

Uncommon Wisdom from a Common Man



Amos and the Dignity of Human Life

The Background of Amos

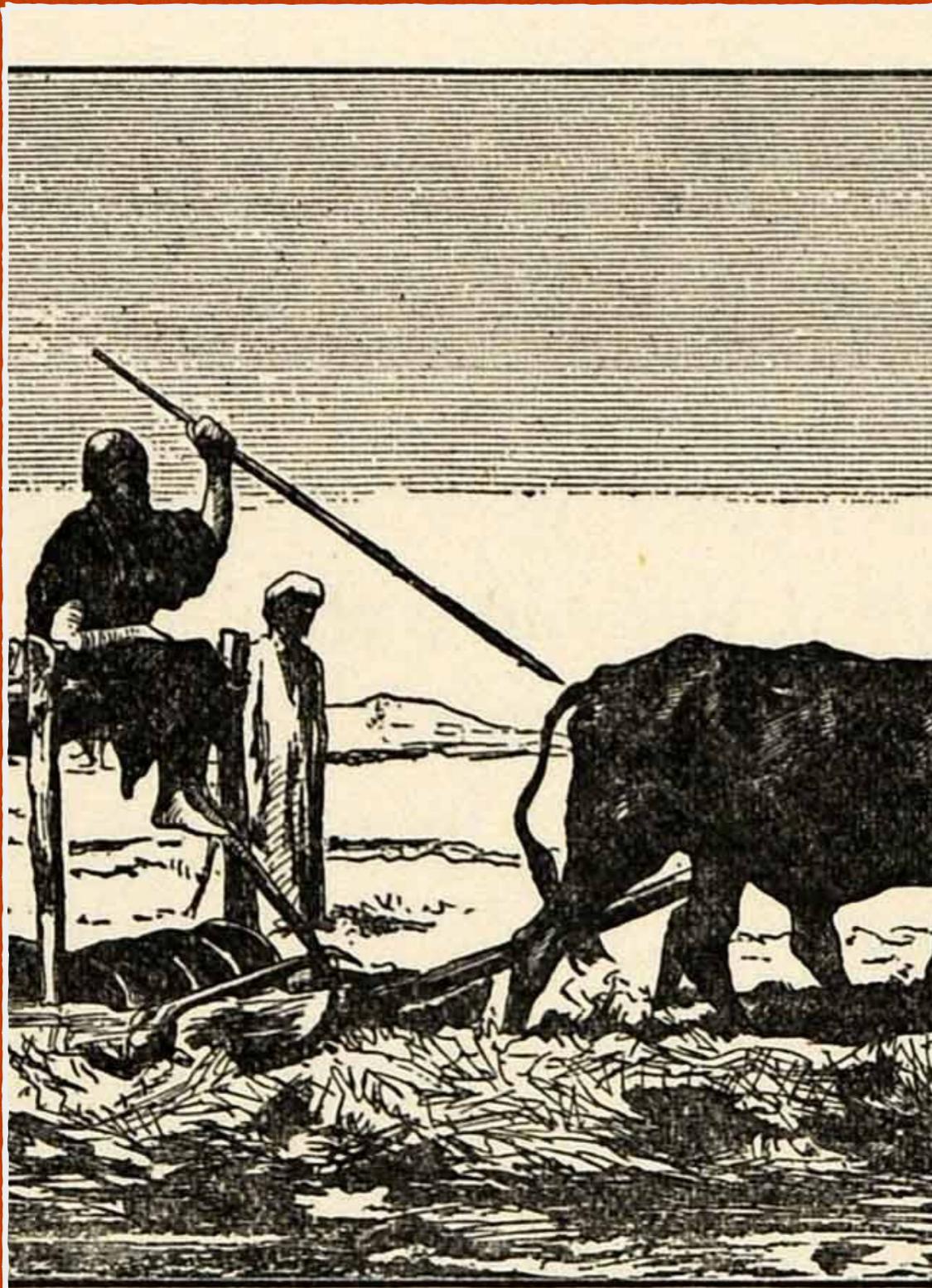
- Amos is thought to be a shepherd (1.1).
- His book contains pronouncements of judgments upon many nations, both Jewish and Gentile.
 - Gentile: 1.3-2.2
 - Jewish: 2.4,6
- The book ends with hope for all mankind (9.11-15).

Amos and Human Dignity:

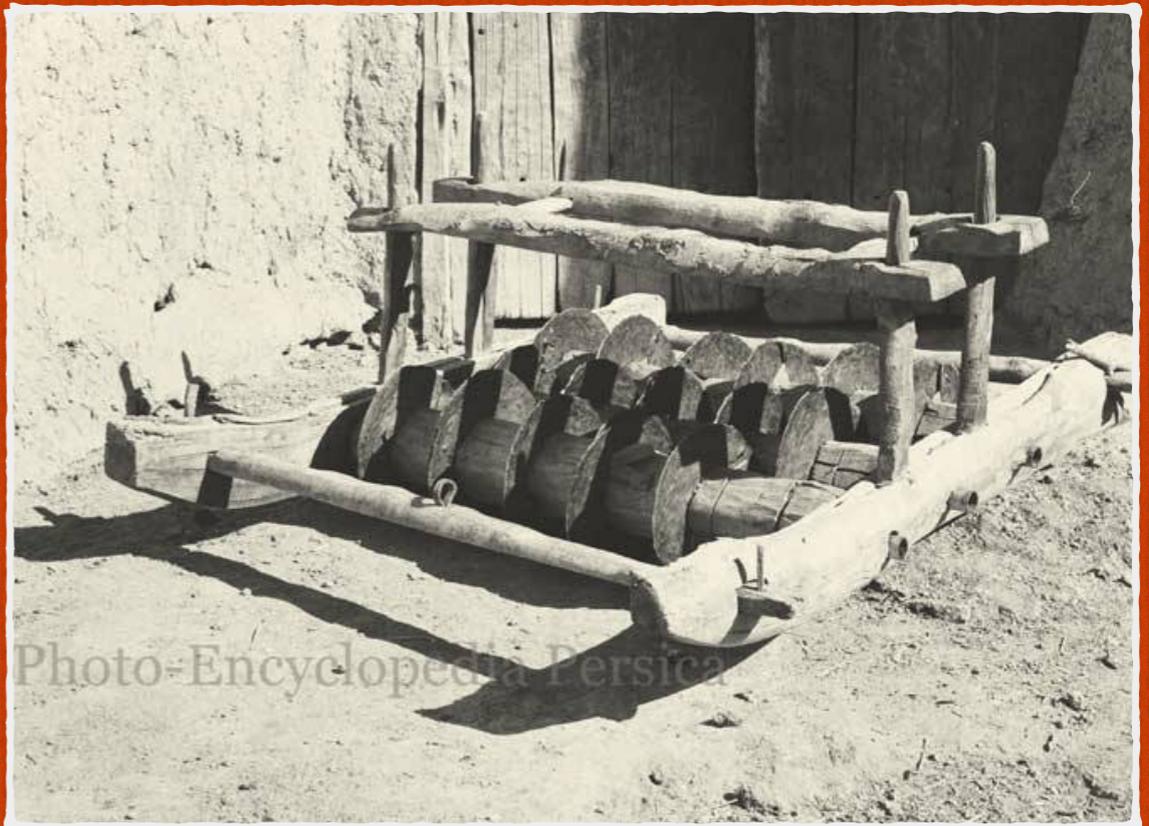
"Because they threshed Gilead with implements of sharp iron."

Amos 1.3

- Damascus (Syria/Aram/Arameans) was an old foe of Israel, back to the days of David (2 Sam. 8).**
- Amos describes how they treated people as though they were grain or cattle.**



EGYPTIAN THRESHING - MACHINE.



Amos and Human Dignity:

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Amos 1.3

- Damascus (Syria/Aram/Arameans) was an old foe of Israel, back to the days of David (2 Sam. 8).**
- Amos describes how they treated people as though they were grain or cattle.**
 - People are not to be treated as “things”; we are created in the image of God (Gen. 1.26f).**
 - Man is the pinnacle of God’s creation (Luke 12.6f).**

Amos and Human Dignity:

"Because they deported an entire population to deliver it up to Edom."

Amos 1.6

- The Philistines (Gaza) were also an old foe.**
- The well-being of people takes priority over profit.**
 - **Not only were the Jews being sold as slaves, but to a nation that would mistreat them.**
 - **God instilled this into the Law (Deut. 21.14; 24.14).**
 - **Man is not merchandise to be sold (Amos 2.6; 8.6).**

Amos and Human Dignity:

"And did not remember the covenant of brotherhood."

Amos 1.9

- Tyre was at one time an ally of Israel (1 Kings 5.12).**
- However, they disregarded the covenant and sold the Israelites to the Edomites.**
 - Respecting others means honoring our promises.**
 - No promise can be altered by one party for selfish purposes; we must hold to our word, even when it is inconvenient or painful (Psalm 15.4).**

Amos and Human Dignity:

*"Because he pursued his brother with the sword, While he stifled his compassion;
His anger also tore continually, And he maintained his fury forever."*

Amos 1.11

- Edom mistreated the Jews (Obadiah 10ff).**
- The Edomites covered themselves in anger:**
 - **They didn't defend, they pursued; they set aside innate compassion; they maintained their anger.**
 - **Anger is to be controlled and dismissed (Eph. 4.26-32).**
 - **Mercilessness will be judged by God (Rom. 1.31f; Mt. 6.14f).**

Amos and Human Dignity:

"They ripped open the pregnant women of Gilead...to enlarge their borders."

Amos 1.13

- The Ammonites were a cruel, evil people who negatively influenced Israel (1 Kings 11.7).**
- They were cruel even to the most vulnerable.**
 - **The rights of the helpless should be considered and remembered (Exodus 22.22ff).**
 - **God does not ignore oppression, especially when directed toward the pregnant, old, infirm, widow, and fatherless (Isaiah 1.17; Zechariah 7.8ff; Psalm 103.6).**

Amos and Human Dignity:

"Because he burned the bones of the king of Edom to lime."

Amos 2.1

- The Moabites had a long history with the Edomites, including episodes of intense violence (2 Ki. 3.26).**
- Moab was swallowed up by selfish vengeance.**
 - Man should allow God to avenge (Rom. 12.19ff).**
 - We should be more concerned with mercy and patience than with selfish vengeance.**

A Shepherd and Human Dignity

- Amos the shepherd reminds us:**
 - Treat people as beings created in God's image.**
 - Man is not merchandise to be bought and sold.**
 - Honesty is fundamental to human dignity.**
 - Retaining anger will harm us, not bless us.**
 - God is deeply concerned with our treatment of the weak.**
 - We ought to seek mercy not selfish vengeance.**