

# Amos 8:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

They that swear by the sin of Samaria, and say, Thy god, O Dan, liveth; and, The manner of Beer-sheba liveth; even they shall fall, and never rise up again.

## Analysis

**They that swear by the sin of Samaria** (הַנִּשְׁבָּעִים בְּאַשְׁמַת שֹׁמְרוֹן, hanishba'im b'ashmat Shomron)—'sin' (אַשְׁמַת, ashmat) likely refers to the golden calf at Bethel or possibly Asherah worship. They swear oaths by idols rather than Yahweh. **And say, Thy god, O Dan, liveth** (וְאָמְרוּ חַי אֱלֹהֵיכָה דָן, v'am'ru chei Eloheicha Dan)—Dan had the other golden calf shrine (1 Kings 12:29). **And, The manner of Beer-sheba liveth** (וְחַי דֶּרֶךְ בְּאֵר שֶׁבַע, v'chei derech Be'er Sheva)—דֶּרֶךְ (derech) might mean 'way' (pilgrimage route) or refer to another cultic object. **Even they shall fall, and never rise up again** (וְנָפְלוּ וְלֹא-יָקוּמוּ עוֹד, v'naflu v'lo-yakumu od)—permanent spiritual death.

Swearing by false gods demonstrates complete apostasy—binding oneself to powerless idols rather than the living God. The irony: they say these gods 'live' (חַי, chei), but worshipers themselves will fall and never rise. Psalm 115:8 warns: 'They that make them are like unto them'—idolaters share their idols' impotence. Only those who swear by the true God's name find life (Jeremiah 4:2).

## Historical Context

The golden calves at Dan and Bethel represented Israel's foundational apostasy (1 Kings 12:28-29). Beer-sheba was in Judah's territory but apparently featured in northern pilgrimage practices. This syncretistic worship—mixing Yahweh forms with pagan content—epitomized covenant unfaithfulness that guaranteed exile.

## Related Passages

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**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

## Study Questions

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1. What modern equivalents exist to 'swearing by idols'—binding ourselves to false securities and calling them 'alive'?
2. How does syncretism (mixing true worship with false elements) ultimately prove deadlier than outright paganism?
3. What does it mean to 'fall and never rise'—experiencing judgment without hope of restoration?

## Interlinear Text

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הַנִּשְׁבָּעִים	בְּאִשְׁמֹת	שָׁמָר וְ	וְאָמַר וְ	וְהֵי י	אֱלֹהֵי יְב	יְדָן
They that swear	by the sin	of Samaria	and say	liveth	Thy god	O Dan
H7650	H819	H8111	H559	H2416	H430	H1835
וְהֵי י	וְהַיָּה	וְהַיָּה	וְהַיָּה	וְהַיָּה	וְהַיָּה	וְהַיָּה
liveth	and The manner		of Beersheba	even they shall fall		
H2416	H1870	H0	H884	H5307		
וְהַיָּה	וְהַיָּה	וְהַיָּה	וְהַיָּה	וְהַיָּה	וְהַיָּה	וְהַיָּה
and never rise up						
H6965						

## Additional Cross-References

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**Amos 5:5** (Parallel theme): But seek not Beth-el, nor enter into Gilgal, and pass not to Beer-sheba: for Gilgal shall surely go into captivity, and Beth-el shall come to nought.

**Deuteronomy 9:21** (Sin): And I took your sin, the calf which ye had made, and burnt it with fire, and stamped it, and ground it very small, even until it was as small as dust: and I cast the dust thereof into the brook that descended out of the mount.

**Acts 9:2** (Parallel theme): And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.

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