

# Hosea 5 Commentary

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Hosea's Unconditional Love for Gomer

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## OUTLINE OF HOSEA

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**John Hannah's Outline - The prophet's message (Hosea 4:1-14:8)**

The prophet's message (Hosea 4:1-14:8)

- A. Jehovah's rejection of Israel (Hosea 4:1-7:16)
1. The faithlessness of Israel (Hosea 4:1-19)
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      1. The idolatry of Israel (Hosea 4:11-13)
      2. The instruction of Judah (Hosea 4:14-19)
  2. The repudiation of Israel (Hosea 5:1-6:3)
    - a. The rebuke of Israel (Hosea 5:1-7)
    - b. The judgment upon Israel (Hosea 5:8-15)
    - c. The invitation to Israel (Hosea 6:1-3)
  3. The fickleness of Israel (Hosea 6:4-11)
  4. The foolishness of Israel (Hosea 7:1-16)
    - a. The wickedness of Israel (Hosea 7:1-7)
    - b. The silliness of Israel (Hosea 7:8-16) -- [Hannah's Bible Outlines](#).

**Robert Chisholm** (Bible Knowledge Commentary) summarizes the "Judgment/Salvation" cycles in Hosea.

CYCLES OF JUDGMENT AND SALVATION IN HOSEA	
JUDGMENT	SALVATION
Hosea 1:2-9	Hosea 1:10-2:1
Hosea 2:2-13	Hosea 2:14-3:5
Hosea 4:1-5:14	Hosea 5:15-6:3
Hosea 6:4-11:7	Hosea 11:8-11
Hosea 11:12-13:16	Hosea 14:1-9

**Hosea 5:1 Hear this, O priests! Give heed, O house of Israel! Listen, O house of the king! For the judgment applies to you, For you have been a snare at Mizpah And a net spread out on Tabor.**

BGT Hosea 1:1 λ γος κυρ ου ς γεν θη πρ ς Ωσηε τ ν το Βεηρι ν μ ραι ς Οζιου κα Ιωαθαμ κα Αχαζ κα Εζεκιου βασιλ ων Ιουδα κα ν μ ραι ς Ιεροβοαμ υ ο Ιωας βασιλ ως Ισραηλ

NET Hosea 5:1 Hear this, you priests! Pay attention, you Israelites! Listen closely, O king! For judgment is about to overtake you! For you were like a trap to Mizpah, like a net spread out to catch Tabor.

LXE Hosea 5:1 Hear these things, ye priests; and attend, O house of Israel; and hearken, O house of the king; for the controversy is with you, because ye have been a snare in Scopia, and as a net spread on Itabyrium,

NLT Hosea 5:1 "Hear this, you priests. Pay attention, you leaders of Israel. Listen, you members of the royal family. Judgment has been handed down against you. For you have led the people into a snare by worshiping the idols at Mizpah and Tabor.

KJV Hosea 5:1 Hear ye this, O priests; and hearken, ye house of Israel; and give ye ear, O house of the king; for judgment is toward you, because ye have been a snare on Mizpah, and a net spread upon Tabor.

ESV Hosea 5:1 Hear this, O priests! Pay attention, O house of Israel! Give ear, O house of the king! For the judgment is for you; for you have been a snare at Mizpah and a net spread upon Tabor.

CSB Hosea 5:1 Hear this, priests! Pay attention, house of Israel! Listen, royal house! For the judgment applies to you because you have been a snare at Mizpah and a net spread out on Tabor.

NIV Hosea 5:1 "Hear this, you priests! Pay attention, you Israelites! Listen, O royal house! This judgment is against you: You have been a snare at Mizpah, a net spread out on Tabor.

- **Hear this, O priests:** Ho 4:1,6,7 6:9 Mal 1:6 2:1
- **Give heed, O house of Israel:** Ho 7:3-5 1Ki 14:7-16 21:18-22 2Ch 21:12-15 Jer 13:18 22:1-9 Am 7:9 Mic 3:1,9
- **For the judgment applies to you:** Ho 9:11-17 10:15 13:8
- **For you have been a snare at Mizpah:** Ho 9:8 Mic 7:2 Hab 1:15-17
- **And a net spread out on Tabor:** Jdg 4:6 Jer 46:18

**Hear this, O priests!** - They were accused in Hosea 4.

**Give heed** - Literally "Use the ear". To hear and not to do is not to heed! It's like going in one ear and out the other. We've all had kids like that! Unfortunately these are not unruly kids but an unruly nation!

**O house of Israel!** - NLT = "you leaders of Israel."

**Listen, O house of the king!** - NIV = "O royal house."

**Leon Wood** - The threefold call to attention in this verse is parallel to a similar one in Hos 4:1+. The general thought continues as before. Three imperatives demand attention; and three groups of people are alerted: the priests, already given special notice in chapter 4, the people of Israel, and the royal family (lit., "house of king"). (Expositor's Bible Commentary – Volume 7: Daniel and the Minor Prophets)

**Gilbrant** - Neither the religious privileges of the priests, nor the multitude of the people, nor the civil dignity of the king, can exempt any from God's judgment. The king was probably Zechariah.

**For the judgment applies to you** - Literally = "for the judgment is to you"; or "For this accusation is against you." Cf. NIV = "This judgment is against you." Some say this explains the judgment against the royalty but more likely it is against priest, populace and prince - no one is exempt from the judgment. All are guilty in some way of setting snares of false worship/idolatry.

**For you have been a snare at Mizpah** - Literally = "you were a trap to Mizpah." The leaders had set traps (so to speak) of false worship at Mizpah and at Tabor, trapping men like one would trap birds. That these sites were generally revered made it easier to ensnare them in false worship.

**THOUGHT** - False Religion is always a potential trap because man was created with a God shaped vacuum (even atheists!) and therefore will seek to worship something and anything other than the true and living God, Jehovah, Yahweh, is tantamount to idol worship and it will ensnare the so-called worshipers. Men are especially attracted to "snares" of ritual and ceremony or rote, repetitive religion. Sadly there are millions and millions who have been thus ensnared, thinking falsely that they are worshipping the true God and that Heaven is their final destination, when in fact they are on a fast track to Hell! Acts 4:12 is clear that "there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved." And Acts 16:31 says "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."

**Snare** (06341)(pach) is a bird trap, used literally in Amos 3:5, Proverbs 7:23, and Ecclesiastes 9:12. Most OT uses are figurative referring to ensnarement of men by various "traps."

(Hos. 9:8) Ephraim was a watchman with my God, a prophet; Yet the **snare** of a bird catcher is in all his ways,  
And there is only hostility in the house of his God.

**Gilbrant** - Occurring twenty-five times in the Hebrew Bible, the noun pach, which refers to a "snare" for birds, has cognates attested in Arabic, Christian Palestinian Aramaic, Syriac, Jewish Aramaic and Middle Hebrew. It is used exclusively in metaphors of humans being trapped by other humans or by the Lord. The effectiveness of the **snare metaphor lies in the element of surprise**. The **victim does not sense danger until it is too late** (Amos 3:5). The **lure of the loose woman** of Proverbs employs this simile (Prov. 7:23), as does a description of **the effects of the syncretistic practices of the official priesthood of the northern kingdom of Israel** (Hos. 5:1). The psalmist calls out for protection from the **snares of the wicked** (Ps. 140:5; 141:9; 142:3), as does Jeremiah (Jer. 18:22). Indeed, **divine protection is characterized as rescue from a snare** (Ps 91:3; 124:7). The Lord accused the wicked of ignoring his word delivered through the prophets, as they instead set snares for them (Hos. 9:8). The Day of the Lord will be catastrophic for the wicked, as wherever they turn, there will be no escape from the traps which the omnipresent Lord will set for them (Isa. 24:17f; Jer. 48:43f). The wicked will stumble and be caught in traps so that justice may prevail (Prov. 22:5). Indeed, Job's condition was proof in the eyes of his visitors that the wicked would be ensnared, for they were certain that Job had committed a grievous sin which he refused to admit (Job 18:8f; 22:10). The wicked inhabitants of Canaan who were not exterminated would serve as a snare to the Israelites who chose to intermarry with them, ultimately causing the Israelites to perish from the land which the Lord gave them (Josh. 23:13). ([Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary](#))

**Pach** - 22v - snare(15), snares(4), trap(5).

Jos. 23:13; Job 18:9; Job 22:10; Ps. 11:6; Ps. 91:3; Ps. 119:110; Ps. 124:7; Ps. 140:5; Ps. 141:9; Ps. 142:3; Prov. 7:23; Prov. 22:5; Eccl. 9:12; Isa. 8:14; Isa. 24:17; Isa. 24:18; Jer. 18:22; Jer. 48:43; Jer. 48:44; Hos. 5:1; Hos. 9:8; Amos 3:5

**NET Note on snare** - The noun נֶגֶד (pakh, "trap") is used (1) literally of a bird-trap, used in similes and metaphors (Amos 3:5; Prov 7:23; Eccl 9:12), and (2) figuratively to refer to (a) calamities and plots (Job 18:9; 22:10; Pss 91:3; 119:110; 124:7; 140:6; 141:9; 142:4; Prov 22:5; Isa 24:17–18; Jer 18:22; 48:43–44; Hos 9:8) and (b) a source of calamity (Josh 23:13; Pss 11:6; 69:23; Isa 8:14; Hos 5:1; BDB 809 s.v. נֶגֶד).

**And a net spread out on Tabor** - Literally = "and a net spread out over Tabor." These godless men were setting the net at the famous site of Mount Tabor (scene of Balak's victory - Jdg 4:14). Instead of fixing their eyes on idols their eyes should have been "continually toward the LORD, for He will pluck my feet out of the **net (resheth)** ." (Ps 25:15)

**Constable** - There was an Israelite Mizpah in Gilead (Judg. 10:17; 11:29) and one in the territory of Benjamin (1 Sam. 7:5; 10:1). Mt. Tabor stood in the Jezreel Valley in northern Israel. Probably these hunting sites represent the whole nation (by merism), from north to south or east to west. The point is that the leadership was corrupting the people everywhere.

**Net (07568)(resheth)** used predominantly used of a net for trapping (Job 18:8; Ps. 140:5). Often, the heathen are caught in their own traps (Ps 9:15; 35:7; 57:6). The believer should look to God, whose strength can deliver from the net (Ps 25:15; Ps 31:4).

**Resheth** - net(20), network(2).

Ex 27:4; Exod. 27:5; Exod. 38:4; Job 18:8; Ps. 9:15; Ps. 10:9; Ps. 25:15; Ps. 31:4; Ps. 35:7; Ps. 35:8; Ps. 57:6; Ps. 140:5; Prov. 1:17; Prov. 29:5; Lam. 1:13; Ezek. 12:13; Ezek. 17:20; Ezek. 19:8; Ezek. 32:3; Hos. 5:1; Hos. 7:12

**Gilbrant** - In Exodus, the altar is to have a bronze **'het'** or **'lattice'** on it (Exo. 27:4f; 38:4). The resheth probably allowed for better ventilation and easier cleaning. The holes would have allowed the air to flow more freely and the ashes and grease to drop into the hollow opening (Durham, Exodus, 376).

**John Hartley** - **Net** is an instrument used to catch game, as birds (Proverbs 1:17); it was made out of cords woven together. Sometimes a net was spread over a pit; the animal became entrapped in the net as he fell into the hole. It also indicates the bronze grate placed under the altar which extended (or set in the middle (?)) halfway to the ground and had four bronze rings at its corners (Ex 27:4f.; Ex 38:4f.). It is translated "network" when used with ma'āšeh "work." This word is employed metaphorically to describe people being trapped by their enemies. The wicked spread nets to overcome the righteous (Ps 140:5), and the arrogant lay a net by flattery (Proverbs 29:5). However, they often become trapped in their own deeds (Job 18:8). Priests and rulers too lay a net for the people by entangling them in sin (Hosea 5:1). On the other hand, God spreads a net for disobedient Israel (Hosea 7:12; Ezekiel 12:13; Ezekiel 17:20; cf. Ezekiel 19:8) and for Pharaoh (Ezek 32:3). It means they shall be taken into captivity. This image draws from real life, for a picture in ANEP 288 shows a Mesopotamian king containing his enemies in a net (cf. Lament. 1:13). The righteous, however escape the net of the wicked by confidently calling on God, their refuge (Psalm 25:15; Psalm 31:4). (Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament)

**NET Note on net** - The noun נֶשֶׁת (reshet, "net") is used (1) literally of a net used to catch birds (Prov 1:17) and (2) in figurative descriptions of the wicked plotting to ensnare their victims (Pr 29:5; Ps 9:16; 10:9; 25:15; 31:5; 35:7; 57:7; 140:6; Job 18:8; BDB 440 s.v. נֶשֶׁת).

The piercing eye of God saw secret liking and disposition to sin, the love the house of Israel had to their sins, and the dominion their sins had over them. Pride makes men obstinate in other sins. And as Judah was treading in the same steps, they would fall with Israel. By dealing treacherously with the Lord, men only deceive themselves. Those that go to seek the Lord with their flocks and their herds only, and not with their hearts and souls, cannot expect to find him; nor shall any speed who do not seek the Lord while he may be found. See how much it is our concern to seek God early, now, while it is the accepted time, and the day of salvation.

**Hosea 5:2 The revolvers have gone deep in depravity, But I will chastise all of them.**

BGT Hosea 1:2 ρχ λ του κυρ ου πρ ς Ωσηε κα ε πεν κ ριος πρ ς Ωσηε β διζε λαβ σεαυτ γυνα κα πορνε ας κα τ κνα πορνε ας δι τι κπορνε ουσα κπορνε σει γ π πισθεν το κυρ ου

NET Hosea 5:2 Those who revolt are knee-deep in slaughter, but I will discipline them all.

LXE Hosea 5:2 which they that hunt the prey have fixed: but I will correct you.

NLT Hosea 5:2 You have dug a deep pit to trap them at Acacia Grove. But I will settle with you for what you have done.

KJV Hosea 5:2 And the revolvers are profound to make slaughter, though I have been a rebuker of them all.

ESV Hosea 5:2 And the revolvers have gone deep into slaughter, but I will discipline all of them.

CSB Hosea 5:2 Rebels are deeply involved in slaughter; I will be a punishment for all of them.

NIV Hosea 5:2 The rebels are deep in slaughter. I will discipline all of them.

- **The revolvers:** Ho 6:9 9:15 Jer 6:28
- **have gone deep in depravity:** Ps 64:3-6 140:1-5 Isa 29:15 Jer 11:18,19 18:18 Lu 22:2-5 Ac 23:12-15
- **But I will chastise all of them:** Ho 6:5 Isa 1:5 Jer 5:3 25:3-7 Am 4:6-12 Zep 3:1,2 Rev 3:19

## PEOPLE HUNTED AND SLAUGHTERED

**The revolvers have gone deep in depravity** - Better rendered "the revolvers have gone deep into slaughter," (ESV) Literally - "and those who revolt have gone deep into slaughter" (similar KJV, NIV) And this rendering would continue the hunting metaphor as they in effect (spiritually) "slaughter" their prey (many of whom would literally end up slaughtered by the brutal Assyrians).

The only other use of **"revolvers"** (rebels) (Hebrews = set) is in Ps 101:3 which says "I will set no worthless thing before my eyes; I hate the work of **those who fall away** (Heb = set; Lxx = [ekklino](#) = literally turn away - figuratively morally deviating from a right path ); It shall not fasten its grip on me."

In Hos 5:2 **revolvers**, the word Hebrew "set," is translated in Septuagint with the verb [agreuo](#) which is used of hunting or fishing to take, catch unawares. Figuratively in the NT, [agreuo](#) is used of taking advantage of someone in an unguarded moment (cf Mk 12.13).

**NET Note** - The MT reads וְשָׁחַטוּהֶם בְּעֵמֶק שִׁטִּים (véshakhatah setim he'miqu): "and rebels have made deep the slaughter." The BHS editors propose וְשָׁחַטוּהֶם בְּעֵמֶק שִׁטִּים (véshakhat hashittim he'miqu): "they have made the pit of Shittim [place of idolatry] deep" (cf. NRSV, TEV, NLT; see BDB 1006 s.v. שִׁטִּים). This involves: (1) phonological confusion between the similar sounding consonants ת (tav) and ט (tet), (2) redivision of words to take ה (hey) as the article with שִׁטִּים rather than feminine noun ending of שִׁטִּים, and (3) revocalization of שִׁטִּים with the two daghesh fortes. Retaining the reading of the MT is preferable here.

**But I will chastise all of them** - Literally "but I am discipline to all of them"; ASV = "but I am a rebuker of them all." The verb **chastise** in Lxx is [paideutes](#) which means corrector, one who disciplines and corrects by punishment.

**Chisholm** notes that **musar** "refers here to severe punishment designed to restore one to proper behavior. As such, it is an expression of love that arises out of a close relationship (cf. Prov. 3:11; 13:24; 15:5). The positive goal of the Lord's judgment is evident (cf. Hosea 2:6-7; 5:15b). (Ibid)

**Chastise** (discipline) ([04148](#))(**musar** from **yasar** = to discipline, chasten, admonish) refers to discipline, chastening, correction. God's chastening is always for purposes of instruction, and should not be ignored or resented. (Job 5:17 cp Job 42:2). Solomon instructs us "My son, do not reject the discipline of the LORD Or loathe His reproof." (Pr 3:11) One of major purposes of wisdom literature is to teach wisdom and instruction (musar) (Pr 1:2) Isaiah describes the divine chastisement poured out on the Suffering Messiah (Isa 53:5+).

**Musar** - 40x - chastening(3), chastise(1), correction(3), discipline(18), disciplines(1), instruction(20), punishment(2), reproof(1), warning(1).

Deut. 11:2; Job 5:17; Job 20:3; Job 33:16; Job 36:10; Ps. 50:17; Prov. 1:2; Prov. 1:3; Prov. 1:7; Prov. 1:8; Prov. 3:11; Prov. 4:1; Prov. 4:13; Prov. 5:12; Prov. 5:23; Prov. 6:23; Prov. 7:22; Prov. 8:10; Prov. 8:33; Prov. 10:17; Prov. 12:1; Prov. 13:1; Prov. 13:18; Prov. 13:24; Prov. 15:5; Prov. 15:10; Prov. 15:32; Prov. 15:33; Prov. 16:22; Prov. 19:20; Prov. 19:27; Prov. 22:15; Prov. 23:12; Prov. 23:13; Prov. 23:23; Prov. 24:32; Isa. 26:16; Isa. 53:5; Jer. 2:30; Jer. 5:3; Jer. 7:28; Jer. 10:8; Jer. 17:23; Jer. 30:14; Jer. 32:33; Jer. 35:13; Ezek. 5:15; Hos. 5:2; Zeph. 3:2; Zeph. 3:7

**Hosea 5:3 I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hidden from Me; For now, O Ephraim, you have played the harlot, Israel has**

BGT Hosea 1:3 κα πορεθη κα λαβεν τ ν Γομερ θυγατ ρα Δεβηλαιμ κα συν λαβεν κα τεκεν α τ υ ν

NET Hosea 5:3 I know Ephraim all too well; the evil of Israel is not hidden from me. For you have engaged in prostitution, O Ephraim; Israel has defiled itself.

LXE Hosea 5:3 I know Ephraim, and Israel is not far from me: for now Ephraim has gone grievously a-whoring, Israel is defiled.

NLT Hosea 5:3 I know what you are like, O Ephraim. You cannot hide yourself from me, O Israel. You have left me as a prostitute leaves her husband; you are utterly defiled.

KJV Hosea 5:3 I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hid from me: for now, O Ephraim, thou committest whoredom, and Israel is defiled.

ESV Hosea 5:3 I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hidden from me; for now, O Ephraim, you have played the whore; Israel is defiled.

CSB Hosea 5:3 I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hidden from Me. For now, Ephraim, you have acted promiscuously; Israel is defiled.

NIV Hosea 5:3 I know all about Ephraim; Israel is not hidden from me. Ephraim, you have now turned to prostitution; Israel is corrupt.

- **I know Ephraim:** Am 3:2 Heb 4:13 Rev 3:15
- **Ephraim:** Ho 5:9,11,13 6:4 8:11 12:1 13:1 Ge 48:19,20 De 33:17 Isa 7:5,8,9,17
- **you have played the harlot:** Ho 4:17,18 1Ki 12:26-33 14:14-16 Eze 23:5-21

## NOTHING WAS HIDDEN FROM JEHOVAH

**I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hidden from Me**- Jehovah was not blind to idolatry. It was not hidden from Him for He is omniscient and His eyes watch the evil and the good (Pr 15:3).

**THOUGHT** - Sometimes we deceive ourselves thinking that because we can commit a sin in "secret," unbeknownst to other people, God does not see. What if we simply stopped each time before we were going to commit our "secret" sin and say "Wait, this is not hidden from Jehovah!" (And as alluded to above we need to fix our eyes on Jesus - read/memorize Psalm 25:15 and ask the Spirit to enable you to **practice the presence of the Lord!**)

"The Bethel altar was in Ephraim, the center of a religion not only corrupt (see Hos 4:10, 12) but corrupting all Israel, also. God knew the whole sad story; nothing was hidden." (Wood)

**For now, O Ephraim, you have played the harlot**- It is notable that the Septuagint translates zanaḥ with the Greek verb **ekporneuo** (**ek** = out or from + **porneuo** = commit fornication or lewdness) which is used only once in Jude 1:7<sub>±</sub> and means to be to be utterly unchaste. The picture is to give one's self over to indulge in flagrant immorality, to live licentiously. The use in Jude 1:7<sub>±</sub> reflects the force of the prefix **ek** meaning "out and out" and depicts the Sodomites as giving themselves up utterly to fornication. "The inhabitants of these depraved cities in Jude 1:7<sub>±</sub> made "an "out and out surrender to" extravagant sexual lust. Ge 19:5-9 clearly portrays the sin of the Sodomites as homosexuality. They were thoroughly committed to its practice." (Hiebert) The use of that rare verb to translate "play the harlot" suggests similar practices going on in Ephraim. At the very least the point is that they were engaged in unspeakably gross immorality. Enough said!

**Played the harlot** (02181) (**zanaḥ**) is a verb meaning to fornicate, to prostitute and refers to marital infidelity or unfaithfulness. It was word used elsewhere in the OT to describe prostitution (Lev 21:7, Pr 7:10). Many of the uses of zanaḥ are figurative describing Israel 's (Jehovah's "wife") commission of "spiritual prostitution" by having "intercourse" so to speak with other gods (cp 1 Co 6:16). Indeed, idolatry is looked upon as prostitution (Isa 50:1, 2, 3; 54:6, 7, 8; Jer 2:1, 2, 3; 3:1ff; Hos 2:1ff; Jas 4:4-note; Rev 2:4-note). In addition zanaḥ describes Israel's improper relationships with other nations (Isa. 23:17; Ezek. 23:30; Nah. 3:4). "The thought seems to be of having relations with these nations for the sake of political and monetary benefit, although in the case of Nineveh the added element of alluring, deceitful tactics leading on to oppressive dominance is implied." (TWOT) "A third figurative meaning is found in Isa 1:21, where the Israelites' departure from God's approved moral standards is called harlotry." (TWOT)

**Zanaḥ** is used repeatedly in the prophecy of Hosea - Hos. 2:5; Hos. 3:3; Hos. 4:10; Hos. 4:12; Hos. 4:13; Hos. 4:14; Hos. 4:15; Hos.

4:18; Hos. 5:3; Hos. 9:1

**Israel has defiled itself** - "Israel has become corrupt"; NCV "has made itself unclean"; TEV "are unfit to worship me." The Septuagint of **has defiled** (**tame**) is **miaino** means literally to dye with another color. Figuratively **miaino** describes a **mind** and **conscience** that is morally contaminated, corrupted, tainted, tinged and polluted. In a ceremonial or cultic sense it means to defile or make unclean or to be unacceptable.

**Defiled** (made unclean) (02930)(**tame**) means to become unclean or make unclean. To become ceremonially unclean. To defile oneself (Hos 5:3, 6:10, Ezek 20:30). A wife defiles herself by adultery (Nu 5:13, Jer 2:23 = speaks of Israel as God's wife who had defiled herself by her spiritual adultery with idols!, Ezek 23:13 = refers to Judah and in context to the 10 Northern tribes - both had defiled themselves). To defile (violate) a girl (Ge 34:5), a woman (Ezek 18:6)

**Hosea 5:4 Their deeds will not allow them To return to their God. For a spirit of harlotry is within them, And they do not know the LORD.**

BGT Hosea 5:4 ο κ ῶκαν τ διαβολια α τ ν το πιστρ ψαι πρ ς τ ν θε ν α τ ν τι πνε μα πορνε ας ν α το ς σ τ ι ν τ ν δ κ ρ ι ο ν ο κ π γ ν ω σ α ν

NET Hosea 5:4 Their wicked deeds do not allow them to return to their God; because a spirit of idolatry controls their heart, and they do not acknowledge the LORD.

LXE Hosea 5:4 They have not framed their counsels to return to their God, for the spirit of fornication is in them, and they have not known the Lord.

NLT Hosea 5:4 Your deeds won't let you return to your God. You are a prostitute through and through, and you do not know the LORD.

KJV Hosea 5:4 They will not frame their doings to turn unto their God: for the spirit of whoredoms is in the midst of them, and they have not known the LORD.

ESV Hosea 5:4 Their deeds do not permit them to return to their God. For the spirit of whoredom is within them, and they know not the LORD.

CSB Hosea 5:4 Their actions do not allow them to return to their God, for a spirit of promiscuity is among them, and they do not know the LORD.

NIV Hosea 5:4 "Their deeds do not permit them to return to their God. A spirit of prostitution is in their heart; they do not acknowledge the LORD.

- **Their deeds will not allow them.** Ps 36:1-4 78:8 Joh 3:19,20 2Th 2:11,12
- **For a spirit of harlotry is within them:** Ho 4:12 Jer 50:38
- **And they do not know the LORD:** Ho 4:1 1Sa 2:12 Ps 9:10 Jer 9:6,24 22:15,16 24:7 Joh 8:55 16:3 1Jn 2:3,4

**Their deeds will not allow them** - Their acts reflected the attitude of their heart, the defiled condition of their heart which resulted in defiling deeds.

**THOUGHT** - Isn't that always the case? Jesus clearly taught this integral heart-deeds dynamic declaring (Mt 15:19-20) "For **out of the heart** come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders. **These are the things which defile the man**; but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile the man." Because this is a "**truism**" it is imperative to seek to practice (enabled by the Spirit) Proverbs 4:23+ "**Watch** (command and in the Septuagint = **present imperative**) over your heart with all diligence, For from it flow the springs of life." ([See discussion of the Need for the Holy Spirit to obey these commands](#))

**John Phillips** - The One who had experienced Israel's perfidy over and over again said, "**They will not**" (italics added). The battle against evil always ends up as a battle of the will. The wicked should not say that they *cannot* overcome evil; the truth is that they *will not*. (Exploring the Minor Prophets: An Expository Commentary)

**To return to their God** - The people desired "prostitution" with the false gods (and the lascivious, gross, abominable sex that was associated with their "worship!"). So "God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them." (Ro 1:24+). In essence, God said you want idols and their associated immorality, then I will give you over to them, which is a frightening place to be!

Repentance becomes impossible for a people totally devoted to sin. Evil deeds raise a barrier between a sinner and God. They raise wicked pride in people's hearts, barring saving humility and repentance. Adulterous Israel (Hos 1:2) had become totally corrupt or unclean (Eze 39:23,24), unfit for God's presence. Instead of letting God's Spirit lead them, they followed the "spirit of prostitution." They did not even know God (Hos 4:1-2). They stumbled along a crooked path of sin (Isa 1:2-4). Such a path certainly cannot lead the way to God, who cannot accept unfaithful, treacherous people (Isa 48:1-9). Political allies cannot cure sin sickness. They cannot fight God's discipline. Only confession of sin and guilt or shame (2Ch 28:9-13) can bridge the sin gap which separates us from God.

**For a spirit of harlotry is within them** - Literally = spirit of harlotries"; **CSB** = spirit of promiscuity" **NIV** = "a spirit of prostitution"; TEV = "Idolatry has a powerful hold on them." CEV interprets it literally: "your constant craving for sex keeps you from knowing me." There is undoubtedly truth in the CEV paraphrase because Israel's whoring after idols was usually associated with abominable sexual immorality especially on the so-called "high places."

**And they do not know the LORD - Know** (yada) speaks of intimacy (Adam and Eve in Ge 4:1). Because they were "intimate" with idolatry, they could hardly be "intimate" with the true and living God!

**Hosea 5:5 Moreover, the pride of Israel testifies against him, And Israel and Ephraim stumble in their iniquity; Judah also has stumbled with them.**

BGT Hosea 5:5 κατὰ ταπεινωθῆσεται ἡ βριση τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ ἐν τῷ πρῶτῳ καὶ τῷ δευτέρῳ καὶ Ἰσραὴλ καὶ Ἐφραὶμ σθενθοῦσιν ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ταύταις καὶ Ἰουδᾶς μετ' αὐτῶν

NET Hosea 5:5 The arrogance of Israel testifies against it; Israel and Ephraim will be overthrown because of their iniquity. Even Judah will be brought down with them.

LXE Hosea 5:5 And the pride of Israel shall be brought low before his face; and Israel and Ephraim shall fall in their iniquities; and Judas also shall fall with them.

NLT Hosea 5:5 "The arrogance of Israel testifies against her; Israel and Ephraim will stumble under their load of guilt. Judah, too, will fall with them.

KJV Hosea 5:5 And the pride of Israel doth testify to his face: therefore shall Israel and Ephraim fall in their iniquity; Judah also shall fall with them.

ESV Hosea 5:5 The pride of Israel testifies to his face; Israel and Ephraim shall stumble in his guilt; Judah also shall stumble with them.

CSB Hosea 5:5 Israel's arrogance testifies against them. Both Israel and Ephraim stumble because of their wickedness; even Judah will stumble with them.

NIV Hosea 5:5 Israel's arrogance testifies against them; the Israelites, even Ephraim, stumble in their sin; Judah also stumbles with them.

- **the pride of Israel:** Ho 7:10 Pr 30:13 Isa 3:9 9:9,10 28:1-3
- **testifies against him:** Isa 44:9 59:12 Jer 14:7 Mt 23:31 Lu 19:22
- **Israel and Ephraim stumble in their iniquity:** Ho 4:5 14:1 Pr 11:5,21 14:32 24:16 Am 5:2
- **Judah also has stumbled with them:** Ho 5:14 8:14 2Ki 17:19,20 Eze 23:31-35 Am 2:4,5

## **PRIDE WAS A WITNESS AGAINST ISRAEL!**

**Moreover, the pride of Israel testifies against him** - Their own arrogance took the witness stand against unfaithful Israel. God is **opposed** to ([antitasso](#) from **anti** = against + **tasso** = order, set means to set an army in array against, to arrange in battle order; to line oneself up against) the **proud**, which is a picture of Him "stiff arming" the prideful person! Woe! (see [commentary](#) on James 4:6). (cf similar expression 1 Sa 12:3, 2 Sa 1:16).

**And Israel and Ephraim stumble in their iniquity** - Proverbs 16:18 says "Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before stumbling."

As **Constable** says "With their proud noses high in the air, they frequently stumbled as they walked. Judah had also stumbled in some of the same sins."



**NET Note on stumble** - Heb “will stumble” (so NCV, NLT). The verb לִשְׁבֹּץ (kashal, “to stumble; to stagger; to totter”) is used figuratively to describe distress (Isa 59:10; Ps 107:12), the debilitating effects of misfortune and calamity (Isa 5:27), and toil in exile (Lam 5:13). It is often used figuratively to describe the overthrow of a people or nation through divine judgment (Isa 8:15; Jer 6:21; 50:32; Hos 4:5; 5:5; 14:2). The Niphal stem used here is also frequently used in reference to divine judgment: “be overthrown,” of nations, armies (Jer 6:15; 8:12; Dan 11:19, 33, 34, 41; BDB 505 s.v. 1 לִשְׁבֹּץ.b). This figurative use of לִשְׁבֹּץ is often used in collocation with נָפַל (nafal, “to fall”; Isa 3:8; 31:3; 8:15; Jer 6:15; Dan 11:19).

**Judah also has stumbled with them** - Note that Ephraim “stumbled” into Assyrian exile in 722 BC, so Judah had ample time to contemplate the error of her idolatrous, unfaithful ways and yet she stiffened her neck, hardened her heart and steadfastly refused to repent and return to her Husband, her Maker (Jer 31:32+, Isaiah 54:5). And so she “stumbled” into exile in Babylon in 586 BC.

**Stumbled (03782) (kashal)** means to stagger, totter, falter - stumbling in and out of control (Lev 26:37). Literally kashal describes physically falling. Figuratively **kashal** speaks of falling in the sense of failing or falling into ruin (Ps 64:8, 2Chr 25:8, Isa. 3:8; Hos. 14:1)

**Kashal** is used 4x in Hosea - Hos. 4:5; Hos. 5:5; Hos. 14:1; Hos. 14:9

**NET Note on has stumbled** - Heb “will stumble” (so NCV). The term לִשְׁבֹּץ (kashal) appeared in the preceding line (Niphal “be overthrown”) and now appears here (Qal “will stumble”). The repetition of לִשְׁבֹּץ emphasizes that a similar fate will befall Judah because it failed to learn its lesson from God’s judgment on Israel. The verb לִשְׁבֹּץ (“to stumble”) does not describe the moral stumbling of Judah, but the effect of God’s judgment (Isa 8:15; Jer 6:21; 50:32; Hos 4:5; 5:5; 14:2), and the toil of exile (Lam 5:13).

**Hosea 5:6 They will go with their flocks and herds To seek the LORD, but they will not find Him; He has withdrawn from them.**

BGT Hosea 5:6 μετ' ἄρτων καὶ μισθῶν πορεύσονται τοῦ κληρονομήσαι τὸν κύριον καὶ οὐ μὲρῶσιν αὐτῶν  
ἔκλινεν παύτως

NET Hosea 5:6 Although they bring their flocks and herds to seek the favor of the LORD, They will not find him— he has withdrawn himself from them!

LXE Hosea 5:6 They shall go with sheep and calves diligently to seek the Lord; but they shall not find him, for he has withdrawn himself from them.

NLT Hosea 5:6 When they come with their flocks and herds to offer sacrifices to the LORD, they will not find him, because he has withdrawn from them.

KJV Hosea 5:6 They shall go with their flocks and with their herds to seek the LORD; but they shall not find him; he hath withdrawn himself from them.

ESV Hosea 5:6 With their flocks and herds they shall go to seek the LORD, but they will not find him; he has withdrawn from them.

CSB Hosea 5:6 They go with their flocks and herds to seek the LORD but do not find Him; He has withdrawn from them.

NIV Hosea 5:6 When they go with their flocks and herds to seek the LORD, they will not find him; he has withdrawn himself from them.

- **go:** Ex 10:9,24-26 Pr 15:8 21:27 Jer 7:4 Mic 6:6,7
- **they:** Pr 1:28 Isa 1:11-15 Isa 66:3 Jer 11:11 La 3:44 Eze 8:18 Am 5:21-23 Mic 3:4 Joh 7:34
- **He has withdrawn from them:** Song 5:6 Lu 5:16

## SACRIFICES BROUGHT IN VAIN

**They will go with their flocks and herds** - This speaks of their vain (too little, too late) attempts to approach God with their animal sacrifices.

**Leon Wood** says that "To go with "flocks and herds to seek the Lord" means to search after God's favor through sacrifice. But without the evidence of true faith, mere outward sacrifice will not do (cf. Hos 6:6; 1 Sam 15:22-23). Thus the people find only that

God "has withdrawn himself from them." (Ibid)

**NET Note** - The terms flocks and herds are used figuratively for animal sacrifices (metonymy of association). Hosea describes the futility of seeking God's favor with mere ritual sacrifice without the prerequisite moral obedience (e.g., 1 Sam 15:24; Ps 50:6–8; 51:17–18; Isa 1:12; Mic 6:6–8).

Here is God's "commentary" on this passage...

**"What are your multiplied sacrifices to Me?"** Says the LORD. "I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams And the fat of fed cattle; And I take no pleasure in the blood of bulls, lambs or goats. 12 "When you come to appear before Me, Who requires of you this trampling of My courts? 13 "Bring your worthless offerings no longer, Incense is an abomination to Me. New moon and sabbath, the calling of assemblies— I cannot endure iniquity and the solemn assembly. 14 "I hate your new moon festivals and your appointed feasts, They have become a burden to Me; I am weary of bearing them. 15 "So when you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide My eyes from you; Yes, even though you multiply prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are covered with blood. (Isa 1:11-15+)

**To seek the LORD, but they will not find Him**- Literally = "they go out to seek the LORD"; NCV "to worship the Lord"; NLT "to offer sacrifices to the Lord." Why? Because of their determination not to turn to God (see Hos 5:4 "Their deeds will not allow them To return to their God").

**John Phillips** writes that "When at last they say, **We will,** **God will say, "No you won't."** When the Israelites have sinned away the day of grace, they will bring flocks and herds for sacrifice in a last desperate move to avert their doom, but God will no longer be available. When He has knocked and knocked, and called and called in vain, He will go away." The Israelites should have known what would happen, for they knew that God had withdrawn himself from King Saul. Saul sinned against God with a high hand, but the time came when he desperately needed God. However, no message came to him from God. Samuel was dead. David knew God and wrote Psalms, but Saul had driven him away. God had abandoned Saul. **No more terrible state of soul can be imagined.** In desperation he resorted to witchcraft—finding the door of Heaven barred, he went down and knocked at the door of Hell. God opened that door and let Saul fall through it into the darkness on the other side. (Ibid)

**He has withdrawn from them** - They were two-faced hypocrites. They wanted a "touch" of God, but they wanted to continue to caress their empty idols! God's holiness precludes Him fellowshiping with duplicitous men!

**THOUGHT** - How is your worship on Sunday? Are you "bringing the flocks and herds" to God on Sunday but living like the devil Monday - Saturday? Then don't be surprised when you do not feel close to God and/or when you begin to experience His hand of chastisement (assuming you are really a "son" - see Hebrews 12:5-11+).

**NET Note** - "the LORD"; the phrase "the favor of" does not appear in Hebrew here, but is supplied for the sake of clarity. It is implied by the metonymical (cause-effect) reference to the LORD, the source of favor and forgiveness.

**Hosea 5:7 They have dealt treacherously against the LORD, For they have borne illegitimate children. Now the new moon will devour them with their land.**

BGT Hosea 5:7 τι τ ν κ ριον γκατ λιπον τι τ κνα λλ τρια γενν θησαν α το ς ν ν καταφ γεται α το ς ρυσ βη κα το ς κλ ρους α τ ν

NET Hosea 5:7 They have committed treason against the LORD, because they bore illegitimate children. Soon the new moon festival will devour them and their fields.

LXE Hosea 5:7 For they have forsaken the Lord; for strange children have been born to them: now shall the cankerworm devour them and their heritages.

NLT Hosea 5:7 They have betrayed the honor of the LORD, bearing children that are not his. Now their false religion will devour them along with their wealth.

KJV Hosea 5:7 They have dealt treacherously against the LORD: for they have begotten strange children: now shall a month devour them with their portions.

ESV Hosea 5:7 They have dealt faithlessly with the LORD; for they have borne alien children. Now the new moon shall devour them with their fields.

CSB Hosea 5:7 They betrayed the LORD; indeed, they gave birth to illegitimate children. Now the New Moon will devour them along with their fields.

NIV Hosea 5:7 They are unfaithful to the LORD; they give birth to illegitimate children. Now their New Moon festivals will devour them and their fields.

- **They have dealt treacherously against the LORD** - Ho 6:7 Isa 48:8 59:13 Jer 3:20 5:11
- **For they have borne illegitimate children** Ne 13:23,24 Ps 144:7,11 Mal 2:11-15
- **Now the new moon** : Eze 12:28 Zec 11:8

**They have dealt treacherously against the LORD** - NRSV “dealt faithlessly”; NLT “betrayed the honor of.” Israel was called by God as His wife, by covenant, but she broke the covenant and abandoned Him (just like Gomer had done to Hosea).

Hos 6:7 But like Adam they have transgressed the covenant; There they have dealt treacherously [bagad](#) against Me.

Jer 3:20 “Surely, as a woman **treacherously departs** ([bagad](#)) from her lover, So you have dealt treacherously with Me, O house of Israel,” declares the LORD.

Malachi 2:14+ Yet you say, ‘For what reason?’ Because the LORD has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have **dealt treacherously** ([bagad](#)) , though she is your companion and your wife by covenant.

**Dealt treacherously** (0898)([bagad](#)) apparently from an Arabic root meaning to deceive) means to act deceitfully, unfaithfully, to commit faithlessness.. This word describes a traitor, one who violates his allegiance and betrays something or someone (e.g., God). Bagad means to ‘break faith’ which speaks of one who does not honour the terms of an existing agreement. The root idea of bagad is to cover or cloak things over, and so to act covertly or falsely, perfidiously (acting untrue to what should command one’s fidelity or allegiance and adds to faithless the implication of an incapacity for fidelity or reliability!). "The verb connotes unfaithfulness in relationships like marriage (Ex. 21:8; Jer. 3:20; Mal. 2:14); Israel’s covenant with the Lord (Ps. 78:57; 119:158); friendships (Job 6:15; Jer. 3:20; Mal. 2:10); leadership (Jdg. 9:23).

The **Septuagint** translates **bagad** in this passage with the verb [egkatalaipo](#) (**en** = in + [kataleipo](#) = forsake, desert) means literally to leave down in and conveys the sense of deserting someone, to let one down, to abandon.

**For they have borne illegitimate children** - This actually could have a literal as well as spiritual aspect. The literal would be the birth of children to temple prostitutes as a result of their perverted, idolatrous "worship." "**Strange**" children (see zur below). In short they failed miserably to heed the call of Moses to raise up children who would learn to fear (reverentially) Jehovah. In fact, they seem to have even forgotten the purpose of the [Shema](#)!

Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! 5 “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. 6 “These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. 7 “**You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.** (Dt 6:4-7)

**Illegitimate** (02114)([zur](#)) means to turn aside, to depart, to be crooked, to be perverse, to be devious. To go the wrong way. Baker says "It indicates what a person or nation trusts in. In context it indicates guile, deviousness, etc. found in political alliances with Egypt rather than trust in God’s word (Isa. 30:12). The wicked and perverse follow a path of perversity, crookedness, deviousness (Pr. 2:15; 3:32), and the Lord abhors them. Their way of crookedness shows that they despise and reject the Lord (Pr. 14:2). In two passages, it has the sense of losing sight of something or of something being lost sight of (Pr. 3:21; 4:21)."

**Now the new moon will devour them with their land.** - NLT paraphrases it fairly accurately "Now their false religion will devour **them** along with **their wealth**." These were the monthly sacrifices which in their case clearly were utter hypocrisy and clearly not blessed by Jehovah! In fact this verse says just the converse - their hypocritical worship would bring about the ruin of people and fields alike.

**NET Note on now** - The particle עֲתָהּ ('attah) often refers to the imminent or the impending future: “very soon” (BDB 774 s.v. עֲתָהּ 1.b). In Hosea it normally introduces imminent judgment (Hos 2:12; 4:16; 5:7; 8:8, 13; 10:2).

Chisholm adds that "The fields, for which they sought fertility through Baal worship, would be destroyed by drought, blight, and insects, and would be overrun by invading armies (cf. Lev. 26:16, 19-20; Deut. 28:17, 22-24, 33, 38-42, 51)." (BKC)

BGT Hosea 5:8 σαλπ σατε σ λιπιγγι π το ς βουνο ς χ σατε π τ ν ψηλ ν κηρ ξατε ν τ ο κ Ων ξ στη Βενιαμιν (Hos 5:8 BGT)

NET Hosea 5:8 Blow the ram's horn in Gibeah! Sound the trumpet in Ramah! Sound the alarm in Beth Aven! Tremble in fear, O Benjamin!

LXE Hosea 5:8 Blow ye the trumpet on the hills, sound aloud on the heights: proclaim in the house of On, Benjamin is amazed.

NLT Hosea 5:8 "Sound the alarm in Gibeah! Blow the trumpet in Ramah! Raise the battle cry in Beth-aven! Lead on into battle, O warriors of Benjamin!

KJV Hosea 5:8 Blow ye the cornet in Gibeah, and the trumpet in Ramah: cry aloud at Bethaven, after thee, O Benjamin.

ESV Hosea 5:8 Blow the horn in Gibeah, the trumpet in Ramah. Sound the alarm at Beth-aven; we follow you, O Benjamin!

CSB Hosea 5:8 Blow the horn in Gibeah, the trumpet in Ramah; raise the war cry in Beth-aven: After you, Benjamin!

NIV Hosea 5:8 "Sound the trumpet in Gibeah, the horn in Ramah. Raise the battle cry in Beth Aven; lead on, O Benjamin.

- **Blow the horn** : Ho 8:1 Jer 4:5 6:1 Joe 2:1,15
- **Gibeah**: Ho 9:9 10:9 Jud 19:12-15 20:4-6 1Sa 15:34 2Sa 21:6 Isa 10:29
- **Ramah**: 1Sa 7:17 8:4 15:34
- **Bethaven**: Ho 4:15 10:5,8 Jos 7:2 1Ki 12:29
- **Behind you, Benjamin**: Jdg 5:14

## BLOW THE SHOFAR FOR THE DAY OF DESTRUCTION

The [Shofar](#) blasts ([listen to what it must have sounded like](#)) would soon be heard in Israel as the invading Assyrians swept down to the southern edge of the Northern Kingdom (thus the towns mentioned - see below). This sound would have surely struck fear in the hearts of the hearers!

**Blow the horn in Gibeah, The trumpet in Ramah** - Gibeah and [Ramah](#) were cities of the land of Benjamin, and served as strategic points on Judah's northern border.

**Sound an alarm at Beth-aven** - **Beth-aven** is probably the reference to **Bethel** (see comments Hos 4:15) which was on the southern edge of Israel (Northern 10 Tribes). The evil day and destruction are now vividly pictured as actually having come. All is in confusion, hurry, alarm, because the enemy was in the midst of them. The ram's horn was to be blown as the alarm when the enemy was at hand. The trumpet was especially used for the worship of God. Gibeah and Ramah were cities of Benjamin on the borders of Ephraim where the enemy, who had possessed himself of Israel, would burst in upon Judah..

**"Behind you, Benjamin!"** - NET = "Tremble in fear, O Benjamin!"

**NET Note on behind you** - The MT reads the anomalous אַחֲרֶיךָ בְּנִימִין ('akharekha binyamin, "behind you, O Benjamin"), a reading followed by many English versions. The LXX reads ἐξέστη (exestē) which might reflect an alternate textual tradition of הַחֲרִידוּ בְּנִימִין (hakhharidu binyamin, "Tremble in fear, O Benjamin"); the verb form would be a Hiphil imperative 2nd person masculine plural from חָרַד (kharad, "to tremble, be terrified"; BDB 353 s.v. חָרַד). For discussion of this textual problem, see D. Barthélemy, e.d., Preliminary and Interim Report on the Hebrew Old Testament Text Project, 5:236.

NET Hosea 5:9 Ephraim will be ruined in the day of judgment! What I am declaring to the tribes of Israel will certainly take place!

LXE Hosea 5:9 Ephraim has come to nought in the days of reproof: in the tribes of Israel I have shown faithful dealings.

NLT Hosea 5:9 One thing is certain, Israel: On your day of punishment, you will become a heap of rubble.

KJV Hosea 5:9 Ephraim shall be desolate in the day of rebuke: among the tribes of Israel have I made known that which shall surely be.

ESV Hosea 5:9 Ephraim shall become a desolation in the day of punishment; among the tribes of Israel I make known what is sure.

CSB Hosea 5:9 Ephraim will become a desolation on the day of punishment; I announce what is certain among the tribes of Israel.

NIV Hosea 5:9 Ephraim will be laid waste on the day of reckoning. Among the tribes of Israel I proclaim what is certain.

- **Ephraim will become a desolation:** Ho 5:12,14 Hos 8:8 Hos 9:11-17 Hos 11:5,6 Hos 13:1-3,15,16 Job 12:14 Isa 28:1-4 Am 3:14,15 Amos 7:9,17
- **Among the tribes of Israel I declare what is sure:** Isa 46:10 Isa 48:3,5 Am 3:7 Zec 1:6 Joh 16:4

## DESOLATION IS COMPLETE AND CERTAIN

**Ephraim will become a desolation in the day of rebuke** - NLT “day of punishment.” Ephraim was not taken away for a time; it was never restored.

**Desolation** had been promised for **disobedience**...

**I will make the land desolate** so that your enemies who settle in it will be appalled over it. (Lev. 26:32)

**Among the tribes of Israel I declare what is sure** - God promised it. That settled it. It was as good as done (which is what happened some 30 years later).

**NET Note on declare** (yada) - The verb הוֹדַעְתִּי (hoda'ti, Hiphil perfect 1st person common singular from יָדַע, yada'; Qal “to know,” Hiphil “to make known, declare”) here functions as (1) an instantaneous perfect, representing an action being performed at the same instant that the speaker utters the statement (e.g., Gen 14:22; Deut 8:19; 26:3; 2 Sam 17:11; 19:30; P s 143:6); or (2) an epistolary perfect, representing a situation in past time from the viewpoint of the recipient of the message but in present time from the viewpoint of the writer (e.g., 1 Kgs 15:19; 2 Chr 2:12). For functions of the perfect tense (suffix-conjugation), see IBHS 486–90 §30.5.1.

**NET Note on what is sure** - The substantival use of the Niphal participle הַנֶּאֱמָנָה (ne'emanah, “that which is sure”) refers to an event that will occur in the future (BDB 52 s.v. 2 אָמַן).

**Hosea 5:10 The princes of Judah have become like those who move a boundary; On them I will pour out My wrath like water.**

BGT Hosea 5:10 γ νοντο ο ρχοντες Ιουδα ς μετατιθ ντες ρια π ατο ς κχε ς δωρ τ ρηημ μου (Hos 5:10 BGT)

NET Hosea 5:10 The princes of Judah are like those who move boundary markers. I will pour out my rage on them like a torrential flood!

LXE Hosea 5:10 The princes of Juda became as they that removed the bounds: I will pour out upon them my fury as water.

NLT Hosea 5:10 "The leaders of Judah have become like thieves. So I will pour my anger on them like a waterfall.

KJV Hosea 5:10 The princes of Judah were like them that remove the bound: therefore I will pour out my

wrath upon them like water.

ESV Hosea 5:10 The princes of Judah have become like those who move the landmark; upon them I will pour out my wrath like water.

CSB Hosea 5:10 The princes of Judah are like those who move boundary markers; I will pour out My fury on them like water.

NIV Hosea 5:10 Judah's leaders are like those who move boundary stones. I will pour out my wrath on them like a flood of water.

- **The princes of Judah:** Ho 5:5
- **like those who move a boundary:** Dt 19:14 Dt 27:17 2Ki 16:7-9 2Ch 28:16-22 Pr 17:14 22:28
- **I will pour out My wrath like water:** Ps 32:6 88:17 93:3,4 Mt 7:27 Lu 6:49

## THE REASON FOR THE COMING DESOLATION

**The princes of Judah have become like those who move a boundary** - This was tantamount to stealing property from neighbors. Moses warns against moving boundaries (or boundary stones - something that could be done stealthily at night!) - it is forbidden and if you do it you are cursed!

Deuteronomy 19:14 "You shall not move your neighbor's boundary mark, which the ancestors have set, in your inheritance which you will inherit in the land that the LORD your God gives you to possess.

Deuteronomy 27:17 '**Cursed** is he who moves his neighbor's boundary mark.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.'

Notice the phrase "**have become like those**" so this is a comparison -- they were necessarily moving boundary stones (although that may have been going on also), but the point is that princes (leaders) of Judah were in effect moving the spiritual boundaries (so to speak) that had been established by God. As **Wood** says they were "changing the boundary between right and wrong, between true and false religion, between the true God and the idols." (Ibid)

**Chisholm** explains that "The act was tantamount to theft as it obscured the legal boundary between properties and was a way of taking some land that belonged to another. Perhaps this particular crime was cited in order to allude to the acts of social injustice being carried out by the Judean upper class (cf. Isa. 5:8; Micah 2:1-2). (The Bible Knowledge Commentary)

**On them I will pour out My wrath like water** - Water in Israel normally would be refreshing, but here the metaphor is anything but refreshing. As water is poured out of a bucket, so God's wrath would be poured out on Israel. This might be like "divine water boarding" but that analogy breaks down because God has already tried to get them to confess. This is more like a "divine drowning" because of their persistent sin.

**NET Note on like water** - Heb "like water" (so KJV, NAB, NRSV); NLT "like a waterfall." The term מַיִם (mayim, "water") often refers to literal flood waters (Gen 7:7, 10; 8:3, 7-9; Isa 54:9) and figuratively describes the LORD's judgment that totally destroys the wicked (BDB 566 s.v. 4 מַיִם.k).

**Constable** - The leaders of Judah had also broken covenant with the Lord (cf. Isa. 5:8; Mic. 2:1-2), as those who move boundary markers. Judah had re-annexed Benjamite territory, thus violating the terms of the Mosaic Covenant regarding tribal allotments (cf. Deut. 19:14; 27:17). Consequently God's wrath would rain down on them. The boundaries that the leaders of Judah had moved were not just physical but also spiritual. They had moved the boundaries between right and wrong, true and false religion, and the true God and idols.

**Hosea 5:11 Ephraim is oppressed, crushed in judgment, Because he was determined to follow man's command.**

BGT Hosea 5:11 κατεδυν στευσεν Εφραιμ τ ν ντ δικον α το κατεπ τησεν κρ μα τι ρξατο πορε εσθαι π σω τ ν ματα ων

NET Hosea 5:11 Ephraim will be oppressed, crushed under judgment, because he was determined to pursue worthless idols.

LXE Hosea 5:11 Ephraim altogether prevailed against his adversary, he trod judgment under foot, for he began to go after vanities.

NLT Hosea 5:11 The people of Israel will be crushed and broken by my judgment because they are determined to worship idols.

KJV Hosea 5:11 Ephraim is oppressed and broken in judgment, because he willingly walked after the commandment.

ESV Hosea 5:11 Ephraim is oppressed, crushed in judgment, because he was determined to go after filth.

CSB Hosea 5:11 Ephraim is oppressed, crushed in judgment, for he is determined to follow what is worthless.

NIV Hosea 5:11 Ephraim is oppressed, trampled in judgment, intent on pursuing idols.

- **Ephraim is oppressed:** De 28:33 2Ki 15:16-20,29 Am 5:11,12
- **Because he was determined to follow man's command:** 1Ki 12:26-33 Mic 6:16

**Ephraim is oppressed, crushed in judgment** - Ephraim (Northern 10 Tribes) in fact did experience a oppressive, crushing judgment by the brutal Assyrians.

The same Hebrew verb for **oppressed** (ratsats) is used in the "cursings" section of Deuteronomy 28 (blessings Dt 28:1-14, cursings begins in Dt 28:15ff)

Deuteronomy 28:33 "A people whom you do not know (Assyria for Northern Kingdom - 722 BC; Babylon for Southern Kingdom - 586 BC) shall eat up the produce of your ground and all your labors, and you will never be anything but oppressed (ashaq) and **crushed** (ratsats; Lxx = thrauo - broken in pieces as pottery, figuratively broken in spirit - Lk 4:18+) continually.

**Oppressed** (06231)(**ashaq**) means to oppress, to extort, to defraud. The root word is concerned with acts of abuse of power or authority, the burdening, trampling, and crushing of those lower in station (half the uses are in the context of poverty). **Ashaq** speaks of harshness or roughness and often embodies use of force or violence. The **Septuagint** translates **ashaq** here (and the other use of **ashaq** in Hos 12:7) with the verb **katadunasteuo** (from **katá** = down, against + **dunasteúo** = to rule or **dunastes** = a ruler or potentate) means to exercise dominion against. In the two NT uses it conveys the sense of tyrannize or oppress harshly.

**NET Note on oppressed** - The verb אָשַׁק ('ashaq, "to oppress") may refer to (1) oppressing the poor and defenseless (BDB 798 s.v. 1 אָשַׁק), or more likely to (2) oppression of one nation by another as the judgment of God (Deut 28:29, 33; 1 Chr 16:21; Pss 105:14; 119:121, 122; Isa 52:4; Jer 50:33; Hos 5:11; BDB 798 s.v. 2). The Qal passive participles אָשֻׁק ('ashuq, "oppressed") and רָצַץ (rétsuts, "crushed") might refer to a present situation (so KJV, RSV, NASB, NIV, NRSV); however, the context suggests that they refer to a future situation (so NLT). When a participle is used in reference to the future, it often denotes an imminent future situation and may be rendered, "about to" (e.g., Gen 6:17; 15:14; 20:3; 37:30; 41:25; 49:29; Exod 9:17-18; Deut 28:31; 1 Sam 3:11; 1 Kgs 2:2; 20:22; 2 Kgs 7:2). For functions of the participle, see IBHS 627-28 §37.6f.

**NET Note on crushed** - The term רָצַץ (rétsuts, "crushed") is a metaphor for weakness (e.g., 2 Kgs 18:21; Isa 36:6; 42:3) and oppression (e.g., Deut 28:33; 1 Sam 12:3, 4; Amos 4:1; Isa 58:6). Here it is used as a figure to describe the devastating effects of the LORD's judgment.

**Because** - Term of explanation. **NLT** says "because they are determined to worship idols." This use is straightforward - they "deserved" or "earned" the judgment! They had been intent on pursuing idols. They got paid their due, for the wages of sin is death (Ro 6:23).

**He was determined to follow man's command - NAS marginal note** = "Or with some ancient versions, **follow nothingness**" **NET** "he was determined to pursue **worthless idols**." The Septuagint would support this rendering for the Greek word is **mataios** which means that which is deceptive and ineffectual which is a good description of idols!

**Determined** (02974)(**yaal**) means to show willingness, be pleased, determine, undertake (to do anything). It describes the "Canaanites persisted (yaal) living in the land." (Josh 17:12, cf similar use Jdg 1:27 and Amorites in Jdg 1:35). In Jdg 19:6 "Please **be willing** to spend the night, and let your heart be merry." In 1 Sa 12:22 "the LORD **has been pleased** to make you a people for Himself." In 2 Ki 6:3 "Please **be willing** to go with your servants."

It means "to be foolish, to act foolishly; to show oneself foolish. It depicts an action, behavior, and attitude that are against what is considered wise, prudent, upright. Miriam and Aaron murmured against Moses, which was shown to be a foolish act in the circumstances (Num. 12:11). It means in some contexts to act against God's people and the Lord's plan for them (Isa. 19:13). It

means to behave against the way of the Lord (Jer. 5:4). It refers to Babylonian priests being made to appear foolish by the failure and falsity of their oracles (Jer. 50:36). (Complete Word Study Dictionary – Old Testament)

**Ralph Alexander** on **yaal** - The primary meaning of this root is "to exhibit a moral behavior which demonstrates a lack of understanding of God's righteous ways." It is similar in meaning to *nābal*. The term involves both an ignorance of God's ways and an active insensibility and opposition to the known righteous behavior which God desires of his people for their own good. When the Lord is dealing with foreign nations, the emphasis of this root lies upon the lack of understanding of God's purposes and ways. The princes of Egypt have led their people astray because they did not understand the Lord's purposes for Egypt (Isaiah 19:13). Parallel terms in the context indicate that these leaders were "deceived" (*nishshe'û*) and "scoundrels" (*'ëwilîm*) who were morally bad. Likewise, the Lord judged the Babylonian diviners because their words and boastings were empty of God's righteous ways (Jeremiah 50:36). The common usage of this root when it is used to describe Israelites concerns a failure to behave morally according to their understanding of God's righteous revelation. Miriam deliberately acted contrary to God's revealed truth when in jealousy she questioned Moses' humility and leadership (Numbers 12:11). Jeremiah claims that the people of Jerusalem, being weak (*dallîm*), behaved improperly when they did not seek to do God's truth or justice, but rather swore falsely, refused to repent, and obstinately rejected correction and instruction (Jeremiah 5:4). Foolishness, therefore, as conveyed by this term, does not stress the inability to act intelligently, but rather the moral failure to behave according to God's prescribed holy conduct. (Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament)

**Yaal** - 19v - agreed(1), determined(1), persisted(3), please(2), pleased(2), pleased\*(1), tried(1), undertook(1), ventured(2), willing(5).

Gen. 18:27; Gen. 18:31; Exod. 2:21; Deut. 1:5; Jos. 7:7; Jos. 17:12; Jdg. 1:27; Jdg. 1:35; Jdg. 17:11; Jdg. 19:6; 1 Sam. 12:22; 1 Sam. 17:39; 2 Sam. 7:29; 2 Ki. 5:23; 2 Ki. 6:3; 1 Chr. 17:27; Job 6:9; Job 6:28; Hos. 5:11

**Hosea 5:12 Therefore I am like a moth to Ephraim And like rottenness to the house of Judah.**

BGT Hosea 5:12 κα γ ζ ταραχ τ Εφραϊμ κα ζ κ ντρον τ ο κ Ιουδα (Hos 5:12 BGT)

NET Hosea 5:12 I will be like a moth to Ephraim, like wood rot to the house of Judah.

LXE Hosea 5:12 Therefore I will be as consternation to Ephraim, and as a goad to the house of Juda.

NLT Hosea 5:12 I will destroy Israel as a moth consumes wool. I will make Judah as weak as rotten wood.

KJV Hosea 5:12 Therefore will I be unto Ephraim as a moth, and to the house of Judah as rottenness.

ESV Hosea 5:12 But I am like a moth to Ephraim, and like dry rot to the house of Judah.

CSB Hosea 5:12 So I am like rot to Ephraim and like decay to the house of Judah.

NIV Hosea 5:12 I am like a moth to Ephraim, like rot to the people of Judah.

- **I am like a moth:** Job 13:28 Isa 50:9 51:8
- **And like rottenness to the house of Judah** , Jon 4:7 Mk 9:44-48 Pr 12:4

## **GOD'S JUDGMENT LIKE MOTHS AND WORMS**

Notice that although Hosea's prophecy which he began in about 753 BC is directed primarily at the Northern Kingdom which some 31 years later was carried off by the Assyrians into exile in 722 BC, here the prophecy also speaks of the judgment that will fall on Judah culminating in her exile to Babylon in 586 BC. God is clearly sovereignly in control of both of these enemy invasions and exiles!

**Therefore I am like a moth to Ephraim** - Notice the words of God '**I am**' which depicts the judgment as already in progress. "The people were being eaten—as if by moths and decay—by problems and troubles." (Wood)

God describes the slow, sure ruin of Ephraim as a moth slowly, silently eats threads and ruins an expensive suit or dress! Have you ever had that happen -- you put your pants on to go to church and your wife asks "Did you see the holes in your pants?" Whoa!

**THOUGHT** - A nation does not crumble in a day but over years, decades, perhaps centuries of sinfulness which eats away at the soul of the nation until one day it collapses. The collapse had been in process over a long period of time, because God is longsuffering and desires to give us an opportunity to confess, repent and



be revived. This note is written in June, 2019 and it is clear that moths and worms are eating away at the moral foundation of America, we once proudly referred to as "one nation under God!" Lord God please send revival to America for Thy Name's sake, for Thy glory, in the Name of Jesus. Amen.

**And like rottenness to the house of Judah** - Like the gradual, imperceptible work of a moth, here the picture is of wood that is rotting because of worms and by the time the rot is discovered, the wood is ruined. If the wood is a picture of one's spiritual foundation, our spiritual house may crumble slowly but surely if allow persistent sin to "simmer" in our heart. As Moses said in Numbers 32:23 " "But if you will not do so, behold, you have sinned against the LORD, and be sure **your sin will find you out.**" We always think in our deceived state, there is no way anyone would ever find out my secret sin. But secret sin on earth is open scandal in Heaven (Pr 15:3). And all the while the secret sin is destroying one's soul like a moth slowly ruining a garment or termites slowly destroying the foundation of a house. The proverb is true when it says "He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but (PRAISE GOD FOR THIS TERM OF CONTRAST - CHANGE OF DIRECTION!) he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion." (Pr 28:13+).

**Rottenness** (07538)(**raqab** from raqeb = to rot) is a masculine noun that refers to decay, either the process of decay or the result of decay. Job refers to himself as "decaying (balah - 01086) like a **rotten thing.**" (Job 13:28). Of a wife who shames a man is "like **rottenness** in his bones." (Pr 12:4) Of "passion is **rottenness** to the bones." (Pr 14:30). Habakkuk says "Decay enters my bones." (Hab 3:16).

The **Septuagint** translates **raqab** in Hos 5:12 with the noun **kenton** which means a sharp, pointed instrument used for piercing to hurt or kill; literally, of insects with a poisonous tip stinger (Rev 9.10); figuratively, of death power to hurt (1Cor 15.55);

**NET Note on rottenness** - The noun רָקָב (raqav, "rottenness, decay") refers to wood rot caused by the ravages of worms (BDB 955 s.v. רָקָב); cf. NLT "dry rot." The related noun רִיקָוֹן (riqqavon) refers to "rotten wood" (Job 41:27).

**Raqab** - 5x - decay(1), rotten thing(1), rottenness(3). Job 13:28; Prov. 12:4; Prov. 14:30; Hos. 5:12; Hab. 3:16

**Hosea 5:13 When Ephraim saw his sickness, And Judah his wound, Then Ephraim went to Assyria And sent to King Jareb. But he is unable to heal you, Or to cure you of your wound.**

BGT Hosea 5:13 κα ε̅θεν Εφραιμ τ ν ν σον α το κα Ιουδας τ ν δ νην α το κα πορεθη Εφραιμ πρ ς σσυρ ους κα π στειλεν πρ σβεις πρ ς βασιλ α Ιαριμ κα α τ ς ο κ̅ δυν σθη̅ σασθαι μ ς κα ο μ̅ διαπασ̅ ξ̅ μ ν̅ δ νη̅

NET Hosea 5:13 When Ephraim saw his sickness and Judah saw his wound, then Ephraim turned to Assyria, and begged its great king for help. But he will not be able to heal you! He cannot cure your wound!

LXE Hosea 5:13 And Ephraim saw his disease, and Judas his pain; then Ephraim went to the Assyrians, and sent ambassadors to king Jarim: but he could not heal you, and your pain shall in nowise cease from you.

NLT Hosea 5:13 "When Israel and Judah saw how sick they were, Israel turned to Assyria-- to the great king there-- but he could neither help nor cure them.

KJV Hosea 5:13 When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah saw his wound, then went Ephraim to the Assyrian, and sent to king Jareb: yet could he not heal you, nor cure you of your wound.

ESV Hosea 5:13 When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah his wound, then Ephraim went to Assyria, and sent to the great king. But he is not able to cure you or heal your wound.

CSB Hosea 5:13 When Ephraim saw his sickness and Judah his wound, Ephraim went to Assyria and sent a delegation to the great king. But he cannot cure you or heal your wound.

NIV Hosea 5:13 "When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah his sores, then Ephraim turned to Assyria, and sent to the great king for help. But he is not able to cure you, not able to heal your sores.

- **When Ephraim saw his sickness:** Jer 30:12,14 Mic 1:9
- **Then Ephraim went to Assyria and sent to King Jareb:** Ho 7:11 10:6 12:1 2Ki 15:19,29 16:7 2Ch 28:16-18
- **But he is unable to heal you** 2Ch 28:20,21 Jer 30:15

**INTERNAL DECAT  
DISCERNED!**

**When Ephraim saw his sickness** - They saw the degrading effects of the "moths" on their culture! Frankly, this is an amazing statement for one would have thought their consciences would have been so seared and their hearts so deceived that they could even discern their moral **sickness**! But apparently they were aware that there was major moral rot in both the northern and southern kingdoms! And yet tragically, even with this awareness, there was no repentance! Such is the power of sin beloved! Be careful when you begin to give into "little" sins for they eventually inevitably lead to a big fall!

**And Judah his wound** - **Wound** (04205) is **mazor** (from **zur** = press down and out, crush) which means wound and is used twice in Hosea 5:13 (both times translated **odune** = physical or mental pain) and once in Jer 30:13+ ("sore").

**Gilbrant on wound** - The wounds here represent impending death. Infected wounds are symptomatic of death (**ED**: AS AN INFECTIOUS DISEASE DOCTOR THIS IS TRUE - IT IS LIKE GANGRENE OF THE LEG WHICH IF NOT AMPUTATED WILL CAUSE DEATH - IN THEIR CASE THE PROBLEM COULD NOT BE CURED BY AMPUTATION BECAUSE THE WHOLE BODY WAS "INFECTED" BY SIN!). The imagery here is of wounds which will not be healed, given that Yahweh is the Healer [[Jehovah Rapha](#)], and He is judging them. The people had turned their trust to political alliances, rather than trusting in Yahweh. Thus, this position is one of hopelessness, as their alliances will not save them from the nations which Yahweh is sending as judgement. ([Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary](#))

**Then** - When? When they recognized their "sickness!" **Wood** writes "Ephraim sought help from Assyria rather than from God. The precise time when Ephraim did this is uncertain, though it may have been when Menahem paid tribute to Assyria (2 Kings 15:19-20)." (Ibid)

**Ephraim went to Assyria and sent to King Jareb ("great king")** - This is Hosea's first use of this dreadful word "Assyria." **Jareb** (yarev) means great and so is translated not as a proper name but as "great king" in the NET, ESV, CSB, NIV, NLT. **BDB** says the idea of the word **yarev** is "let him contend" or "one who contends."

**NET Note** says that "The Masoretic Text reads מֶלֶךְ יָרֵב (melekh yarev, "a contentious king"). This is translated as a proper name ("king **Jareb**") by KJV, ASV, NASB. However, the stative adjective יָרֵב ("contentious") is somewhat awkward. The words should be redivided as an archaic genitive-construct מַלְכֵי רָב (malki rav, "great king"; cf. NAB, NIV, NRSV, NLT) which preserves the old genitive hireq yod ending. This is the equivalent of the Assyrian royal epithet *sarru rabbu* ("the great king"). Same phrase in Hosea 10:6.

**Gilbrant on Jareb** (Yarev) - Yārfiv was Hosea's nickname for the king(s) of Assyria (Hos. 5:13; 10:6), who would prove to be Israel's enemy rather than a trusted ally. Hosea was probably referring to [Tiglath-pileser III](#) (745-727 B.C.), who in 734 B.C. captured Gaza and made several raids on Israel; [Shalmaneser V](#) (727-722 B.C.), who laid siege and captured Samaria (722 B.C.), the capital city of Israel, deporting its inhabitants to Assyria; and [Sargon II](#) (721-705 B.C.) who reconquered Gaza and defeated Egypt and Philistia.

All of **Hosea's** uses of **Assyria** - Hos. 5:13; Hos. 7:11; Hos. 8:9; Hos. 9:3; Hos. 10:6; Hos. 11:5; Hos. 11:11; Hos. 12:1; Hos. 14:3;

Thus Ephraim sees the sin problem or the results caused by the sin and goes to men instead of to God. And not only do they not go to God, but they go to pagan, godless men! This is the height of stupidity, but when one is deceived (which is what sin does to our heart and mind - see [Deceitfulness of Sin](#)) they do stupid things and don't even realize how foolish they are! (You've never done that have you? Of course I have!)

**THOUGHT** - How many Christians are suffering moral (sin) **sickness** (unforgiving spirit, bitter spirit, angry spirit, etc) and instead of going to the Counselor, God the Spirit, Who is the Spirit of Wisdom, they go to men who have degrees steeped in humanistic wisdom (like "King Jareb") and find that man's wisdom is unable to heal or cure. And this makes sense, because sin **sickness** has a spiritual basis and therefore requires a spiritual solution. One of the best "medicines" is to as confess and repent, the best "cure" for sin sickness (of course this is not referring to physical sickness which is a different matter and for which it is wise to use physicians and medicines, both of which are ultimately gifts from God.)

**But he is unable to heal you or to cure you of your wound**- Sin sickness cannot be healed even by a "great king"

In Second Chronicles we read a similar story of King Ahaz (Southern Kingdom, Judah) who initially sought help from Assyria(2 Chr 28:16)

So Tilgath-pilneser (**ED**: variant spelling of [Tiglath-pileser III](#)) king of Assyria came against him and afflicted him **instead of strengthening** him.(2Ch 28:20)

**Hosea 5:14 For I will be like a lion to Ephraim And like a young lion to the house of Judah. I, even I, will tear to pieces and**

BGT Hosea 5:14 δι τι γ ε μι ς πανθ ρ τ Εφραιμ κα ς λ ω ν τ ο κ Ιουδα κα γ ρ π μ αι κα πορε σομαι κα λ μ ψ ο μ αι κα ο κ σ τ αι ξ αι ρ ο μ ε ν ο ς

NET Hosea 5:14 I will be like a lion to Ephraim, like a young lion to the house of Judah. I myself will tear them to pieces, then I will carry them off, and no one will be able to rescue them!

LXE Hosea 5:14 Wherefore I am as a panther to Ephraim, and as a lion to the house of Juda: and I will tear, and go away; and I will take, and there shall be none to deliver.

NLT Hosea 5:14 I will be like a lion to Israel, like a strong young lion to Judah. I will tear them to pieces! I will carry them off, and no one will be left to rescue them.

KJV Hosea 5:14 For I will be unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah: I, even I, will tear and go away; I will take away, and none shall rescue him.

ESV Hosea 5:14 For I will be like a lion to Ephraim, and like a young lion to the house of Judah. I, even I, will tear and go away; I will carry off, and no one shall rescue.

CSB Hosea 5:14 For I am like a lion to Ephraim and like a young lion to the house of Judah. Yes, I will tear them to pieces and depart. I will carry them off, and no one can rescue them.

NIV Hosea 5:14 For I will be like a lion to Ephraim, like a great lion to Judah. I will tear them to pieces and go away; I will carry them off, with no one to rescue them.

- **For I will be like a lion to Ephraim:** Ho 13:7,8 Job 10:16 Ps 7:2 La 3:10 Am 3:4-8
- **I, even I, will tear to pieces:** Ps 7:2 50:22 Mic 5:8
- **there will be none to deliver.:** De 28:31 Job 10:7 Isa 5:29 Am 2:14

## GOD IS LIKE A LION THAT TEARS TO PIECES

**For I will be like a lion to Ephraim** - Note the "**I will**" indicating that God is directly involved in meting out the judgment (cf similar scenario with "**I am**" in Hos 5:12). The moth metaphor now becomes the picture of a raging lion! This is God Himself Who would attack Ephraim like a lion which violently attacks and kills its prey. This shows God's sovereignty for He uses men (nations of Assyria and Babylon) to carry out His attack on Ephraim and Judah.

**Leon Wood** - Help could not come from Assyria. A good reason for this is advanced. God, mightier than this foreign country, was "like a lion" in bringing destruction on both Ephraim and Judah. God's justice, like his love, works inevitably, irresistibly. His chastisement, already operating through the mothlike and decaying conditions indicated in v.12, would be greatly accentuated through the coming devastation by Assyria—the very country whose aid had been sought. Against Israel, Tiglath-pileser III would come in two crushing campaigns (743 and 734-732 B.C.); and later (722 B.C.) Sennacherib would do much to bring Israel's history to an end. Against Judah, Sennacherib would come (701 B.C.). (Expositor's Bible Commentary)

**And like a young lion to the house of Judah** - They could have/should have had the "Lion of the Tribe of Judah" as their defender but they shunned God for idols and reaped the rotten fruit.

**I, even I, will tear to pieces and go away I will carry away, and there will be none to deliver** - Who could snatch away the prey from a lion's mouth. Even more who could snatch away the victims from the hand of God! The phrase **I will carry away** would be an allusion to the fact that both Ephraim and Judah were not just defeated, but that they were carried away into exile.

**Hosea 5:15 I will go away and return to My place Until they acknowledge their guilt and seek My face; In their affliction they will earnestly seek Me.**

BGT Hosea 5:15 πορε σομαι κα πιστρ ψ ω ς τ ν τ π ο ν μ ο υ ω ς ο φ ανισθ σιν κα πιζητ σουσιν τ π ρ σω π ν μ ο υ ν θ λ ψ ει α τ ν ρ θ ρ ι ο σ ι π ρ ς μ ε λ γ ο ν τ ε ς

KJV Hosea 5:15 I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early.

NET Hosea 5:15 Then I will return again to my lair until they have suffered their punishment. Then they will seek me; in their distress they will earnestly seek me.

NLT Hosea 5:15 Then I will return to my place until they admit their guilt and turn to me. For as soon as trouble comes, they will earnestly search for me."

ESV Hosea 5:15 I will return again to my place, until they acknowledge their guilt and seek my face, and in their distress earnestly seek me.

CSB Hosea 5:15 I will depart and return to My place until they recognize their guilt and seek My face; they will search for Me in their distress.

NIV Hosea 5:15 Then I will go back to my place until they admit their guilt. And they will seek my face; in their misery they will earnestly seek me."

- **I will go away and return to My place:** Ho 5:6 Ex 25:21,22 1Ki 8:10-13 Ps 132:14 Isa 26:21 Eze 8:6 10:4 Eze 11:23 Mic 1:3
- **Until they acknowledge their guilt and seek My face:** Ho 14:1-3 Lev 26:40-42 De 4:29-31 30:1-3 1Ki 8:47,48 2Ch 6:36,37 2Ch 7:14 Ne 1:8,9 Job 33:27 Isa 64:5-9 Jer 3:13 29:12-14 Jer 31:18-20 Eze 6:9 20:43 36:31 Da 9:4-12
- **In their affliction they will earnestly seek Me:** Jdg 4:3 Jdg 6:6,7 Jdg 10:10-16 2Ch 33:12,13 Job 27:8-10 Ps 50:15 Ps 78:34 Ps 83:16 Pr 1:27,28 Pr 8:17 Isa 26:9,16 Jer 2:27 Zep 2:1-3 Lu 13:25

## A PROPHECY OF SALVATION

**Chisholm** entitles Hosea 5:15-6:3 "Israel's Restoration Envisioned." (BKC)

**I will go away and return to My place** - In a sense this is a description all the time leading up to the Second Coming when Israel will finally acknowledge their guilt and seek God's face. While God clearly did not totally abandon Israel over the millennia, He did allow them to suffer, but that suffering will come to a glorious end when the Deliverer returns. Paul describes this in Romans 11:25-27<sup>+</sup>

For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery—so that you will not be wise in your own estimation—that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; 26 and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, “**THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB.**” 27 “**THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS.**”

**Until** - Expression of time. Ask when will [until](#) be consummated? The context says when they acknowledge their guilt and seek God's face

See how the word **until** in Hosea 5:15 parallels Jesus' prophecy in Mt 23:29

"For I say to you, from now on you shall not see Me**UNTIL** you say, 'BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!'"

**Comment** - This affirmation, prophesied in Psalm 118:26, had been sung by the Jerusalem crowds when Jesus entered the city just a few days before. They thought He had come as a conquering King to defeat break the yoke of the Roman oppression, but they did not really understand Who He was, and their enthusiasm was quickly rejected by the priests, the very ones who should have known the Truth. The result was the age-long exile and suffering of the Jews which Hosea describes in Hosea 3:4+ "For the sons of Israel will remain for many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar and without ephod or household idols." But one day (perhaps soon) the **UNTIL** will come to pass when Christ comes a [Second Time](#), in **power and great glory** (Mt 24:30<sup>+</sup>), the nation of Israel will recognize Him in deep repentance (Zech 12:10-14+) and indeed will say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

**Observe the "untils" of Israel's blessing:** (1) Israel must say, "Blessed is he".(cp Ge 49:10) (2) Gentile world power must run its course (Lu 21:24+; Da 7:21,22<sup>+</sup>, cp Da 2:34, 35<sup>+</sup>). (3) the elect number of Gentiles and Jews must be brought into the Church (Acts 15:13-18+). Then "the Deliverer will come from Zion," etc. (Ro 11:25-27<sup>+</sup>).

**Leon Wood** agrees that "The language would appear to reach into the [Millennium](#), when the Israelites will indeed repent before God and seek his face (cf. Hosea 1:10-11; Hos 2:14-23)." (Expositor's Bible Commentary)

**David Hubbard** - The sequence of divine judgment is noteworthy: (1) Ephraim and Judah are chastened with a purulent disease because of their civil war (v. 12); (2) they turn not to God but to Assyria for healing—and in vain (v. 13); (3) God's response to their entanglements is even more ferocious—he tears them beyond repair and drags them away from all rescue (v. 14); and (4) then, as a lion retires to his lair, he withdraws (cf. on 5:6) to wait for their distress to prod them to repentance (v. 15). (Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries – Hosea)

**They acknowledge their guilt and seek My face** - This is a prophecy that at some time in the future Israel will confess her sin and seek her Messiah. The Hebrew for **acknowledge guilt** is *asham* which the **Septuagint** translates with the verb [aphanizo](#) which means to obliterate, to vanish, to disappear which suggest the picture of her guilt "vanishing" because it had been in effect laid upon Jesus Who paid the price in full at Calvary.

## PROPHECY OF AFFLICTION

**In their affliction they will earnestly seek Me** - This will be fulfilled just prior to the return of their Messiah, in the horrible 3.5 year period of Jacob's trouble (Jer 30:7+), the [Great Tribulation](#) that the Lord Jesus warned them about beginning in Mt 24:15+ and specifically named in Mt 24:21+. Then they will respond according to Zech 12:10+, and Dan 12:10+ ("Many will be purged, purified and refined...").

As **John Phillips** says "It has been a long wait and although God has revealed Himself in Christ, Israel still has not turned to Him." (Exploring the Minor Prophets: An Expository Commentary)

**Affliction** ([06862](#))([tsar](#) from [tsarar](#) = to bind, be restricted or cramped) literally indicates narrowness as of a narrow space vividly depicted when the Angel of the Lord confronted Balaam and stood in such a narrow space that Balaam could not pass by (Nu 22:26). **Tsar** is used figuratively of the personal anguish one encounters in adverse circumstances. **Tsar** is used in a parallel prophetic passage in Dt 4:30+

"When you are in distress and all these things have come upon you, in the latter days you will return to the LORD your God and listen to His voice.

In the [Septuagint \(Lxx\)](#) translation, the Greek word for **affliction** ([tsar](#)) in Hosea 5:15 and **distress** ([tsar](#)) in Deut 4:30 is [thlipsis](#) which literally describes a pressing together, but figuratively as in the prophecies in Hosea and Deuteronomy refers to trouble that inflicts **distress**. In this case it will **distress** on the entire nation of Israel in the future [Great Tribulation](#). Thus it should come as no surprise that [thlipsis](#) is used by Jesus to describe the [Great Tribulation](#) (*thlipsis megale*) in Mt 24:21+ where Jesus warned His Jewish audience "For then there will be a **great tribulation**, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will."

In summary, the 3.5 year period of the [Great Tribulation](#) is the same period of affliction/distress described in Hosea 5:15 ("**In their affliction**"), in Jeremiah 30:7+ ("the **time of Jacob's distress**") and in Daniel 12:1+ ("there will be a **time of distress** [again the [Lxx](#) uses [thlipsis](#)] such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time").

### Related Resource:

- [Daniel's seventieth week](#) - last half or 3.5 year = [Great Tribulation](#).
- Commentary on Matthew 24:15
- Commentary on Matthew 24:21
- Commentary on Deuteronomy 4:30
- Commentary on Jeremiah 30:7
- Commentary on Daniel 12:1

As **Robert Chisholm** (Bible Knowledge Commentary) points out this passage begins one of the "salvation" cycles in Hosea. Here are all 5 cycles as deduced by Dr Chisholm...

CYCLES OF JUDGMENT AND SALVATION IN HOSEA	
JUDGMENT	SALVATION
Hosea 1:2-9	Hosea 1:10-2:1
Hosea 2:2-13	Hosea 2:14-3:5

Hosea 4:1-5:14	Hosea 5:15-6:3
Hosea 6:4-11:7	Hosea 11:8-11
Hosea 11:12-13:16	Hosea 14:1-9