

to the return of Christ--how it relates to the setting up of God's kingdom here on earth. He is showing this by using the phrase, after this I will return--if he is not doing that why on earth would he insert this phrase. Some say that he is using a regular O.T. idiom--using return from shuv --the difficulty with that is that that word is not in the Amos context at all. If he is translating it literally he has put that in there--he certainly knew enough as to whether he wanted to translate it literally or give what the true meaning of the passage is. He is not simply saying that I will build it again--after this I will return and build it again he is saying. When Christ returns, this is what is going to happen and if you take it that way, it makes it perfectly clear why it is not necessary to circumcise the Gentiles. He is not now talking about the Gentiles at all. He is talking about the return of Christ and in view of what Amos is saying, it is not now necessary to circumcise the Gentiles. That way it makes perfect sense--if it is saying that Gentiles can come into the church--he doesn't say a word about circumcision and has nothing to do with the problem at stake--it would be a far poorer verse than others which might have been selected and that is not the matter under discussion at all. The question is not, Shall Gentiles come into the church. The question rather is, when Gentiles accept Christ and become Christians, is it then necessary for these Gentiles then to be circumcised--if these Gentiles are circumcised, then they become Jews. Anyone could become a Jew all through History and there were thousands of proselytes during the time of Christ. To become a Jew you had to become circumcised--the people thought that it was fine for the people to become Christians, but they must also become Jews. Amos was saying that not only Jews will be believing in Christ, when He comes back but there will also be Gentiles--and they would not be Gentiles if all of them were circumcised but they would be Jews. Therefore the argument of James is very good: there we have the reason for no circumcision--otherwise this passage has no meaning. So the question here is are the Gentiles that become Christians to become Jews also. James proves that it is not necessary for the Gentiles to become circumcised. That is why he doesn't start in that day--but introduces it with a phrase to show where it fits into the scheme--after this present period Christ will return, when God is visiting the Gentiles to take out for Himself a people--after this period Christ will return and will