

Amos 6:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, which are named chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came!

Analysis

God's woe against complacent elites: 'Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, which are named chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came!' The Hebrew 'ha-shan'anim be-Tsiyyon' (those at ease/complacent in Zion) and 'ha-botekim be-har Shomron' (those trusting in mount Samaria) describes false security. Zion (Jerusalem/Judah) and Samaria (capital of Israel/northern kingdom) both contained people presuming on God's protection while ignoring covenant obligations. They're 'named chief of the nations' (nequvim reshit ha-goyim)—thinking themselves superior. Verses 4-6 detail their decadent luxury while 'not grieved for the affliction of Joseph' (we-lo nehelav al-shever Yoseph)—indifferent to coming destruction. This complacent prosperity without compassion provokes judgment.

Historical Context

Both Israel and Judah enjoyed relative prosperity in the 8th century BC. The wealthy lived luxuriously, confident in their covenant status and fortified cities. They assumed temple presence and Abrahamic promises guaranteed security regardless of obedience. Amos shatters this illusion: covenant privilege without covenant faithfulness brings heightened judgment, not immunity. The elite's conspicuous consumption (ivory beds, choice meats, idle music, fine wines—6:4-6) contrasted sharply with oppression of the poor and blind indifference to impending catastrophe. Within decades, both kingdoms fell (Israel 722 BC, Judah 586 BC).

Prosperity gospel error repeats this mistake: assuming God's blessing equals approval while ignoring holiness and justice.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. Do I live complacently, presuming on God's grace while ignoring sin and justice concerns in my life and community?
2. How does my lifestyle compare to the Amos 6:4-6 description of self-indulgent luxury ignoring others' suffering?

Interlinear Text

הוֹי	הַשְׁאֲנֵנִי יָם	בְּצִיּוֹן	וְהִבְטַחְתָּ יָם	בְּהָר	שָׁמַר וְ
Woe	to them that are at ease	in Zion	and trust	in the mountain	of Samaria
H1945	H7600	H6726	H982	H2022	H8111
וְהִנֵּה	רֹאשׁ יֵת	הַגּוֹיִם	וָבָאוּ	לָהֶם	בְּיָת
which are named	chief	of the nations	came	H1992	to whom the house
H5344	H7225	H1471	H935		H1004
יִשְׂרָאֵל:					
of Israel					
H3478					

Additional Cross-References

James 5:5 (Parallel theme): Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.

Amos 4:1 (Parallel theme): Hear this word, ye kine of Bashan, that are in the mountain of Samaria, which oppress the poor, which crush the needy, which say to their masters, Bring, and let us drink.

Zephaniah 1:12 (Parallel theme): And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees: that say in their heart, The LORD will not do good, neither will he do evil.

Judges 18:7 (Parallel theme): Then the five men departed, and came to Laish, and saw the people that were therein, how they dwelt careless, after the manner of the Zidonians, quiet and secure; and there was no magistrate in the land, that might put them to shame in any thing; and they were far from the Zidonians, and had no business with any man.

Isaiah 33:14 (Parallel theme): The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?

Jeremiah 49:31 (Parallel theme): Arise, get you up unto the wealthy nation, that dwelleth without care, saith the LORD, which have neither gates nor bars, which dwell alone.

James 1:18 (Parallel theme): Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.