

Amos 6:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Pass ye unto Calneh, and see; and from thence go ye to Hamath the great: then go down to Gath of the Philistines: be they better than these kingdoms? or their border greater than your border?

Analysis

Pass ye unto Calneh, and see; and from thence go ye to Hamath the great: then go down to Gath of the Philistines—God commands Israel to examine three conquered cities as object lessons. Calneh (Assyrian Kullani) fell to Tiglath-Pileser III around 738 BC. Hamath (Syrian city) was defeated by Assyria circa 720 BC. Gath (Philistine city) had been conquered by Uzziah of Judah (2 Chronicles 26:6). **Be they better than these kingdoms? or their border greater than your border?** מִן-הַמֶּלֶכְוֹת הַאֶלְהָה (hatovim min-hamamlachot ha'eleh)—rhetorical question: if these great cities fell, what makes Israel think they're immune?

This confronts nationalistic pride and false security. Israel trusted in their covenant status, but covenant unfaithfulness removes covenant protection. If powerful nations fell to judgment, covenantbreakers will fare no better. Peter echoes this: 'judgment must begin at the house of God' (1 Peter 4:17).

Historical Context

Amos likely prophesied this between 760-750 BC, before some of these cities fell—making it a genuine prophecy. Israel's complacency during prosperous times

blinded them to approaching judgment. They thought their election guaranteed safety, but election without obedience brings greater accountability (Amos 3:2).

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What forms of false security—national identity, church membership, religious heritage—do people trust instead of genuine faith?
2. How does examining other fallen nations or churches warn against presumption on God's patience?
3. Why do prosperous times often breed spiritual complacency and blindness to approaching judgment?

Interlinear Text

בְּ	בַּ	חַמַּת	מִשְׁמָרֶת	וְלֹכֶד	וְרָא	כְּלִינָה	עַבְרֵר	1
Pass	ye unto Calneh	and see	H1980	H8033	ye to Hamath	greater		
H5674	H3641	H7200			H2574	H7227		
וְרַד	1	גַת	פָלָשָׁת יִם	בְּטוּבִים	מִן	הַמְּמָלָכִים וְת		
then go down	to Gath	of the Philistines	be they better	H2896	H4480	than these kingdoms		
H3381	H1661	H6430				H4467		
בְּ	אָמֵן	בְּ	מִגְבָּלָכָם:	מִגְבָּלָכָם:				
H428	H518	H7227	greater	or their border	or their border			
			H1366		H1366			

Additional Cross-References

Nahum 3:8 (Parallel theme): Art thou better than populous No, that was situate among the rivers, that had the waters round about it, whose rampart was the sea, and her wall was from the sea?

Genesis 10:10 (Kingdom): And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.

2 Kings 18:34 (Parallel theme): Where are the gods of Hamath, and of Arpad? where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah? have they delivered Samaria out of mine hand?

2 Chronicles 26:6 (Parallel theme): And he went forth and warred against the Philistines, and brake down the wall of Gath, and the wall of Jabneh, and the wall of Ashdod, and built cities about Ashdod, and among the Philistines.

1 Samuel 17:4 (Parallel theme): And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span.

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