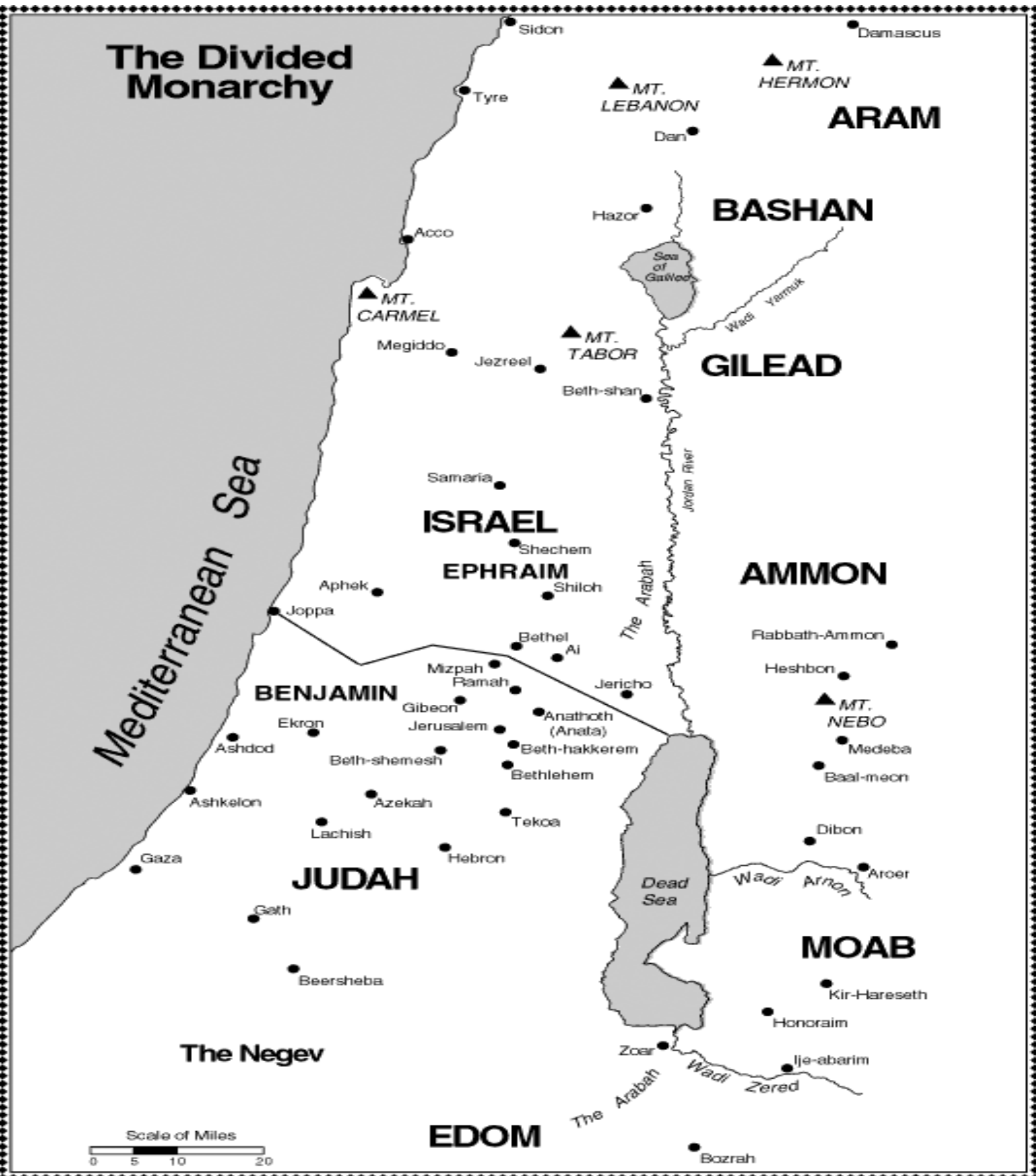


Focus Text

“Thus says the Lord: “For three transgressions of Moab, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment, because he burned to lime the bones of the king of Edom. So I will send a fire upon Moab, and it shall devour the strongholds of Kerioth, and Moab shall die amid uproar, amid shouting and the sound of the trumpet; I will cut off the ruler from its midst, and will kill all its princes with him,” says the Lord. Thus says the Lord: “For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment, because they have rejected the law of the Lord, and have not kept his statutes, but their lies have led them astray, those after which their fathers walked. So I will send a fire upon Judah, and it shall devour the strongholds of Jerusalem.” **(Amos 2:1–5, ESV)**

3.24.24 Amos "The Neighborhood II" Amos 2:1-5



3.24.24 Amos "The Neighborhood II" Amos 2:1-5

I: Moab

"Thus says the Lord: "For three transgressions of Moab, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment, because he burned to lime the bones of the king of Edom. So I will send a fire upon Moab, and it shall devour the strongholds of Kerioth, and Moab shall die amid uproar, amid shouting and the sound of the trumpet; I will cut off the ruler from its midst, and will kill all its princes with him," says the Lord." **(Amos 2:1–3, ESV)**

As the final neighbor in judgment, Moab's sin is interesting. They are guilty not against Israel or Judah but Edom in the south. They have burned the bones of Edom's king until they become lime. Which was used in plaster in the ancient world. There are a variety of opinions on why this is important to God, but what makes sense is the offense against an enemy and being disrespectful to their body. Royalty and Nobility were thought to be cared for with respect, even if they were enemies. Burning their corpse to plaster is a step too far for God.

Because of their disrespectful nature, God will send fire (divine war) to conquer their capital city.

"Moab's representative crime neither harmed Israel nor concerned them in any way. Desecration of an Edomite king's remains was Moab's sin. Border fortifications between Moab and Edom suggest the probability that the two nations engaged in armed conflict from time to time. Warfare" ¹

"(Amos) echoes the common sentiment that even the corpse of an enemy should be given proper burial.²³⁹ In this case, then, the corpse was violated in an especially offensive way, the bones having been "burned to lime."

²³⁹ 2 Kgs 9:34*; cf. Amsler, 177." ²

"Fire will also descend upon Moab and devour the strongholds of Kerioth, presumably its capital. Kerioth is believed to have been a fortified city, thirteen miles south of modern-day Madeba, although the site is unknown." ³

¹ Smith, Billy K., and Franklin S. Page. 1995. *Amos, Obadiah, Jonah*. Vol. 19B. The New American Commentary. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

² Wolff, Hans Walter. 1977. *Joel and Amos: A Commentary on the Books of the Prophets Joel and Amos*. Edited by S. Dean McBride. Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible. Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

³ Lundbom, Jack R. 2021. *Amos, Hosea, and Micah: Hebrew Prophets of the Eighth Century*. Cascade Companions. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books.

II: Judah

“Thus says the Lord: “For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment, because they have rejected the law of the Lord, and have not kept his statutes, but their lies have led them astray, those after which their fathers walked. So I will send a fire upon Judah, and it shall devour the strongholds of Jerusalem.”

(Amos 2:4–5, ESV)

We are no longer in the neighborhood now God is going to speak to Amos’ hometown of Judah. Judah is not in judgment because of their humanitarian violations but something worse. Judah has been given the Law (Torah). Just as someone who has received proper instruction, Judah’s sin is that they have been told by YHWH (God) how to conduct themselves as His Holy (Set Apart) people in this land. Yet, they have opted instead to reject the Law of God and walk in “their lies.”

As we can see in the New American Commentary, the term “their Lies” in Hebrew is synonymous with the term “False gods.” As we can read both in Hosea and in Ezekiel, God takes note, especially of idolatry and a rejection of His law. The neighboring nations are supposed to understand the sacred nature of humankind at the bare minimum. But God’s elect people (Israel & Judah) have received the complete instruction for their life together as God’s people. It is even more offensive to God that His own people would reject His ways and worship other gods.

Finally, we might expect that Judah would not receive fire from Heaven because they are God’s people. Yet, because of their choice of following other gods and rejecting the Law, they too will receive God’s divine judgment and weapon of fire from Heaven. What Amos can’t imagine is that in two years, there will be an earthquake that will ravage all the nations. But also, in 581, Babylon conquered Judea and exiled them.

“Judah is censured not because of any inhumane or moral outrage, but because it has rejected the law (*torah*) of Yahweh and not kept its statutes. This is every bit as serious, probably more so in the eyes of the prophet. Deuteronomy has Moses telling the covenant people that they must be sure to “keep the commandments, the statutes, and the ordinances” once they become settled in the land (Deut 4:1; 8:11; etc.). If they do not, the covenant curses will fall (Deut 28).”

Lundbom, Jack R. 2021. *Amos, Hosea, and Micah: Hebrew Prophets of the Eighth Century*. Cascade Companions. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books.

3.24.24 Amos "The Neighborhood II" Amos 2:1-5

“*Tôrâ* (“law”) may refer to the Ten Words (i.e., Ten Commandments) and more broadly to the Pentateuch. Here the term is defined by association with the name of Israel’s covenant God, Yahweh. *Tôrâ* of the Lord means his teaching or instruction, not general instruction. It is the embodiment of justice and righteousness and may be equated with the knowledge of God, the rejection of which results and consists in all manner of religious and social wickedness and amounts to breaking the covenant (cf. Isa 5:7, 18–24; Hos 4:1–13). For Judah to reject the Lord’s instruction was comparable to the atrocities committed by foreign nations (cf. Ezek 5:6).”⁴

“The term rendered “false gods” (v. 4) is literally “their lies,” and the phrase “the gods” in the last line is not in the Hebrew but has been added by the NIV for clarification. Andersen”⁵

“foreign deities can neither profit nor save; consequently they deceive. Or, as our Deuteronomistic preacher in Amos expresses it, they are “lies” personified.”²⁵⁹⁶

“And she has rebelled against my rules by doing wickedness more than the nations, and against my statutes more than the countries all around her; for they have rejected my rules and have not walked in my statutes.” (Ezekiel 5:6, ESV)

“Hear the word of the Lord, O children of Israel, for the Lord has a controversy with the inhabitants of the land. There is no faithfulness or steadfast love, and no knowledge of God in the land; there is swearing, lying, murder, stealing, and committing adultery; they break all bounds, and bloodshed follows bloodshed. Therefore the land mourns, and all who dwell in it languish, and also the beasts of the field and the birds of the heavens, and even the fish of the sea are taken away. Yet let no one contend, and let none accuse, for with you is my contention, O priest. You shall stumble by day; the prophet also shall stumble with you by night; and I will destroy your mother. My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being a priest to me. And since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children. The more they increased, the more they sinned against me; I will change their glory into shame. They feed on the sin of my people; they are greedy for their iniquity. And it shall be like people, like priest; I will punish them for their ways and repay them for their deeds. They shall eat, but not be satisfied; they shall play the

⁴ Smith, Billy K., and Franklin S. Page. 1995. *Amos, Obadiah, Jonah*. Vol. 19B. The New American Commentary. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

⁵ Smith, Billy K., and Franklin S. Page. 1995. *Amos, Obadiah, Jonah*. Vol. 19B. The New American Commentary. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

⁶ ²⁵⁹ Cf. Martin Alfred Klopfenstein, *Die Lüge nach dem Alten Testament* (Zürich: Gotthelf, 1964), 236–37.

Wolff, Hans Walter. 1977. *Joel and Amos: A Commentary on the Books of the Prophets Joel and Amos*. Edited by S. Dean McBride. Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible. Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

3.24.24 Amos "The Neighborhood II" Amos 2:1-5

whore, but not multiply, because they have forsaken the Lord to cherish whoredom, wine, and new wine, which take away the understanding. My people inquire of a piece of wood, and their walking staff gives them oracles. For a spirit of whoredom has led them astray, and they have left their God to play the whore. They sacrifice on the tops of the mountains and burn offerings on the hills, under oak, poplar, and terebinth, because their shade is good. Therefore your daughters play the whore, and your brides commit adultery." **(Hosea 4:1–13, ESV)**

Application

"And God spoke all these words, saying, "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. "You shall have no other gods before me. "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments. "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you. "You shall not murder. "You shall not commit adultery. "You shall not steal. "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's."

(Exodus 20:1–17, ESV)

In Matthew 22, we are told to "Love God" and "Love Our Neighbors." Last week, we challenged ourselves to love our Neighbors. This week, as we dive into Judah's sin, our focus is to love God and understand that He has given His children guidelines to live under. Today, I have included Exodus 20 in the 10 commandments. These simple life lessons teach us what it means to live under God's rule and reign as His Holy people. While we know it is impossible in our power to follow these in our hearts perfectly. That does not excuse us from openly violating them. Instead, we acknowledge our frailty and ask the Holy Spirit to cleanse us and grow us so that Christ, through us, can display His good Grace.

This is our "DO" pillar. Once we know what God desires, we submit and try to live it out. As you Exodus 20...How are you doing in Loving God? Amen.