

Amos 1:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Gaza, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they carried away captive the whole captivity, to deliver them up to Edom:

Analysis

Amos continues oracles against nations, now Gaza: "Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Gaza, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they carried away captive the whole captivity, to deliver them up to Edom." Gaza's crime was comprehensive human trafficking—"the whole captivity" indicates entire communities, not just individuals. They sold these captives to Edom, compounding injustice. God's wrath against human trafficking permeates Scripture (Exodus 21:16, Deuteronomy 24:7, 1 Timothy 1:10, Revelation 18:13). The Reformed doctrine of the image of God (*imago Dei*) establishes human dignity as foundational—every person bears God's image (Genesis 1:26-27), making slavery, trafficking, and dehumanization especially heinous. Christ came to "set at liberty them that are bruised" (Luke 4:18)—His gospel brings both spiritual and, in application, physical liberation.

Historical Context

Philistine cities, including Gaza, frequently raided Israelite and other territories for slaves. Ancient slave trade was lucrative and widespread. Edom's participation made them accessories. Both faced judgment—Gaza through various conquerors, ultimately disappearing from history. This demonstrates that God keeps His word and holds nations accountable across generations until justice is satisfied.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How should the doctrine of imago Dei shape Christian engagement with modern human trafficking?
2. What forms of economic or social oppression might we unknowingly participate in today?

Interlinear Text

כֹּה	אָמַר	יְהוָה	עַל	שְׁלֹשָׁה	פְּשָׁעֵי	עַזְּהָה	וְעַל
H3541	Thus saith	the LORD	H5921	For three	transgressions	of Gaza	H5921
	H559	H3068		H7969	H6588	H5804	
וְעַל	אַרְבָּעָה	לֹא	אֶשְׁיֹבֶנּוּ	עַל			
	and for four	H3808	I will not turn away	H5921			
	H702		H7725				
		הַגְּלוּתָם		גָּל וְ	שְׁלֵמָה		
		the punishment thereof because they carried away captive		captivity	the whole		
		H1540		H1546	H8003		
	לְהִסָּג יִרְ	לְאֶדְוֹם:					
	to deliver them up	to Edom					
	H5462	H123					

Additional Cross-References

Amos 1:11 (Sin): 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:

2 Chronicles 28:18 (Parallel theme): The Philistines also had invaded the cities of the low country, and of the south of Judah, and had taken Beth-shemesh, and Ajalon, and Gederoth, and Shochu with the villages thereof, and Timnah with the villages thereof, Gimzo also and the villages thereof: and they dwelt there.

Obadiah 1:11 (Parallel theme): In the day that thou stoodest on the other side, in the day that the strangers carried away captive his forces, and foreigners entered into his gates, and cast lots upon Jerusalem, even thou wast as one of them.

Amos 1:9 (Sin): Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Tyrus, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they delivered up the whole captivity to Edom, and remembered not the brotherly covenant:

1 Samuel 6:17 (References Lord): And these are the golden emerods which the Philistines returned for a trespass offering unto the LORD; for Ashdod one, for Gaza one, for Askelon one, for Gath one, for Ekron one;

Joel 3:6 (Parallel theme): The children also of Judah and the children of Jerusalem have ye sold unto the Grecians, that ye might remove them far from their border.

Ezekiel 35:5 (Sin): Because thou hast had a perpetual hatred, and hast shed the blood of the children of Israel by the force of the sword in the time of their calamity, in the time that their iniquity had an end:

Jeremiah 47:1 (References Lord): The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah the prophet against the Philistines, before that Pharaoh smote Gaza.

Zechariah 9:5 (Parallel theme): Ashkelon shall see it, and fear; Gaza also shall see it, and be very sorrowful, and Ekron; for her expectation shall be ashamed; and the king shall perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon shall not be inhabited.

Amos 1:3 (Sin): Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Damascus, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they have threshed Gilead with threshing instruments of iron: