

THE ALLEGED "NO" OF AMOS AND AMOS' ESCHATOLOGY

GERHARD F. HASEL
Andrews University

1. Introduction

One of the most hotly contended issues, perhaps even the most difficult problem of the entire OT book of Amos, is the assessment of Amos' message about the future. Does Amos have a message that contains a future for Israel or, in any case, for an entity within Israel? Do his words contain an eschatology or at least one or more aspects of eschatology?

Two foundational considerations are undeniable. The first relates to the fact that the book of Amos in its canonical form contains messages that clearly hold out a future, if not for Israel as a whole, then at least for a "remnant of Joseph" (5:15). Whether this future hope is eschatological in nature depends to a large degree, but by no means entirely, upon the definition of eschatology. For our purpose it may suffice to say that we follow the broad definition of eschatology in the sense of an end of the present world order which can either be within the flow of history or, in an absolute and final sense, at the end of all history.¹

¹On the definition of eschatology, see W. Vollborn, *Innerzeitliche oder endzeitliche Gerichtserwartung? Ein Beitrag zu Amos und Jesaja* (Kiel, 1938); Joh. Lindblom, "Gibt es eine Eschatologie bei den alttestamentlichen Propheten?" *ST* 6 (1953): pp. 79-114; Th. C. Vriezen, "Prophecy and Eschatology," in *Congress Volume: Copenhagen 1953*, VTSup, vol. 1 (Leiden, 1953), pp. 199-229; E. Rohland, *Die Bedeutung der Erwählungstraditionen Israels für die Eschatologie der alttestamentlichen Propheten* (privately publ. Th.D. diss., University of Heidelberg, 1956); H.-J. Gronbaek, "Zur Frage der Eschatologie in der Verkündigung der Gerichtspropheten," *Svensk Exegetisk Årsbok* 24 (1959): 5-21; S. Mowinckel, *He That Cometh*, trans. G. W. Anderson (New York, [1954]), pp. 149-154; Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, vol. 2, *The Theology of Israel's Prophetic Traditions*, trans. D. M. G. Stalker (New York, 1965), pp. 114-119; R. E. Clements, *Prophecy and Covenant*, SBT, no. 43 (Naperville, IL, 1965), pp. 103-107: "We may, therefore, adopt a broad definition of eschatology which renders it suitable to describe the biblical ideas of God's purpose in history. Eschatology is the study of ideas and beliefs concerning the end of the present world order, and the introduction of a new order" (p. 105); Horst Dietrich Preuss, *Jahweglaube und Zukunftserwartung*, Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten

The second foundational consideration involves a recognition that the book of Amos contains the radical announcement, "The end has come for my people Israel" (8:2). This is often seen, to use the words of Rudolf Smend, as an "absolute No regarding the future existence of the nation."² Scholars who take this "No" as unconditional in nature, absolute in intention, and total in comprehensiveness have assigned passages that hold out a "perhaps" (5:15), or a possibility of repentance or a future of some sort, as being the work of a later editor or later editors—a redactor or redactors who have sought to soften Amos' absolute message of judgment with its assumed proclamation of a sure end to the entire nation of Israel.³ As we shall see, a number of key scholars have followed Smend's conclusion that "Amos speaks the No of God, not the Yes of God, he announces wrath and not grace."⁴ Smend argues that Amos says "No" to Israel's social relations, to her understanding of history, to her election and cultus; and consequently Amos says "No" to the entire existence of Israel as a whole.

The task of this essay will be to investigate the nature of "the day of the Lord" (5:18-20), the motif of the remnant, and the future hope preserved in the ending of the book (9:11-15) with a view to elucidate, if possible, Amos' "No" and Amos' eschatology. While

und Neuen Testaments (BWANT), vol. 87 (Stuttgart, 1968), pp. 208-214; Hans-Peter Müller, *Ursprünge und Strukturen alttestamentlicher Eschatologie*, BZAW, vol. 109 (Berlin, 1969), pp. 1-11; J. P. M. van der Ploeg, "Eschatology in the Old Testament," in *The Witness of Tradition: Papers Read at the Joint British-Dutch Old Testament Conference Held at Woudschoten, 1970*, Oud Testamentische Studiën, vol. 17 (Leiden, 1972), pp. 89-99; Goswin Habets, "Eschatologie-Eschatologisches," in *Bausteine biblischer Theologie: Festgabe für G. Johannes Botterweck zum 60. Geburtstag dargebracht von seinen Schülern*, ed. Heinz-Josef Fabry, Bonner Biblische Beiträge, vol. 50 (Köln, 1977), pp. 351-369; and others. Among those who follow a broader definition of eschatology are Vollborn, Vriezen, Lindblom, von Rad, Rohland, Clements, Müller, Preuss.

²Rudolf Smend, "Das Nein des Amos," *EvT* 23 (1963): 415.

³E.g., Hans Walter Wolff, *Joel and Amos: A Commentary on the Books of the Prophets Joel and Amos*, Hermeneia—A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Philadelphia, 1977), pp. 231, 234, and Artur Weiser, *Die Prophetie des Amos*, BZAW, no. 53 (Giessen, 1929), pp. 191-192, before him. Similarly J. Lust, "Remarks on the Redaction of Amos V 4-6, 14-15," in *Remembering All the Way . . . : A Collection of Old Testament Studies Published on the Occasion of the Fortieth Anniversary of the Oudtestamentisch Werkgezelschap in Nederland*, Oudtestamentische Studiën, no. 21 (Leiden, 1981), pp. 141-146.

⁴Smend, p. 423.

there are numerous scholars who have denied any eschatological message for Amos and have thus maintained the "No" of Smend, there are recent voices that claim that "Amos never unequivocally proclaimed the total destruction and end of the people."⁵ Klaus Koch puts it this way: "Amos certainly proclaims unconditional disaster, but he does not proclaim it wholesale."⁶ Similarly, Georg Fohrer maintains that Amos continued to hold out that repentance was possible and that it was part of Amos' proclamation to keep the door of salvation open.⁷

2. Amos and "The Day of the Lord"

A pivotal passage in connection with the debate about the eschatological nature of the message of Amos is the first usage in the Bible of the Hebrew expression *yôm YHWH*, "the day of Yahweh," in Amos 5:18-20. In 1905 Hugo Gressmann in his famous study on eschatology argued that the beginning of biblical eschatology is found in this very passage in Amos.⁸ In 1922 Sigmund Mowinckel, who saw the matrix of eschatology in the cult, also understood "the day of Yahweh/Lord" in Amos as eschatological.⁹ For Gerhard von Rad, who argues that eschatology is rooted in the holy-war tradition,¹⁰ the *yôm YHWH* is likewise eschatological.¹¹

A slightly different view is expressed by Koch. He believes that "the day of Yahweh/Lord" is "an important expression of popular eschatology."¹² In a similar vein, J. Alberto Soggin has recently

⁵John H. Hayes, *Amos: The Eighth Century Prophet: His Times and His Preaching* (Nashville, 1988), p. 39.

⁶Klaus Koch, *The Prophets*, vol. 1, *The Assyrian Age*, trans. Margaret Kohl (Philadelphia, 1982), p. 70.

⁷Georg Fohrer, *Die Propheten des 8. Jahrhunderts*, *Die Propheten des Alten Testaments*, vol. 1 (Gütersloh, 1974), p. 50.

⁸Hugo Gressmann, *Der Ursprung der israelitisch-jüdischen Eschatologie*, *Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments*, vol. 6 (Göttingen, 1905), pp. 141-158.

⁹Sigmund Mowinckel, *Psalmstudien II: Das Thronbesteigungsfest Jahwäs und der Ursprung der Eschatologie* (Amsterdam, 1966), pp. 213-244; idem, "Jahves Dag," *Norsk Teologisk Tidsskrift* 59 (1958): 1-56, 209-229.

¹⁰Gerhard von Rad, *Der heilige Krieg im alten Israel*, 5th ed. (Göttingen, 1969).

¹¹G. von Rad, "The Origin of the Concept of the Day of Yahweh," *JSS* 4 (1959): 97-108; idem, *Theology*, 2:119-125.

¹²Koch, p. 63.

noted: "This [Amos 5:18-20] is probably the earliest datable discussion of an eschatological theme, a theme which . . . cannot have just emerged then."¹³ Koch and Soggin refrain from saying that Amos' own saying on "the day of Yahweh/Lord" is eschatological.

Scholars such as Meir Weiss¹⁴ and C. Carniti¹⁵ see the expression and concept of "the day of the Lord" as an invention of Amos himself. Accordingly, they do not allow for a reaction on the part of Amos against a popular concept of "the day of the Lord."

There are other scholars, among them John H. Hayes, who assert that Amos has no eschatological message whatsoever.¹⁶ In this opinion Hayes was preceded by H. W. Wolff,¹⁷ who suggested that "the day of the Lord" in Amos was derived by the prophet from the thought patterns of clan wisdom and the wandering shepherds.¹⁸ Werner H. Schmidt,¹⁹ J. G. Trapiello,²⁰ A. J. Everson,²¹ and H. M. Barstad,²² in their discussions on "the day of the Lord," deny any eschatological connections in Amos. It is also noteworthy that the recent massive commentary by F. I. Andersen and D. N. Freedman in the Anchor Bible series refrains from linking "the day of the Lord" in Amos 5:18-20 to eschatology, while otherwise these authors maintain with fervor that the message of Amos in its fourth stage/phase is

¹³J. Alberto Soggin, *The Prophet Amos* (London, 1987), p. 95.

¹⁴M. Weiss, "The Origin of the 'Day of the Lord' Reconsidered," *HUCA* 37 (1966): 29-60.

¹⁵C. Carniti, "L'espressione 'il giorno di JHWH'," *Bibbia e Oriente* 12 (1970): 11-25.

¹⁶Hayes, p. 38.

¹⁷Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, p. 253-257. He cautiously states, "The oracle [of Amos 5:18-20] can be called eschatological only in the precise sense that it testifies, in the face of renewed assurances of security, that the end of the state of Israel is totally inescapable" (p. 257).

¹⁸Hans Walter Wolff, *Amos' geistige Heimat*, Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testaments, vol. 18 (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1964), pp. 11, 23.

¹⁹Werner H. Schmidt, *Alttestamentlicher Glaube und seine Umwelt: Zur Geschichte des alttestamentlichen Gottesverständnisses* (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1968), p. 95.

²⁰J. G. Trapiello, "La noción del 'Día de Yahvé en el Antiguo Testamento,'" *Cultura bíblica* 26 (1969): 331-36.

²¹A. Joseph Everson, "The Days of Yahweh," *JBL* 93 (1974): 329-37; idem, "Day of the Lord," *IDB*, suppl. vol. (1976), pp. 209-210.

²²Hans M. Barstad, *The Religious Polemics of Amos: Studies in the Preaching of Amos 2, 7B-8; 4, 1-13; 5, 1-26; 6, 4-7; 8, 14*, VTSup, vol. 34 (Leiden, 1984), pp. 89-108.

thoroughly eschatological.²³ Finally, we may note that there is a sustained argument by Y. Hoffmann that "the day of the Lord" in Amos 5:18-20 is non-eschatological in its meaning,²⁴ this view being subsequently shared by Barstad,²⁵ who with Hoffmann believes that eschatology is a postexilic Israelite phenomenon.²⁶

This brief survey²⁷ of perceptions and interpretations of "the day of the Lord" in Amos 5:18-20 indicates that there are at present three major views regarding the eschatological nature of this expression: 1) "the day of the Lord" concept is non-eschatological in Amos 5; 2) "the day of the Lord" concept reflects popular eschatology which Amos puts to an end; and 3) Amos' own statement on "the day of the Lord" is eschatological.

The idea that "the day of the Lord" in Amos 5:18-20 represents a part of the popular theology of (some) Israelites may be sustained on the assumption that the "you" in 5:18c refers to the people of Israel²⁸—a text which certainly seems to indicate that at least some Israelites considered "the day of the Lord" as a day when Yahweh would intervene in behalf of his people. This "popular eschatology,"²⁹ which understood the *yôm YHWH* as a day of Yahweh's saving intervention, was reversed by Amos into a day of doom for

²³Francis I. Andersen and David Noel Freedman, *Amos: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB, vol. 24A (New York, 1989), pp. 519-522.

²⁴Yair Hoffmann, "The Day of the Lord as a Concept and a Term in the Prophetic Literature," *ZAW* 93 (1981): 40-45.

²⁵Barstad, p. 106.

²⁶C. van Leeuwen, "The Prophecy of the *Yom YHWH* in Amos V 18-20," in *Language and Meaning: Studies in Hebrew Language and Biblical Exegesis: Papers Read at the Joint British-Dutch Old Testament Conference Held at London, 1973*, Oudtestamentische Studiën, vol. 19 (Leiden, 1974), pp. 133-134, concludes that the *yôm YHWH* in Amos 5:18-20 is "not in itself an eschatological phrase" (p. 133); but, based on a broad definition of eschatology, it could be seen as part of an eschatology of doom.

²⁷Other studies on the "Day of the Lord" which have a less direct bearing on our topic are K. A. D. Smelik, "The Meaning of Amos V 18-20," *VT* 36 (1986): 246-247; F. C. Fensham, "A Possible Origin of the Concept of the Day of the Lord," in *Biblical Essays* (n.p., 1966), pp. 90-97; E. Haag, "Der Tag Jahwes," *Bibel und Leben* 13 (1972): 517-525; F. J. Hélewa, "L'origine du concept prophétique du 'Jour de Yahvé,'" *Ephemerides Carmeliticae* 15 (1964): 3-36.

²⁸Here I do not follow the suggestion made by Smelik (p. 247) that those who long for the "day of the Lord" are the false prophets.

²⁹Preuss, p. 172.

Israel. Israel had become like one of the other nations, and thus she was in no better position to avert the coming calamity than were they.

The picture of the *yôm YHWH* in the book of Amos makes it clear that that day is to be a time of disaster for Israel. It is a day of darkness and not light. It will be as when a person escapes with his/her life from the death threat of a lion and subsequently from the death threat of a bear in order to reach his/her house for safety, where, once inside and assuming to be safe, the escapee in the end is bitten by a deadly snake. In this sense one may speak of the end of the person's life in terms of personal eschatology. The picture of the person, however, is to be applied to the nation and not to a single individual or to a group within Israel. Is this not, then, a picture of national eschatology, in which the absolute, irrevocable demise of the nation is proclaimed by Amos?

This picture is not, however, one of universal eschatology which brings about the end of the world in some form of a cataclysmic event. If eschatology is understood in the larger sense of something final within history, and not just the absolute end of all history,³⁰ then the *yôm YHWH* message of Amos 5:18-20 can surely be considered to be eschatological.³¹ Accordingly, Amos is to be seen as the first eschatological preacher among the writing prophets in the OT.³²

3. *Amos and the Remnant*

In the messages of Amos, would there be, or could there be, hope—at least some hope? This query invites us to consider briefly the remnant motif in Amos.

The view held by a rather large number of OT scholars is that the remnant motif in Amos is not cancelled out by the finality of Amos' judgment message, including the coming reality of the *yôm*

³⁰See Müller, pp. 1-11, for a brief discussion on the definitions of eschatology in modern research. In modern times the concept of eschatology as the end of history (the end of the world) has given way to eschatology as a decisive end within history.

³¹On this broader definition of eschatology, see n. 1.

³²This is supported among others by Ralph W. Klein, "The Day of the Lord," *CTM* 39 (1968): 517-525, esp. 523; Clements, pp. 103, 107-110; Wilhelm Rudolph, *Joel-Amos-Obadja-Jona, Kommentar zum Alten Testament*, vol. 13, pt. 2 (Gütersloh, 1971), p. 204; van Leeuwen, pp. 133-134.

YHWH. The essential question is, once again, whether Amos needs to be interpreted in a radical "either/or." In other words, inasmuch as Amos announced the end of the nation of Israel as a nation, is it also true that there cannot be any future whatsoever for anyone or any entity in Israel? Does Amos' message—i.e. his own message, not a reconstructed one by the alleged editors/redactors of the book—contain some hope for the future?

It has been felt by some scholars that to make Amos into a consistent prophet of doom is to put him into a straightjacket of our own making.³³ If we were to force Amos into a mold of western rational consistency, we would press him into a Procrustean bed of our own devising. Indeed, if Amos had no future hope whatsoever, his message would stand totally unique among the prophets of the eighth century B.C. Why would Yahweh reveal himself through Amos in a totally negative way?

During the last two decades, a number of major studies on the remnant idea in the OT have been produced, all of which treat the remnant motif in the book of Amos. In 1972 the first edition of a shortened version of my dissertation of 1970 (Vanderbilt University) appeared under the title, *The Remnant*.³⁴ I have returned to this theme several times since,³⁵ my conclusion being that the remnant idea did not originate in the socio-political sphere of warfare (against Werner E. Müller³⁶ and supporters), but is deeply rooted in Israel's past history. The concept appears in ancient Near Eastern

³³J. Philip Hyatt, *Prophetic Religion* (New York, 1947), pp. 100-101; A. S. Kapelrud, "New Ideas in Amos," in *Volume du Congrès, Genève, 1965*, VTSup, vol. 15 (Leiden, 1966), p. 196.

³⁴Gerhard F. Hasel, *The Remnant: The History and Theology of the Remnant Idea from Genesis to Isaiah*, Andrews University Monograph Studies in Religion, vol. 5 (Berrien Springs, MI, 1972).

³⁵Gerhard F. Hasel, "Linguistic Considerations Regarding the Translation of Isaiah's *Shear-jashub*: A Reassessment," *AUSS* 9 (1971): 36-46; idem, "Semantic Values of Derivatives of the Hebrew Root שָׂר," *AUSS* 11 (1973): 152-96; idem, "Remnant," *IDB*, Supp. Vol. (Nashville, 1976), pp. 735-736; idem, "'Remnant' as a Meaning of *ʿacharith*," *The Archaeology of Jordan and Other Studies*, ed. L. T. Geraty and L. G. Herr (Berrien Springs, MI, 1986), pp. 511-524; idem, "*Pālaṭ, mālaṭ, pālīt, pālēt, pēlēṭāh, pēletāh, miplāṭ*," *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament* (1987), 6:589-606; idem, "Remnant," *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (1979-1988), 4:130-134.

³⁶His dissertation was originally published in 1939, but was republished and enlarged by H. D. Preuss in Werner E. Müller, *Die Vorstellung vom Rest im Alten Testament* (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1973).

texts prior to the establishment of Israel³⁷ in contexts of natural catastrophes, economic hardships, physical difficulties, and military-political strife.³⁸

As regards Amos, I have concluded that there is a twofold usage of the term "remnant" in this book. One usage heightens the picture of judgment (3:12; 4:1-3; 5:3; 6:9-10; 9:1-4) because of a meaninglessness of the remnant, and the other holds out hope for a remnant and thus qualifies the message of doom. The former may be considered as the negative remnant idea. There is joined to this negative picture a powerfully positive remnant concept, one which looks forward to a group that consists not of the nation as a whole, but of a faithful segment from within the nation (5:14-15; 9:11-12). In Amos, this remnant is a remnant *from* Israel, sifted out along ethical-religious lines.³⁹ It may be concluded that "in Amos the remnant motif is used for the first time in an eschatological sense."⁴⁰

F. Dreyfus in an important article has investigated the OT remnant idea and essentially supports the twofold picture in Amos as set forth above. He points out, as well, the manner in which various commentators on critical grounds (form-critical and tradition-historical) redate some or all passages with a positive notion of the remnant (H. W. Wolff, for instance).⁴¹ The Swiss exegete Hans Wildberger, too, defends the positive remnant idea in Amos 5:15 (against Wolff).⁴² Two dissertations on the remnant concept have appeared in recent years. The Italian scholar Omar Carena attempts in his 1985 dissertation to bolster the earlier idea of Müller that the Israelite remnant concept derives from the sphere of warfare, borrowed and adapted from Assyrian political texts.⁴³ This reconstruc-

³⁷See Hasel, *Remnant*, pp. 50-134.

³⁸Preuss writes in the first appendix to Müller and Preuss, p. 114: "In view of the amount and variety of (new) materials [from the ancient Near East] which have been brought together and interpreted by Hasel, Müller's thesis of an original military-political filling of the remnant idea and his conclusions based on them will have to be scrutinized anew and critically."

³⁹Hasel, pp. 173-215.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, p. 393.

⁴¹F. Dreyfus, "Reste d'Israël," in *Dictionnaire de la Bible: Supplément* (1985), 10:422-423.

⁴²Hans Wildberger, "שׂר ׀brigg sein," *THAT*, 2:850. Preuss also objects to Wolff's claim of inauthenticity of Amos 5:15 in Müller and Preuss, pp. 118-119.

⁴³Omar Carena, *Il resto di Israele*, Associazione Biblica Italiana, Supplementi alla Rivista Biblica 13 (Bologna, 1985), pp. 21-55.

tion remains highly problematical in view of the presence of the remnant idea in older nonpolitical texts from the ancient Near East,⁴⁴ not to speak of the OT itself. Carena supports the remnant idea in Amos 5:14-15 and 9:7-10, with this little remnant forming the nucleus of the new people of God.

The University of Erlangen-Nürnberg dissertation by Jutta Hausmann is radically different from Carena's.⁴⁵ Hausmann allows for only a minimalized idea of the remnant in the preexilic prophetic writings in general. She dates most of the major texts into exilic times and later, and thus she utilizes them to describe the development of the rich remnant idea in postexilic Judaism. She dismisses from her discussion the negative remnant concept in Amos, but does acknowledge Amos 5:14-15 to have a positive remnant idea with a "conditional salvation promise."⁴⁶ For her the remnant is not a national possibility, but is rather a religious notion conditioned by the "perhaps," which expresses a vague hope in a direct manner.⁴⁷ It is part of Amos' future expectation.⁴⁸

We may now summarize as follows: 1) There is no total unanimity in recent scholarship as to how many of the remnant passages in Amos are authentic, but there are few scholars today who would deny Amos 5:14-15 as deriving from the prophet himself (*pace* Wolff and followers). 2) There is a rather general consensus that Amos has a negative and also a positive remnant idea. 3) There is widespread agreement that Amos does have a future expectation expressed by means of the remnant concept.⁴⁹ 4) Müller's hypothesis of a political-military origin of the remnant motif has recently found a defender

⁴⁴See Hasel, *Remnant*, pp. 50-134, and Müller and Preuss, pp. 113-114.

⁴⁵Jutta Hausmann, *Israels Rest: Studien zum Selbstverständnis der nachexilischen Gemeinde*, Beiträge zur Wissenschaft des Alten und Neuen Testaments, vol. 124 (Stuttgart, 1987).

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, 184, n. 227.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 186.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 187.

⁴⁹Aside from those already mentioned, the following need to be added: James Luther Mays, *Amos: A Commentary*, Old Testament Library (Philadelphia, 1969), p. 102; W. Zimmerli, "Die Bedeutung der grossen Schriftprophetie für das alttestamentliche Reden von Gott," in *Studien zur alttestamentlichen Theologie und Prophetie: Gesammelte Aufsätze II*, Theologische Bücherei, vol. 51 (Munich, 1974), p. 63; Othmar Keel, "Rechtung oder Annahme des drohenden Gerichts? (Erwägungen zu Amos, dem frühen Jesaja und Micha)" *BZ* 21 (1977): 200-218; John M. Berridge, "Zur Intention der Botschaft des Amos: Exegetische Überlegungen zu Am 5," *TZ* 32

in Carena but has not received any real support from Hausmann.⁵⁰ (It should be noted that covenant notions [O. Schilling], election traditions [H. H. Rowley], connections with "the day of the Lord" [K.-D. Schunck],⁵¹ and other relationships with the remnant play a role as well.⁵²) 5) A positive remnant thrust is present in Amos 5:14-15, where it serves as an eschatological idea located right at the center⁵³ of the book.

4. *Amos and the Future Restoration*

One of the most vexing problems in the book of Amos and in the study of it is found in Amos 9:11-15. Ever since Julius Wellhausen declared in 1892 that Amos 9:13-15 suddenly deals out "roses and lavender instead of blood and iron,"⁵⁴ and that Amos cannot so quickly change his mind in 9:8-15 to let "milk and honey" flow from "the wrath of Yahweh,"⁵⁵ there have been scores of scholars who have denied this passage as belonging to Amos. This influential assessment gives the impression, as Klaus Koch objects, that it "puts Amos too hastily on the same level as a Christian theologian, ruled by dogmatic principles."⁵⁶

In discussions since the 1970s, it has been suggested that the ending of the book of Amos is a "voice of Deuteronomistic salvation hope"⁵⁷ of obviously a much later period than the historical Amos.

(1976): 321-340; Rudolph, p. 59; Alfons Deissler, *Zwölf Propheten: Hosea, Joel, Amos*, Neue Echter Bibel (Würzburg, 1981), pp. 114-115; Ina Willi-Plein, *Vorformen der Schriftexegese innerhalb des Alten Testaments: Untersuchungen zum literarischen Werden der auf Amos, Hosea und Micha zurückgehenden Bücher im hebräischen Zwölfprophetenbuch*, BZAW, vol. 123 (Berlin, 1971), p. 32.

⁵⁰Hausmann, pp. 211-212.

⁵¹K.-D. Schunck, "Strukturlinien in der Entwicklung der Vorstellung vom 'Tag Jahwes'," *VT* 14 (1964): 319-330, esp. 323.

⁵²Preuss, pp. 181-182.

⁵³Andersen and Freedman, p. 53, note with great insight that "the center of the book is vv. 14-15 [of Amos 5], almost to the word. Taken together the two verses are a capsule of the book's essential message."

⁵⁴J. Wellhausen, *Die Kleinen Propheten: Übersetzt und erklärt*, 4th unchanged ed. (Berlin, 1963), p. 96.

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Koch, p. 69.

⁵⁷Ulrich Kellermann, "Der Amosschluss als Stimme deuteronomistischer Heilshoffnung," *EvT* 29 (1969): 169-183. The theory that Amos 9:11-15 is of Deuteronomistic origin is not unique to Kellermann. See Weiser, *Die Prophetie des Amos*,

But even a scholar of the stature of H. W. Wolff, who is a strong supporter of the Deuteronomistic edition of the book of Amos (following W. H. Schmidt), does not see here any Deuteronomistic influence; instead, he considers this passage as being from "the hand of a redactor not in evidence elsewhere in the book."⁵⁸ Soggin also refuses to follow the Deuteronomistic redaction line of thought.⁵⁹

Peter Weimar seeks to place this concluding section of Amos into the framework of the redaction of the book of Amos,⁶⁰ and W. A. G. Nel suggests that Amos 9:11-15 is an unconditional prophecy to the people of the kingdom of Judah from the time of the exile.⁶¹ Brevard Childs, based on his interest in the final form of the text, and agreeing with those who see Amos as a consistent prophet of doom, suggests that the later redactor of the final edition of Amos "engaged in a decisive canonical reinterpretation of the book in that he placed the words of Amos into a broad eschatological framework which goes beyond the original perspective of the prophet himself."⁶² Rolf Rendtorff insists that none of the texts in the book of Amos should be interpreted independently from the context in which they are placed in the book itself.⁶³ As regards Amos 9:7-15, Rendtorff insists that "the proclamation of doom is integrated into the eschatological proclamation of salvation as in all other prophetic books."⁶⁴

In one way or another, the numerous scholars since 1892 who have denied that the concluding part of Amos belongs to the prophet himself feel that the statements about future salvation contained in this prophetic word presuppose the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. They are agreed that the unique phrase "the booth of David" (9:11)

pp. 282-290; Siegfried Herrmann, *Die prophetischen Heilserwartungen im Alten Testament: Ursprung und Gestaltwandel*, BWANT, vol. 85 (Stuttgart, 1965), pp. 125-126, among a few others.

⁵⁸Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, p. 353.

⁵⁹Soggin, pp. 149-150.

⁶⁰Peter Weimar, "Der Schluss des Amos-Buches: Ein Beitrag zur Redaktionsgeschichte des Amos-Buches," *Biblische Notizen* 16 (1981): 60-100.

⁶¹W. A. G. Nel, "Amos 9:11-15—An Unconditional Prophecy of Salvation during the Period of the Exile," *Old Testament Essays* 2 (1984): 81-97.

⁶²Brevard S. Childs, "Die theologische Bedeutung der Endform eines Textes," trans. Klaus Bickerstein, *TQ* 167 (1987): 251.

⁶³Rolf Rendtorff, *Das Alte Testament: Eine Einführung*, 2d ed. (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1985), p. 235, citing Brevard S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia, 1979).

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, p. 234.

refers to the Southern Kingdom and that the reference to its fall must be to the events connected with the end of Judah in the time of the Neo-Babylonian period. This accommodation to the new historical reality of a later period is also understood to soften the harsh message of Amos. In one way or another, an exilic or postexilic dating is bolstered with various historical and philological-linguistic arguments.⁶⁵

Already as early as 1902 Otto Procksch raised an issue that has haunted exegetes and scholars ever since. He wrote, "Most of all one can hardly imagine that Amos should let Yahweh triumph over nothingness."⁶⁶ The debated issue is whether Yahweh's triumph is the complete and total end of Israel and every Israelite.

Did Yahweh have really only an end to proclaim through Amos, without any kind of a future for anyone? Why would only later editors be able to have a message of hope? Therefore, numerous exegetes have considered the final section of Amos to derive from the historical Amos himself.⁶⁷ This is a reconsideration which continues into the present.⁶⁸

⁶⁵In recent times see Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, pp. 113, 350-355; and Willi-Plein, pp. 55-63.

⁶⁶Otto Procksch, *Geschichtsbetrachtung und geschichtliche Überlieferung bei den vorexilischen Propheten* (Leipzig, 1902), p. 13, n. 1.

⁶⁷We will not mention those scholars that see parts of this section as overlaid by later redactors/editors.

⁶⁸E.g., Müller, p. 213, with 9:12 as a late interpolation; O. Hvidberg-Hansen, "Die Vernichtung des goldenen Kalbes und der ugaritische Ernteritus: Der rituelle Hintergrund für Exod 32,20 und andere alttestamentliche Berichte über die Vernichtung von Götterbildern," *Acta Orientalia* 33 (1971): 41-46; Klaus Seybold, *Das davidische Königtum im Zeugnis der Propheten*, Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments, vol. 107 (Göttingen, 1972), pp. 17-19; S. N. Rosenbaum, "Northern Amos Revisited: Two Philological Suggestions," *Hebrew Studies* 18 (1977): 137; Rudolph, pp. 278-287; Bernhard Lang, *Monotheism and the Prophetic Minority: An Essay in Biblical History and Sociology* (Sheffield, 1983), p. 75; G. Henton Davies, "Amos—Prophet of Re-Union: An Essay in Honor of the Eightieth Birthday of Professor Aubrey R. Johnson, F.B.A.," *ExpTim* 92 (1981): 200, leans in that direction; and more recently the commentaries by Hayes; Andersen and Freedman; Gary V. Smith, *Amos: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI, 1989); and Douglas Stuart, *Hosea-Jonah*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 31 (Waco, TX, 1988). Joseph W. Groves, *Actualization and Interpretation in the Old Testament*, SBL Dissertation Series, vol. 86 (Atlanta, 1987), pp. 179-191, criticizes Hans Walter Wolff's atomization of the text and concludes, "In looking at allusions and context we have shown that Amos 9:11-15 is much more thoroughly integrated with the rest of Amos than other commentators have suggested. Every verse contains allusions which enrich the meaning of both this pericope and the rest of the book" (p. 189).

Among the supporters of the authenticity of Amos 9:11-15 are Julius Boehmer,⁶⁹ Ernst Sellin,⁷⁰ H. H. Krause,⁷¹ K. Cramer,⁷² S. R. Driver,⁷³ G. A. Danell,⁷⁴ Albrecht Alt,⁷⁵ Johannes Hempel,⁷⁶ W. Zimmerli,⁷⁷ A. Neher,⁷⁸ Victor Maag,⁷⁹ E. Rohland,⁸⁰ J. G. Botterweck,⁸¹ E. Hammershaimb,⁸² J. D. W. Watts,⁸³ R. E. Clements,⁸⁴ R. A. Carlson,⁸⁵ Gerhard von Rad,⁸⁶ Walther Eichrodt,⁸⁷ Ivan Engnell,⁸⁸

⁶⁹Julius Boehmer, "Die Eigenart der prophetischen Heilspredigt des Amos," *Theologische Studien und Kritiken* 76 (1903): 38-39, 44, n. 1.

⁷⁰Ernst Sellin, *Der alttestamentliche Prophetismus* (Leipzig, 1912), pp. 32-33.

⁷¹H. H. Krause, "Der Gerichtsprphet Amos, ein Vorläufer des Deuteronomisten," *ZAW* 50 (1932): 228-229.

⁷²K. Cramer, *Amos: Versuch einer theologischen Interpretation*, BWANT, series 3, vol. 15 (Stuttgart, 1930), pp. 47-49, 177-180.

⁷³S. R. Driver, *The Books of Joel and Amos*, 2d ed. (Cambridge, 1934), pp. 122-126.

⁷⁴G. A. Danell, *Studies in the Name Israel in the Old Testament* (Uppsala, 1946), pp. 134-135.

⁷⁵A. Alt, in lectures delivered at Leipzig in 1950-51, as stated by S. Wagner, "Überlegungen zur Frage nach den Beziehungen des Propheten Amos zum Südreich," *TLZ* 96 (1971): 661, 669, n. 18.

⁷⁶Johannes Hempel, *Worte der Propheten: In neuer Übertragung und mit Erläuterungen* (Berlin, 1949), p. 114; idem, "Die Wurzeln des Missionswillens im Glauben des Alten Testaments," *ZAW* 66 (1954): 253.

⁷⁷W. Zimmerli, "Gericht und Heil im alttestamentlichen Prophetenwort," *Der Anfang* 11 (1949): 38.

⁷⁸A. Neher, *Amos: Contribution à l'étude du prophétisme* (Paris, 1950), p. 111.

⁷⁹V. Maag, *Text, Wortschatz und Begriffswelt des Buches Amos* (Leiden, 1951), pp. 61-62, 246-251, contends v. 12 is exilic or post-exilic.

⁸⁰Rohland, pp. 59, 230-232. Rohland follows Maag in considering v. 12 late.

⁸¹J. G. Botterweck, "Zur Authentizität des Buches Amos," *BZ* 2 (1958): 188-189.

⁸²Erling Hammershaimb, *Amos fortolket*, 2d ed. (Copenhagen, 1958), pp. 131-139.

⁸³J. D. W. Watts, *Vision and Prophecy in Amos* (Grand Rapids, MI, 1958), pp. 58-60.

⁸⁴Clements, p. 111.

⁸⁵R. A. Carlson, "Propheten Amos och Davidsriket," *Religion och Bibel* 25 (1966): 74-78.

⁸⁶von Rad, *Theology*, 2:138.

⁸⁷W. Eichrodt, *Die Hoffnung des ewigen Friedens im Alten Testament* (Gütersloh, 1920), pp. 95-101.

⁸⁸Ivan Engnell, "Amos," in *Svensk Bibliskt Uppslagsverk*, ed. I. Engnell and A. Fridricksen, 2 vols., 2d ed. (Stockholm, 1962), 1:65-66.

Abraham Heschel,⁸⁹ Y. Kaufmann,⁹⁰ Horst D. Preuss,⁹¹ and Henning Graf Reventlow⁹² before the 1970s. Since that time the arguments for authenticity continue, with, for example, Wilhelm Rudolph⁹³ and Erling Hammershaimb⁹⁴ defending this final section of Amos as coming from the prophet himself. S. Yeivin sees this text as an "invitation to rebellion against the king and his powers," a position which Amos supports and to which he holds out "the restoration of all Israel under the Davidic dynasty."⁹⁵ The passage has been seen as a criticism of the rulership of Jeroboam II.⁹⁶

Other scholars assign this concluding prophecy to a supposed Judean phase of the prophetic activity of Amos.⁹⁷ The suggestion has also been made that it belongs to a cultic covenant-renewal festival.⁹⁸ Very recently the commentaries of John H. Hayes,⁹⁹ Douglas Stuart,¹⁰⁰ Gary V. Smith,¹⁰¹ and David A. Hubbard,¹⁰² besides various others,¹⁰³ have given full support to the authenticity of the passage. Andersen and Freedman¹⁰⁴ are also in general support of the view that it derives from the eighth-century Amos.

⁸⁹Abraham J. Heschel, *The Prophets* (New York, 1962), p. 37.

⁹⁰Yehezkel Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel: From Its Beginnings to the Babylonian Exile*, trans. and abrid. Moshe Greenberg (Chicago, 1960), p. 368.

⁹¹Preuss, pp. 138-139.

⁹²Henning Graf Reventlow, *Das Amt des Propheten bei Amos*, Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments, vol. 80 (Göttingen, 1952), pp. 90-95.

⁹³Rudolph, pp. 279-287.

⁹⁴Hammershaimb, pp. 135-138.

⁹⁵S. Yeivin, "The Divided Kingdom: Rehoboam-Ahaz/Jeroboam to Pekah," *The World History of the Jewish People*, vol. 4, pt. 1, *The Age of the Monarchies: Political History*, ed. Abraham Malamat (Jerusalem, 1979), p. 164.

⁹⁶Seybold, pp. 60-67.

⁹⁷So, among others, Watts, pp. 58-60.

⁹⁸Reventlow, pp. 90-110.

⁹⁹Hayes, p. 223, suggests that 9:11-15 forms the conclusion to the unit begun in 7:1.

¹⁰⁰Stuart, pp. 396-400.

¹⁰¹Smith, pp. 275-280.

¹⁰²David Allan Hubbard, *Joel and Amos*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL, 1989), pp. 237-239.

¹⁰³E.g., Wagner, cols. 661-663; Seybold, pp. 17-19.

¹⁰⁴Andersen and Freedman, p. 916.

The matter of the genuineness of this concluding part of the book of Amos relates to the understanding of the whole message of Amos.¹⁰⁵ Is this prophecy dependent on the ideology of a Davidic empire? Does it reflect a pro-Judean tendency? Is it a criticism of the royal dynasty of Jeroboam II? Does it reflect a psychological/religious tension? Is it rooted in the covenant? Does this prophecy reflect a message of hope from an earlier period which was abandoned later? These issues have been raised but cannot be pursued here.

The perpetual issues turn on whether Amos is a consistent prophet of doom or whether there is some hope held out, even for only a remnant. Is there a development from one to the other? These concerns will exercise exegetes and theologians for some time to come, because the question is not just a matter of what Amos said or did not say. It is also a matter of the entire origin of future hope in the earliest phase of OT classical prophecy. Why should a crisis of the magnitude to be encountered by the Northern Kingdom end in an absolute "No" as regards a future for any remnant from the ten-tribe kingdom? Does not Yahweh have more to offer than that (Procksch)? We must certainly not allow our theology to determine the meaning of a book or a prophet's message, and neither must we allow our notion of consistency to force a text into a particular mold simply because that mold is in harmony with our own modern expectations.

5. *Conclusions*

We may bring together our conclusions as follows: 1) "The day of the Lord" passage in Amos 5:18-20 is indeed eschatological in nature. It proclaims, in a lamentation setting, the end of the national existence of Israel. 2) This final, eschatological end of the national history of Israel, the Northern Kingdom, is not, however, an absolute end of everything. There is a "perhaps" for a remnant that will be left from the "house of Joseph" (5:14-15). This remnant is one of faith, preserved by grace; and as a surviving entity it is eschatological in nature, carrying on the salvational intentions of Yahweh. 3) In view of the end of the Northern Kingdom, the eschatological message of the restoration of the "fallen/falling booth of David," to which

¹⁰⁵In any case, it is clear from the stance of both supporters and detractors that the decision regarding genuineness has nothing to do with the conservative/liberal position of the respective exegete.

other entities are joined (viz., "the remnant of Edom"), looks forward to a successful future. This too is a deed of Yahweh in which the past failures of the people, the separation of the Davidic Israel, are overcome by a glorious reunion.

Thus, Amos is not just a "prophet of re-union";¹⁰⁶ he is a prophet of eschatological doom *and* eschatological hope. Amos holds both aspects together; he is the first preacher of eschatology, but not a "popular eschatology." His eschatology is Yahwistic eschatology, in which the divine demands count and the divine-human relationships are at the center, transforming and shaping all inter-human relationships.

¹⁰⁶Davies, pp. 196-200.