YESHIVAT HAR ETZION

ISRAEL KOSCHITZKY VIRTUAL BEIT MIDRASH (VBM)

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**Prophets vs. Empires: A Survey of Nevi’im Acharonim**

**Rav Yoel Bin-Nun**

**Shiur #08: The Period of Yarovam, Uziyahu, Pekach, and Achaz (1)**

**The prophecies of Amos, and Yeshayahu (1-6)**

The words of Amos who was among the herdmen of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uziya,[[1]](#footnote-1) king of Yehuda, and in the days of Yarovam ben Yoash, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake. (*Amos* 1:1)

The vision of Yeshayahu ben Amotz, which he saw concerning Yehuda and Jerusalem, in the days of Uziyahu, Yotam, Achaz, and Chizkiyahu, kings of Yehuda. (*Yeshayahu* 1:1)

The "words of Amos" date to the period of Yarovam-Uziyahu; they reflect nothing of the period that followed, when Ashur (Assyria) was already the dominant regional power. Hence, the "words of Amos" offer a point of comparison for the early chapters of *Yeshayahu* (1-6), and indeed we see that there is extensive similarity in terms of both content (rebuke and forecasts alike) and the general atmosphere. (A few of the later segments,[[2]](#footnote-2) specifically in *Yeshayahu* 1, are exceptions.)

The common background of this period is mentioned briefly in *Sefer Melakhim*, concerning Yarovam ben Yoash, and in *Divrei Ha-Yamim*, concerning Uziyahu:

Yarovam ben Yoash, king of Israel, began to reign in Shomron, and he reigned forty-one years. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord; he did not depart from all the sins of Yarovam ben Nevat, with which he caused Israel to sin.

He restored the border of Israel from the entrance of Chamat to the sea of the Arava, according to the word of the Lord God of Israel, which He spoke by the hand of His servant, Yona ben Amitai, the prophet, who was from Gat-Chefer[[3]](#footnote-3)… and how he recovered Damesek, and Chamat, for Yehuda in Israel[[4]](#footnote-4)… (*Melakhim* II 14:23-28)

Sixteen years old was Uziya when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem… and as long as he sought the Lord, God caused him to prosper… And the Ma'onites [Amonites[[5]](#footnote-5)] gave gifts to Uziya, and his name spread abroad as far as the entrance of Egypt, for he grew exceedingly strong… (*Divrei* *Ha-Yamim* II 26:3-15)

The military victories and political ascent led directly to an economic boom the likes of which had not been seen since the days of Shlomo.[[6]](#footnote-6) Echoes of this period of abundance and success are evident in Amos's descriptions, like in the early chapters of *Yeshayahu*. Another feature that they share is the introductory exclamation "Woe…" (*hoi*):

Woe to those who are at ease in Tzion, and to those who are secure in the mountain of Shomron… Who lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock and the calves out of the midst of the stall; who thrum on the psaltery, who devise for themselves musical instruments like David; who drink wine in bowls and anoint themselves with the chief ointments, but are not grieved over the hurt of Yosef. Therefore, now they shall go captive at the head of those that go captive… (*Amos* 15:1-7)

Woe to those who rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; who tarry late into the night, until wine inflames them; and the harp and the psaltery, the tabret and the pipe, and wine, are in their feasts, but they do not look upon the work of the Lord, nor have they considered the deeds of His hands. Therefore, My people are gone into captivity, for want of knowledge… (*Yeshayahu* 5:11-13)

These two descriptions are identical: both describe banquets with wine, abundant feasting, and musical instruments, as though describing the generation of David and Shlomo – while in fact the prophets could already see exile on the horizon.

To these verses from *Amos*, we might add his descriptions of the palaces of Shomron facing imminent destruction,[[7]](#footnote-7) the houses of hewn stone and pleasant vineyards,[[8]](#footnote-8) and the banquets with song that will be transformed into lamentation and mourning.[[9]](#footnote-9)

To the verses from *Yeshayahu*, we might add his rebuke of the pride of the "daughters of Tzion," with an extraordinary list of the fine garments and jewelry of which they will be stripped,[[10]](#footnote-10) and the comparison between Uziyahu’s horses, chariots, and towers and walls and ships of Tarshish,[[11]](#footnote-11) and the silver and gold owned by Shlomo.[[12]](#footnote-12)

Both prophets describe a society that is corrupt, but very religious (or rather – very religious, but corrupt): the marketplace is closed on Shabbat and even on Rosh Chodesh, even in the kingdom of Israel, and sacrifices are offered with prayers at the great gatherings on the festivals, but there is no social or legal justice. People wait impatiently for the resumption of trade after Shabbat and Rosh Chodesh so they can resume their deceit and their defrauding of the poor and downtrodden:

Hear this, you who would swallow the needy… saying: “When will Rosh Chodesh be over, that we may sell grain? And Shabbat, that we may set forth corn – making the *efa* small, and the *shekel* great, and falsifying the balances of deceit? That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes, and sell the refuse of the corn?” The Lord has sworn by the pride of Yaakov: Surely I will never forget any of their works... (*Amos* 8:4-8)

To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to Me, says the Lord… When you come to appear before Me, who required this at your hand, to trample My courts?... Rosh Chodesh and Shabbat – the holding of convocations – I cannot endure iniquity along with the solemn assembly. My soul hates your Rosh Chodesh and your appointed seasons… Even when you offer many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood. Wash yourselves, clean yourselves, put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes; cease to do evil. Learn to do well; seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. (*Yeshayahu* 1:11-17)

Both prophets also offer similar descriptions of the imminent catastrophe – but to whom are they referring when they describe the approaching enemy?

Clearly, the enemy will come with a much larger and stronger army than that of Chazael in Damesek, which Israel defeated after their period of decline. In addition, it is clear that the enemy comes from afar – "beyond Damesek" (*Amos* 5:27) – and that it will exile even Aram itself to the north.[[13]](#footnote-13) But it is not mentioned by name.

The reason for this obscurity would seem to be that at this stage, Ashur (Assyria) was still "beyond the horizon" of the kingdoms of Israel and Yehuda, who were at the peak of their power during the reigns of Yarovam and Uziyahu.

For behold, I will raise up against you a nation, O house of Israel, says the Lord God of hosts, and they shall afflict you from the entrance of Chamat to the brook of the Arava. (*Amos* 6:14)[[14]](#footnote-14)

Therefore I will cause you to go into captivity beyond Damesek,[[15]](#footnote-15) says He Whose Name is the Lord God of hosts. (*Amos* 5:27)

And He will lift up a banner to the nations from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth, and behold they shall come with speed, swiftly… Whose arrows are sharp, and all their bows bent; their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flint, and their wheels like a whirlwind; Their roaring shall be like a lion… they shall roar and lay hold of the prey and carry it away safe, and there shall be none to deliver. And they shall roar against them in that day like the roaring of the sea, and if one looks to the land, behold – darkness and distress, and the light is darkened in its skies. (*Yeshayahu* 5:26-30)

In *Yeshayahu*’s prophecies during the days of Achaz (starting from Chapter 7), Ashur is mentioned frequently, by name, as the dominant power in the region. Hence, the absence of the name in the earlier chapters (as well as in *Amos*) should be understood as a reflection of the historical period. In the time of Yarovam ben Yoash, a powerful Ashur was still far off; even when this is the enemy that the prophets are referring to, they do not refer to it by name.

We also find no mention in Yeshayahu’s prophecies from the time of Achaz and Chizkiyahu of the material abundance and decadent feasting of a flourishing, corrupt society.

The close similarities between the prophecies of Amos and the early prophecies of Yeshayahu indicate that the latter (Chapters 2-6) all date to the time of Uziyahu. This also explains the heading given to Chapter 2, which seems like the introduction to a book: "The word that Yeshayahu ben Amotz saw, concerning Yehuda and Jerusalem" (2:1). Only in Chapter 1 do we find later descriptions, and this chapter should be viewed as a summary[[16]](#footnote-16) of Yeshayahu's prophecies, stretching from the time of Uziyahu to the reign of Chizkiyahu.

The parallels between Amos and Yeshayahu (in the time of Uziyahu) reach their climax in the two concluding chapters: the vision of the Sanctuary, and the vision of the altar, with corresponding allusions to the great earthquake in the time of Uziyahu:

I saw the Lord standing by the altar, and He said: Smite the capitals, that the posts may shake… (*Amos* 9:1)

I saw my Lord seated on a high and lofty throne… Seraphim stood in attendance… And the posts of the door were moved at the voice [of those] that called, and the house was filled with smoke. (*Yeshayahu* 6:1-4)

The description of each vision starts with the appearance of God’s glory, but in Jerusalem, Yeshayahu sees the Throne rising up (heavenward) from the Sanctuary, while in the kingdom of Israel, Amos's vision shows God positioned over an open independent altar, ready to destroy it.

This discrepancy points to two different perceptions[[17]](#footnote-17) of the manifestation of God's glory. In the kingdom of Israel, there was no Sanctuary, and the revelation of God's Kingship was perceived in standing form. The Sanctuary in Jerusalem was considered the site of repose of the heavenly Throne, of which the Ark of Testimony is the "footstool**.”**

Amos's prophecy has no Sanctuary or heavenly Throne, nor any seraphim or other heavenly beings. His prophecy is introduced with four visions of destruction[[18]](#footnote-18): locusts and a fire (concerning which Amos prays, and God retracts the decree);[[19]](#footnote-19) the vision of the plumbline;[[20]](#footnote-20) and the vision of the basket of summer fruit,[[21]](#footnote-21) conveying that God would forgive no more – followed by the vision of the altar and the earthquake.

However, the main content of the prophetic visions is the same: the imminent destruction of the kingdom of Israel, and desolation in Yehuda as well; at the same time, the nation[[22]](#footnote-22) will survive its travails among the nations, and a remnant[[23]](#footnote-23) will remain in Yehuda from which the "fallen Tabernacle of David" will rise to become dominant.[[24]](#footnote-24)

If[[25]](#footnote-25) we accept at face value *Chazal*'s interpretation[[26]](#footnote-26) of the date stamp of Yeshayahu's prophecy "in the year of the death of King Uziyahu"[[27]](#footnote-27)– i.e., that it refers to the year when Uziyahu was struck with *tzara'at*, such that he lost the throne – then we find a full parallel between Amos's prophecy to the kingdom of Israel in its heyday of wealth and luxury under the reign of Yarovam ben Yoash, "two years before the earthquake,” and Yeshayahu's prophecy in the heyday of dazzling opulence under Uziyahu, up until the year of his "death" – i.e., his descent from the stage of world history – as well as a parallel between the content and language of the two prophetic visions.

This parallel is formulated clearly in the language of the concluding prophecies of Amos and Yeshayahu:

*Amos* 9:

I saw the Lord standing beside the altar, and He said: Smite the capitals, that the posts may shake; and break them in pieces on the head of all of them, and I will slay the residue of them with the sword; not one of them shall flee, nor shall any one of the them escape. […]

Behold, the eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth, save that I will not utterly destroy the house of Yaakov, says the Lord.

For behold, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all the nations as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet not the least grain will fall upon the earth.

All the sinners of My people shall die by the sword, that say: “The evil shall not overtake nor confront us.”

In that day I will raise up the fallen Tabernacle of David, and close up its breaches, and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old.

[…] says the Lord, Who does this. (*Amos* 9:1-12)

*Yeshayahu* 6:

In the year that King Uziyahu died, I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne high and elevated, and His train filled the Temple. […]

And the posts of the door were moved at the voice [of them] that called, and the house was filled with smoke. […]

And He said, “Go and tell this people: hear, but do not understand; see, but do not perceive.”

Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they, seeing with their eyes, and hearing with their ears, and understanding with their heart, return, and be healed. Then I said, "Lord, how long?” And He answered, “Until cities are desolate without inhabitant, and houses without people, and the land is left utterly waste.

And the Lord has removed men far away, and the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land.

And if there is yet a tenth in it, it shall again be eaten up, as a terebinth, and as an oak, whose stock remains, when they cast their leaves, so the holy seed shall be its stock." (*Yeshayahu* 6:1-13)

As mentioned, the altar in the kingdom of Israel was open and God stood above it, ready to destroy it. In Jerusalem there was a Sanctuary, and God's glory was to depart from it. In each of these parallel visions, the earthquake[[28]](#footnote-28) makes itself felt in the "doorposts” and the vision describes destruction and desolation – but not annihilation, since the nation will survive even in the midst of the other nations, and the Tabernacle of David will arise again: "holy seed" will sprout anew from the naked trunk.

***Kedusha* (Sanctity)**

Among the tribes of Israel[[29]](#footnote-29) and in the kingdom of Israel, God was never revealed as a King sitting upon a Throne, dwelling in His Sanctuary. The people of Israel also never invoked this concept; neither Tanakh nor archaeological evidence contains any mention of it among them. This explains why Amos envisions God as a Master[[30]](#footnote-30) Who announces the end of His forgiveness with a “plumbline” and a “basket of summer fruit,” ultimately “standing beside (above) the altar” (which represented the service of God in the kingdom of Israel) to destroy it.

In Jerusalem, Shlomo declared, “Will God truly dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You; how much less this house that I have built!”[[31]](#footnote-31) It is specifically with this acknowledgment that he asks God to hear, from the heavens, the prayers that will be offered by all servants of God “toward this place” and “toward this House**.”**[[32]](#footnote-32)

Now, let us look at the prophecy of Yeshayahu in Chapter 6, which looks like a prophecy of consecration[[33]](#footnote-33) but contains within it the decree of God’s departure.

At the very end of the *sefer*, Yeshayahu explains the meaning of the vision of God’s glory upon the Throne:

Thus says the Lord: The heaven is My Throne, and the earth is My footstool; where is the house that you could build for Me? And where is the place that might be My resting place?

For all these things My hand has made, and so all these things came to be, says the Lord, but upon this man I will look; upon him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word. (*Yeshayahu* 66:1-2)

If the Temple and the Sanctuary are not worthy of housing God’s glory, He will return to His Throne on High, and the entire earth – not just God’s House and its Sanctuary – will be “the footstool of God**.”**[[34]](#footnote-34)

Therefore, it is appropriate that the words “high and elevated” (*ram ve-nisa*) be interpreted here (6:1) not as adjectives describing God, but rather as verbs in the simple (*kal*) case: God’s glory is “rising up and elevating itself,” meaning, exiting the earthly Sanctuary, which is no longer worthy of His Presence, and rising up to the heavens.[[35]](#footnote-35)

This also explains the prophetic declaration of God’s sanctity as signifying God’s departure (and as such, it is used in the opposite sense in the *Kedusha* that is part of the prayer service[[36]](#footnote-36)):

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the entire earth is filled with His glory. (*Yeshayahu* 6:3)

God’s house and His Sanctuary (in Jerusalem) are no longer worthy of fulfilling their function, and God’s glory is sanctified, elevated, and lifted to the heavens, leaving the entire earth to become once again “His footstool.” In this way, Yeshayahu’s vision of the beginning of God’s departure resembles Yechezkel’s vision of the departure of His glory from the House,[[37]](#footnote-37) with the call, “Blessed be the glory of the Lord [exiled] from His place” (*Yechezkel* 3:12).

Yeshayahu hears the voice of God calling to him from the heavenly court:

Make the heart of this people fat… (6:10)

What is the meaning of this call? Is Yeshayahu’s prophecy meant to suppress the spirit of the people, and to distance them from God’s voice that rebukes them and calls upon them to repent? Can there be prophecy whose sole purpose is to foretell death, with no hope for life? It is already some years that Yeshayahu has been distanced from his cousin, the great king Uziyahu,[[38]](#footnote-38) whose heart had grown haughty with power.[[39]](#footnote-39) He has long been unimpressed by the ornaments of Jerusalem and the parades of the women of the city in their finery. Now he progresses even further away from the worldly kingdom, toward the kingdom of Heaven. In his vision, he is in the Sanctuary, which is ascending heavenward. There, among the seraphim, he hears the voice commanding him to fatten the heart of the people so that they will not awaken from their complacent slumber of abundance. It is now that their fate is sealed: the prophet becomes a party to the scene of their judgment and the verdict, just as until now he has been a messenger to convey God’s rebuke (Chapters 2-5).

In order to understand the full significance of this vision as a prophecy of departure, let us consider a prophetic story with a similar description, from *Sefer Melakhim*, uttered by the prophet Mikhayahu ben Yimla.[[40]](#footnote-40) The text there describes how Achav, king of Israel, goaded Yehoshafat, king of Yehuda, into joining him in waging a war to liberate Ramot Gil’ad. Achav had at his disposal four hundred “prophets” who ate at his table, all foretelling in a single voice the king’s imminent victory. Yehoshafat, king of Yehuda, was alarmed at this choir of prophets, all unanimously declaring the king’s victory in advance of the battle, and asked for another prophet through whom he could inquire of God. The prophet who arrives is Mikhayahu ben Yimla, whom Achav fears. After a few attempts to evade conveying his prophecy, Mikhayahu describes a vision of what is going on in the heavenly court:

I saw the Lord sitting on His Throne, and all the host of heaven standing by Him on His right hand and on His left. And the Lord said, Who shall entice Achav, that he may go up and fall at Ramot Gil’ad? And one said: In this manner; and another said: in that manner. And there came forth the spirit and stood before the Lord and said, I will entice him. And the Lord said to him, With what? And he said, I will go forth, and will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And He said, You shall entice him, and shall also prevail; go forth, and do so. (*Melakhim* I 22:19-22)

This is the vision of the heavenly court in which Achav’s fate is being decided. The Head of the court, the Judge of all the earth, asks a cruel question: “Who shall entice Achav?” In other words, his fate is already sealed; all that remains is for the verdict to be carried out.

The comparison between *Melakhim* and *Yeshayahu* concludes with God’s command to go and entice the king, or to block up the nation’s hearts so that they will not repent after the verdict is given. But from this point on, there is a fundamental difference: In the kingdom of Israel, the spirit goes out promptly to perform its task; there is no room for protest or discussion. Yeshayahu, as a flesh-and-blood prophet, reacts to the prophecy of destruction with a heartrending cry of pain and love for his people: “How long, O Lord?”

By virtue of this cry, Yeshayahu also merits to hear God’s response: there will be a difficult period of destruction and desolation, but in the end there will be new growth (as he is promised also in the prophecy in Chapter 4, “On that day, the growth of the Lord shall be beautiful and glorious…”).

After Yeshayahu cries out, God reveals that the destruction will eventually come to an end; “the holy seed shall be the stock of it.”[[41]](#footnote-41) This revelation is like a new prophetic mission that Yeshayahu takes upon himself from this point on: no more “making the heart of the people fat,” but rather awakening them so they will not be tempted, so they will hold on. No longer will he prevent their repentance; rather, after the destruction and desolation, they will learn to perform justice and righteousness and will merit new growth: they will “return and be healed**.”**[[42]](#footnote-42)

**The prophecies of Hoshea in the time of Yarovam**

The early chapters of *Hoshea* (1-4) likewise make no mention of Ashur; they describe only the collapse of Shomron as a kingdom, without mentioning who would cause this to happen:

For yet a little while and I … will cause the kingdom of the house of Israel to cease. And it shall come to pass on that day that I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Yizre’e’l. (*Hoshea* 1:4-5)

For *Bnei Yisrael* shall sit solitary many days without king, and without prince, and without sacrifice, and without pillar… Afterwards *Bnei Yisrael* shall return and seek the Lord their God, and David their king, and shall come trembling to the Lord and to His goodness in the end of days. (*Hoshea* 3:4-5)

For Israel is stubborn like a stubborn heifer; now the Lord shall feed them as a lamb in a broad place. (*Hoshea* 4:16)

In the chapters that follow (5 and onward), Ashur is mentioned by name as an integral player in the politics of the subjugation (and also of the rebellions).[[43]](#footnote-43) Hence, the early chapters (1,3,4) should be read as a reflection of the period of Yarovam ben Yoash.

In previous *shiurim*, we discussed Chapter 2 as an ancient prophecy from the time of the house of Achav. I also explained Chapter 1 as a prophetic drama in which Hoshea, in the time of Yarovam ben Yoash, invoked personalities from the house of Achav: Izevel (the “wife of harlotry”) and her children – the two sons (Yehoram, who was killed in Yizre’el, and Achazyahu, who inquired of the gods of Ekron) and the daughter (Atalia, the merciless killer). Chapter 3 was explained as an appeal to the “second wife” – i.e., the kingdom of Israel in Hoshea’s time. Chapter 4 provides a description of Israelite society at that time. While Hoshea does not offer images of lavish banquets and opulence, and the corruption is more severe than that described by Amos, the description nevertheless suits the general atmosphere; only the ritual harlotry of idolatry is much more heavily emphasized.

Notably, in the prophets’ descriptions from this period (especially in Hoshea), society in general is hedonistic and corrupt; the problem is not limited to or concentrated around the royalty. With the house of Achav, corruption had arisen from the royal house, and Yehu’s rebellion uprooted it from Israel, along with Ba’al-worship – as did the rebellion of Yehoyada the Kohen against Atalia. However, once the corruption had spread throughout all of society, in the time of Yarovam ben Yoash, a change of regime would no longer solve the problem. Hence, the situation in the kingdom of Israel is more severe in the time of the house of Yehu than it had been under the house of Achav:

Hear the word of the Lord, O children of Israel. For the Lord has a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. Swearing and lying, and killing, and stealing, and adultery – they break all bounds, and blood touches blood. Therefore the land mourns, and everyone that dwells in it languishes, with the beasts of the field and the fowls of heaven; even the fish of the sea are taken away. (*Hoshea* 4:1-3)

The three great prophets at the time of Yarovam and Uziyahu – Amos, Yeshayahu, and Hoshea – offer a multi-faceted reflection of the period from a broader perspective than that of *Sefer Melakhim*. Despite the stylistic and conceptual differences between them, the parallels[[44]](#footnote-44) are clear and manifest.

Translated by Kaeren Fish

1. The shorter version of the name – Uziya – is earlier, and was used in the kingdom of Israel; in Yehuda it was already becoming customary to use the longer version – Uziyahu. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Especially the description "Your land is desolate…" (1:7); see Rashi on 1:1. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Identified with Mashhad, to the east of Tzippori. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. This unusual expression reflects the close cooperation between Yehuda and Israel at the time – which certainly contributed to the military victories of Yarovam in the north and of Uziyahu in the south. This cooperation brought an end to the war between Yoash and Amatzia, king of Yehuda, in Beit Shemesh, in which Israel had emerged victorious and even managed to breach the wall of Jerusalem (*Melakhim* II 14:8-14). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Uziya fought in the southwest of the country on the roads to Egypt; he did not fight on the eastern side of the Jordan. The people of Ma'on dwelled to the south of Philistia, alongside the Arabian tribes, and they are mentioned at the end of verse 7. It is therefore clear that "Me'onites" is an instance of exchanged letters in a word: "Me'onim" = "Amonim." (Other examples include *keves*>*kesev* and *simla*>*salma*.) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The first *shiur* in this series presented a model of the ups and downs of the kingdoms of Israel and Yehuda during the First Temple Period. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. *Amos* 3:10-15. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. *Ibid*. 4:9. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. *Ibid*. 5:23, 8-10. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. *Yeshayahu* 3:16-24. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Ibid. 2:7, 15-16. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. For further elaboration, see *Yeshayahu – ke-Tzipporim Afot* (Yoel Bin-Nun and Binyamin Lau), pp. 50-55. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. *Amos* 1:5. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. See *shiur* no. 2 for more on how Amos deliberately uses the prophecy of salvation, spoken by Yona ben Amitai, to describe the historical turnaround from Yarovam's great victory over Aram to the collapse that will happen at the hands of Assyria. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. At the same time, Amos declares concerning Damesek itself: "and the people of Aram shall go into captivity to Kir…" (1:5). Kir is the northern land from which the Arameans had come: "Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt, and Pelishtim from Kaftor, and Aram from Kir" (*Amos* 9:7). [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. See at length in *Yeshayahu – ke-Tzipporim Afot*, pp. 279-284. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Surprising support for the perception of the Divine revelation as standing is found in archaeological discoveries (dating from the time of the Israelite settlement, from the end of the 13th century B.C.E.) of the “footprint” sites and Mount Eval; see *Mikraot-Mishpatim*, *Mada ba-Torah* series, on *Shemot* 23:14 (“*shalosh* *regalim*”) and 24:10 (“*ve-tachat raglav*”). [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. This format closely resembles the "for three transgressions… and for four I will not reverse it" with which Amos's prophecy begins. See *shiur* #2 in the series. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. *Amos* 7:1-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Ibid. verses 7-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Ibid. 8:1-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. The "house of Yaakov" (*Amos* 9:8). [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. "A tenth" (*Yeshayahu* 6:13). [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. *Amos* 9:11-12. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. This section of the *shiur* is a concise reworking of *Yeshayahu* – *ke-Tzipporim Afot*, pp. 87-92. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. See Targum Yonatan and Rashi on 6:1; *Midrash Shemot Rabba* 1,34; and *Yeshayahu* – *ke-Tzipporim Afot*, pp. 86-87. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. *Yeshayahu* 6:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. The earthquake is described as an actual event at the beginning of *Amos* (1:1); it is also recalled centuries later: "… as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uziya, king of Yehuda…" (*Zekharia* 14:5). [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. As described in the prophecy of Natan (*Shmuel* II 7:6-7) – "For I have not dwelled in a house since the day I brought up Bnei Yisrael out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a Tabernacle. Wherever I have walked among all of *Bnei Yisrael*…" (*Shmuel* II 7:6-7) [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. *Amos* 9:1. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. *Melakhim* I 8:27. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Ibid. vv. 29, 38. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. The great majority of commentators, classical and modern alike (of all streams) have viewed Chapter 6 as a “prophecy of consecration” because verses 8-9 describe God dispatching Yeshayahu on a mission. However, a prophetic mission, as we know, is aimed at catalyzing repentance and repair; this is an unusual vision of a heavenly decree which is revealed in an earthquake. Other than the two specific verses mentioned, the entire chapter describes God’s departure – and its results. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. This contrasts with the vision of David, ultimately executed by Shlomo: “As for me, it was in my heart to build a house of rest for the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, and for the footstool of our God…” (*Divrei Ha-Yamim* I 28:2). [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Unlike elsewhere in *Yeshayahu* (57:15): “For thus says He who is High and Elevated (*ram ve-nisa*), Who inhabits eternity, Whose Name is holy: I dwell in the high and holy place…” There, the departure of God’s glory from the Sanctuary on earth is already a fixed spiritual reality, and God looks out from the heavens, seeking justice for the contrite of spirit, the humble, and the downtrodden. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. In our prayer, we ask for the Divine Presence to return to its place, as at the end of Yechezkel’s prophecies (43:1-9), as evidenced by the concluding verse of the *Kedusha* in the prayer service: “The Lord will reign forever; your God, Tzion, for all generations, *hallelu-ya*” (*Tehillim* 146:10). The most accurate interpretation of the *Kedusha* in our prayers is to be found in the ancient liturgical poem (which, according to some Yemenite traditions, is said in every “*Kedusha*”) – “From Your place, our King, You will appear, and reign over us, for we await You. When will You reign in Tzion? Soon, in our days, forever and ever may You dwell. May You be exalted and sanctified in the midst of Jerusalem, Your city, from generation to generation, and for all eternity. May our eyes behold Your kingdom.” [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Chapter 1, and Chapters 8-11. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. According to the Gemara (*Sota* 10b), “Amotz and Amatzia were brothers.” See *Yeshayahu – ke-Tzipporim Afot*, pp. 42, 92. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. *Divrei Ha-Yamim* II 26:16. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. *Melakhim* I 22:7-28. Concerning the interpretation of this prophecy, see also M. Tzevat, *Yeshayahu* 6, B.Tz. Luria (ed.), *Zer li-Gevurot*, 5733, pp. 161-172. For the parallel between Yeshayahu and Mikhayahu, with slight differences, see M. Breuer, *Pirkei Yeshayahu*, Alon Shvut 5770, pp. 231-232. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. *Yeshayahu* 6:13. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Ibid. 6:10. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. See *Yeshayahu* – *ke-Tzipporim Afot*, pp. 144-177; 201-210; 228-270. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Once the relevant chapters of *Yeshayahu* and *Hoshea* are correctly identified as dating to the period of Uziyahu and Yarovam, as explained. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)