forcibly converted to Judaism during the Maccabean period, and disappeared after AD 70. God keeps His word.

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

## Study Questions

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1. How does betraying family or covenant relationships constitute particularly grievous sin?
2. What does it mean to "keep wrath forever," and how does Christ's command to forgive contrast this?
3. How does Edom's judgment warn against harboring bitterness and unforgiveness?

## Interlinear Text

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וְאֵלֶּה אָמַרְתִּי כִּי  
H3541 Thus saith the LORD H5921 For three transgressions of Edom H5921  
H559 H3068 H7969 H6588 H123

וְאֵלֶּה אָמַרְתִּי כִּי  
H3808 I will not turn away H5921  
H702 H7725

בְּקָרְבָּן  
the punishment thereof because he did pursue  
H7291 H2719 H251

בְּקָרְבָּן  
with the sword his brother  
H2719 H251

וְאֵלֶּה אָמַרְתִּי כִּי  
and did cast off all pity did tear perpetually and his anger his wrath  
H7843 H7356 H2963 H5703 H639 H5678  
H8104 H5331

## Additional Cross-References

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**2 Chronicles 28:17** (Parallel theme): For again the Edomites had come and smitten Judah, and carried away captives.

**Psalms 137:7** (References Lord): Remember, O LORD, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof.

**Joel 3:19** (Parallel theme): Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, for the violence against the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land.

**Malachi 1:4** (References Lord): Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them, The border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the LORD hath indignation for ever.

**Ecclesiastes 7:9** (Parallel theme): Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.

**Deuteronomy 23:7** (Parallel theme): Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite; for he is thy brother: thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian; because thou wast a stranger in his land.

**Micah 7:18** (Sin): Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.

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