

Isaiah 36:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Where are the gods of Hamath and Arphad? where are the gods of Sepharvaim? and have they delivered Samaria out of my hand?

Analysis

The taunt "Where are the gods of Hamath and Arphad...Sepharvaim?" lists conquered cities whose deities failed to save them. The climactic question "have they delivered Samaria?" is particularly cutting—Samaria was Israel's capital, fallen to Assyria in 722 BC. Rabshakeh implies that if YHWH couldn't save the northern kingdom, He certainly can't save Judah. This argument has superficial logic but misses that Samaria fell precisely because of covenant unfaithfulness, while Hezekiah has instituted reforms and sought God.

Historical Context

Hamath, Arphad, and Sepharvaim were Syrian cities conquered by Assyria. Samaria's fall was recent memory, making Rabshakeh's argument psychologically powerful.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How do we answer when unbelievers point to apparent failures of faith as evidence God doesn't help?
2. What is the difference between God allowing judgment for sin versus inability to save?
3. How does Hezekiah's faithfulness distinguish Judah from Samaria's fate?

Interlinear Text

אֵי הָאֱלֹהִים	אֵי הַמִּצְמָת	אֵי הַעֲרָפָד	אֵי הַסְּמָרִים
H346 Where are the gods	H2574 of Hamath	H774 and Arpad	H346 Where are the gods
H430	H2574	H774	H430

אֵיכִי סְפָרָיו יְמִם	הִצְלָה	אַתָּה שְׁמַר עַל	מִצְרַיִם
of Sepharvaim	and have they delivered	Samaria	out of my hand

H5617	H5337	H8111	H3027
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Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 49:23 (Parallel theme): Concerning Damascus. Hamath is confounded, and Arpad: for they have heard evil tidings: they are fainthearted; there is sorrow on the sea; it cannot be quiet.