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AMOS 7: 1 Thus the Lord GOD showed me: and behold, he formed locusts in the beginning of the shooting up of the latter growth; and behold, it was the latter growth after the king's harvest.

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In this chapter God represents to Amos, by three several visions, the judgments he is about to bring on Israel. The first is a plague of locusts, threatening to cut off the hopes of the harvest by attacking it in the time of the second growth; the first luxuriances of the crop being probably mowed for the king's horses, Amo 7:1-3. The next vision threatens a judgment by fire, which would consume a great part, Amo 7:4-6; and the third a total overthrow of Israel, levelling it as it were by a line, Amo 7:7-9. The rest of the chapter is a denunciation of heavy judgments against Amaziah, priest of Beth-el, who had brought an accusation to the king against the prophet, Amo 7:10-17.

#### Verse 1

Behold, he formed grasshoppers - 'גב'י gobai is generally understood here to signify locusts. See the notes on Joel 1 (note) and Joel 2 (note).

The shooting up of the latter growth - The early crop of grass had been already mowed and housed. The second crop or rowing, as it is called in some places, was not yet begun. By the king's mowings we may understand the first crop, a portion of which the king probably claimed as being the better hay; but the words may signify simply the prime crop, that which is the best of the whole. Houbigant thinks the shearing of the king's sheep is meant.

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AMOS 7: 2 When they made an end of eating the grass of the land, then I said, "Lord GOD, forgive, I beg you! How could Jacob stand? For he is small."

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#### Verse 2

By whom shall Jacob arise? - The locusts, the symbols of the many enemies that had impoverished Jerusalem, having devoured much of the produce of the land, were proceeding, till, at the intercession of the prophet, they were removed. Then, seeing in the light of prophecy the nation in every sense brought low, he cries, "By whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small." Calmet justly remarks: "After the death of Jeroboam the second, the kingdom, so flourishing and powerful before, was reduced to such weakness that it was obliged to have recourse to strangers for support. Menahem applied to Pul, king of Assyria, whence arose the final misery of the state."

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AMOS 7: 3 The LORD relented concerning this. "It shall not be," says the LORD.

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#### Verse 3

The Lord repented - Changed his purpose of destroying them by the locusts. See Amo 7:6.

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AMOS 7: 4 Thus the Lord GOD showed me and behold, the Lord GOD called for judgement by fire; and it dried up the great deep, and would have devoured the land.

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Verse 4

The Lord God called to contend by fire - Permitted war, both civil and foreign, to harass the land, after the death of Jeroboam the second. These wars would have totally destroyed it, had not the prophet interceded.

It devoured the great deep, and did eat up a part - We are here to understand the partially destructive wars which afterwards took place; for the Lord causes all these things to pass before the eyes of Amos in the vision of prophecy; and intimates that, at the intercession of his prophets, total ruin should be prevented.

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AMOS 7: 5 Then I said, "Lord GOD, stop, I beg you! How could Jacob stand? For he is small."

AMOS 7: 6 The LORD relented concerning this. "This also shall not be," says the Lord GOD.

AMOS 7: 7 Thus he showed me and behold, the Lord stood beside a wall made by a plumb line, with a plumb line in his hand.

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Verse 7

With a plumbline in his hand - This appears to be intended as an emblem of strict justice, and intimated that God would now visit them according to their iniquities.

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AMOS 7: 8 The LORD said to me, "Amos, what do you see?"

I said, "A plumb line."

Then the Lord said, "Behold, I will set a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel. I will not again pass by them any more."

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Verse 8

I will set a plumbline - I will visit them by justice without any mixture of mercy.

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AMOS 7: 9 The high places of Isaac will be desolate, the sanctuaries of Israel will be laid waste; and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword."

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Verse 9

And the high places of Isaac shall be desolate - Their total destruction is at hand. The high place of Isaac was Beer-sheba, where Isaac had built an altar to the Lord, Gen 26:25. This high place, which

had been abused to idolatrous uses, was demolished by Josiah, king of Judah, as we read in 2Kgs 23:8, for he defiled all the high places from Geba to Beersheba.

I will rise against the house of Jeroboam - The Lord had promised to Jehu, the ancestor of Jeroboam, that his family should sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation. Zechariah, the son of Jeroboam, was the fourth in order after Jehu; and on him the threatening in this verse fell; for he was murdered by Shallum after he had reigned six months, and in him the family became extinct. See 2Kgs 10:30; 2Kgs 15:8-10.

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AMOS 7: 10 Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, "Amos has conspired against you in the midst of the house of Israel. The land is not able to bear all his words."

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#### Verse 10

Amaziah the priest of Beth-el - The idolatrous priest who had been established by the king to maintain the worship of the golden calves which Jeroboam the elder had set up at this place.

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AMOS hath conspired against thee - This was truly a lying prophet; there is not one word of truth in this message which he sent to Jeroboam. Amos had not conspired against the king - had not said that Jeroboam should die by the sword - and had not said that Israel should be carried away captive, though this last was implied in God's threatening and afterwards delivered by this prophet; see Amo 7:17.

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AMOS 7: 11 For Amos says, 'Jeroboam will die by the sword, and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of his land.'

AMOS 7: 12 Amaziah also said to Amos, "You seer, go, flee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there:"

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#### Verse 12

O thou seer - He pretends kindness to the prophet, and counsels him to go into Judea, and prophesy there and be safe, even in the time that he had accused him of high treason against Jeroboam. Hireling priests of this kind have ever been the great enemies of the true prophets of God; and when they could bring no charge of false doctrine or immorality against them, have accused them of conspiring against the government; and because they have preached against sin, have held them up as exciting insurrection among the people.

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AMOS 7: 13 but don't prophesy again any more at Bethel; for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a royal house!"

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#### Verse 13

But prophesy not - at Beth-el - He must not speak against idolatry, because that was the king's religion; and he who speaks against the king's religion must be an enemy to the state. This was the doctrine held in England by popish James 2 and his insidious Jesuit hireling priests, till God in his mercy put this pitiful tyrant down, and with him his false prophets, and the degrading superstition which they endeavored to establish in these lands.

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AMOS 7: 14 Then Amos answered Amaziah, "I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was a herdsman, and a farmer of sycamore figs;

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#### Verse 14

I was no prophet - I am an extraordinary messenger of God. I am not called to the prophetic office but for this occasion. I have no message to Judah, and therefore need not go there. I have a message to Israel alone, and I must faithfully deliver it.

For the account which Amos gives here of himself, see the introduction.

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AMOS 7: 15 and the LORD took me from following the flock, and the LORD said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.'

AMOS 7: 16 Now therefore listen to the LORD's word: 'You say, Don't prophesy against Israel, and don't preach against the house of Isaac.'

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#### Verse 16

Now therefore hear thou the word of the Lord - While he was speaking in his own vindication, God seems to have inspired him with the awful prediction which he immediately delivers.

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AMOS 7: 17 Therefore thus says the LORD: 'Your wife shall be a prostitute in the city, and your sons and your daughters shall fall by the sword, and your land shall be divided by line; and you yourself shall die in a land that is unclean, and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of his land.'"

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#### Verse 17

Thy wife shall be a harlot - As this was the word of the Lord, so it was fulfilled; but as we have no farther account of this idolatrous priest, so we cannot tell in what circumstances these threatenings were executed.

1. His wife was to be a public prostitute; she was probably such already privately in the temple, as the wife of an idolatrous priest.
2. His sons and daughters were to fall by the sword.
3. Their inheritance was to be taken by strangers.

4. And himself was to die a captive in a heathen land.

Israel shall surely go into captivity - He now declares fully what he had not declared before, though Amaziah had made it a subject of accusation. This particular was probably revealed at this instant, as well as those which concerned Amaziah and his family.