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Course: OT755, Amos (Hebrew Text)

Professor: R. Russell Mack, Ph.D.

Essay 9

1. *First, list the book title(s) you read for Amos 5:18-6:14 and the respective pages.*
 - *Hosea-Jonah, Volume 31, by Douglas Stuart, pages 352-365*
 - *Amos, A Handbook on the Hebrew Text, by Duane A. Garrett, pages 129-162*
 - *The Message of Amos, by J. A. Motyer, pages 105-127*
 - *The Minor Prophets, An Exegetical and Expository Commentary, Vol. 1 Hosea, Joel, and Amos. Edited by Thomas Edward McComiskey, pages 408-426*
2. *Second, in a few paragraphs of approximately 350 word total length, detail what you learned about these verses that was new, fascinating, or compelling to you. Focus on being specific about your learning and not the application of it (save that for the discussion posts).*

It is so fascinating to see how the images are used in Amos 5:24, “roll down like waters” [כַּמַּיִם יִגְלָל] and “an enduring wadi” [אַיְתָן כְּנַחַל]. The verb “roll down” [יִגְלָל] is not elsewhere used with “waters” [מַיִם]. The niphal of this verb is found only in one other place, Isaiah 34:4, where heaven is “rolled up like a scroll”. The verb here seems to refer to how water rolls over itself in waves.¹ So, this emphasizes God’s desire to see justice in his people. It is what he requires, not religious practices (v. 22-23). The people offered *up* to God a lot of things that he hated and rejected, while he desired and required them to “roll *down* justice” abundantly.

The second image, “like an enduring wadi.” A wadi [נַחַל] in the Middle East is a narrow valley, often a deep channel, through which rapid torrents of water gush during the rainy season,

¹ Duane A. Garrett, *Amos, A Handbook on the Hebrew Text* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press), 172.

but which may have only a trickle of water or be completely dry in the summer.² So, this metaphor suggests that righteousness should be ongoing and never-ending.

Besides, two keywords “justice” [טִפְסָלִים] and “righteousness” [יְדִיטָא] should be considered in its context. Among a society that was filled with injustice and unrighteousness, one could feel that justice and righteousness are powerless. Yet these two words go together create a power to deal with social issues that were prevalent in Israel at Amos’ days. It means Israel must put an end to the oppression of the poor, ensure the honesty in the courts, and concern for the needs of the poor.

In short, the images of water and stream refer to various aspects of justice and righteousness that the Lord requires his people to do. As mighty and cleansing waters, justice and righteousness should roll away every sin and injustice in the land of Israel. And they should be ever-flowing as a perennial wadi no matter what season.

3. *Third, identify at least one question that was not answered by your reading. This could become the topic of your research paper.*

What is the origin of the concept of the day of the Lord? (Amos 5:18)

² Thomas Edward McComiskey, *The Minor Prophets, An Exegetical and Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1992), 432.