

Amos 4:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And ye shall go out at the breaches, every cow at that which is before her; and ye shall cast them into the palace, saith the LORD.

Analysis

Ye shall go out at the breaches, every cow at that which is before her (וְפָרְצִים וְגִדָּה תִצְאָנָה אִשָּׁה נְגִדָה)—Following Amos's scathing address to Samaria's elite women as 'kine of Bashan' (v. 1), this verse depicts their humiliating exile. Peratsim (breaches) refers to gaps smashed in city walls during siege warfare. Each woman exits straight ahead through the nearest breach—no orderly evacuation but panicked flight. **Ye shall cast them into the palace** (וְהִשְׁלַכְתֶּנָּה הַהֶרְמוֹנָה)—The Hebrew harmonah is difficult; some translate it as 'Harmon' (unknown location), others as 'the heap/dunghill,' indicating these pampered aristocrats will be dumped like refuse.

The imagery reverses Israel's conquest under Joshua. Then, God breached Jericho's walls for Israel's entrance (Joshua 6:20); now He breaches Samaria's walls for their exit into exile. The 'cows of Bashan' who oppressed the poor (v. 1) and demanded luxury are reduced to stampeding cattle—dehumanized, stripped of dignity, herded through rubble. Fulfilled literally when Assyria besieged Samaria (722 BC), deporting the population to Mesopotamia (2 Kings 17:6).

Historical Context

Bashan (modern Golan Heights) was famous for well-fed cattle on lush pastures. Calling Samaria's wealthy women 'cows of Bashan' condemned their self-indulgent luxury funded by oppression. Ancient Near Eastern sieges ended with wall

demolition, through which captives were marched to exile. Archaeological evidence from Samaria shows massive destruction layers from the Assyrian conquest.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does material luxury, when built on injustice toward others, make us spiritually complacent and vulnerable to God's judgment?
2. In what ways might you be demanding comfort and prosperity while remaining indifferent to how your lifestyle affects the vulnerable?

Interlinear Text

וּפָרַצַּיִם	תֵּצֵא אֹנֶה	אֵשׁ הַ	נִגְדָה הַ	
at the breaches	And ye shall go out	every		H5048
H6556	H3318	H802		
	וְהִשְׁלַכְתָּהּ	הַהֵרֶם וְאֹנֶה	נֹאֵם	יְהוָה:
cow at that which is before her and ye shall cast	them into the palace	saith	the LORD	
H7993	H2038	H5002	H3068	

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 12:5 (Parallel theme): Dig thou through the wall in their sight, and carry out thereby.

Ezekiel 12:12 (Parallel theme): And the prince that is among them shall bear upon his shoulder in the twilight, and shall go forth: they shall dig through the wall to carry out thereby: he shall cover his face, that he see not the ground with his eyes.

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