

# Hosea 5:1-15

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.**

1. Three groups are called out (similar to the beginning of chapter 4 in 4:1):
  - a. Priests
  - b. “House of Israel” likely refers to the elite people, which is the ruling class assisting the priesthood and the government to oppress the middle class into poverty.
    - i. This matches the situation in Jeremiah 2:26 -  
“As a thief is disgraced when he is caught,  
so the people of Israel are disgraced—  
they, their kings and their officials,  
their priests and their prophets.”
  - c. Royal Family (literally: “house of king”)
2. Each is given an imperative (command):
  - a. Hear
  - b. Pay attention
  - c. Give ear
3. “For the judgment is for you” is literally “for the judgment belongs to you.”
  - a. This could be YHWH saying you have the power of temporal judgment, but have misused it, so judgment will come on you.
  - b. The common people are still responsible for following the corrupt leadership, but the judgment is on the leaders.
4. Locations:
  - a. Snare at Mizpah (in Benjamin 6 miles north of Jerusalem or Gilead)
    - i. Many Astarte figurines from this time period have been excavated at Bethel in Benjamin
  - b. Net on Mount Tabor 12 miles SW of Sea of Galilee. Likely site of a high place

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

1. “the rebels are deep in slaughter” is based on a hypothetical translation of unusual Hebrew words and structure. A better translation could be “and a pit they have dug for Shittim”. This would add to the previous verse of Mizpah, Tabor:
  - a. Snare at Mizpah
  - b. Net at Mount Tabor
  - c. Pit at Shittim – which was Moses final camping site before Israel crossed the Jordan. This is Tall el-Hammam that is being excavated today (Sodom)
2. “Revolters” or “Rebels” who have rebelled against God have gone to extreme lengths to slaughter God’s people
3. “I will discipline all of them”
  - a. Could be translated “But I am fetters for all of them”.

- i. This would make sense with the imagery of snare, net and pit already used.
- ii. Fetters implies captivity, deportation
- b. Discipline is promised to the priests, the society and the royal family

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

- 1. YHWH “knows” Ephraim’s (or, Israel’s) sin...they “played the whore”
- 2. Israel’s deeds are not hidden from YHWH...they have been defiled

**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.**

- 1. “Deeds” reflect the heart. And, the heart or “spirit” is filled with “whoredom”
- 2. The Lord’s Word, ways, character is not in their heart because “they know not the Lord.”
- 3. Result: They cannot return to the Lord because their deeds which reflect the condition of the heart is not able to return or repent or to respond to the Lord

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

- 1. “The pride” was the idols and the false realities which:
  - a. Testify in front of them
  - b. Cause them to stumble:
    - i. Israel
    - ii. Ephraim
    - iii. Judah
  - c. This means the error of the leadership will be evident to all. Their “arrogance” in their error will be proven to be indeed a mistake.

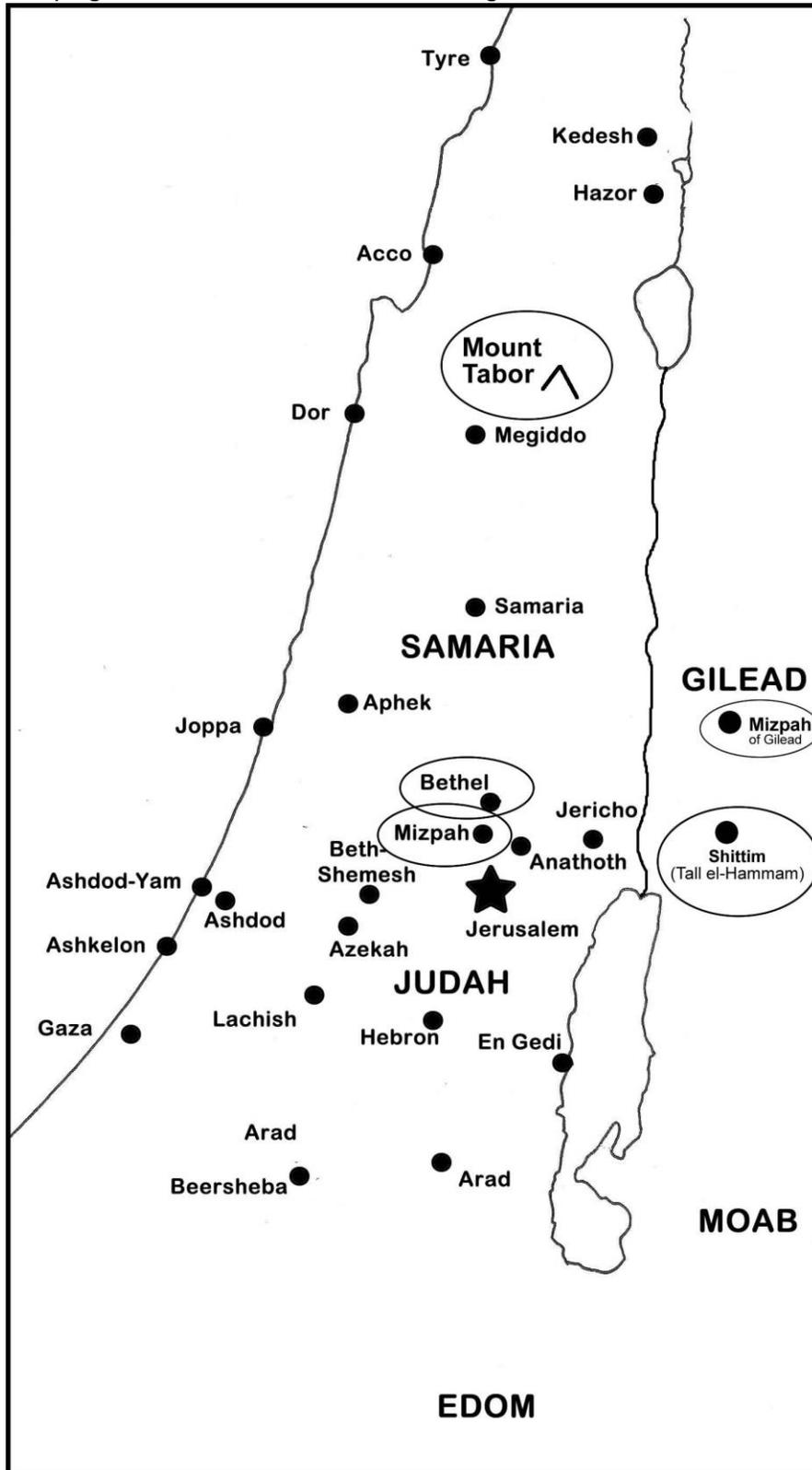
**5:6 – “With their flocks and herds they shall go  
to seek the Lord,  
but they will not find him;  
he has withdrawn from them.**

- 1. “with their flocks and herds” means Israel pursues the Lord as if he were a pagan deity seeking to be pleased.
  - a. YHWH is not served like idols or demons
  - b. The Lord wants worshippers to reflect his character
- 2. Israel will not find the Lord because:
  - a. They are seeking him as if he were a pagan deity. They do not know his ways.
  - b. YHWH has “withdrawn from them” and is no longer available for them

**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.**

- 1. “unfaithful” – *bagad* – “to act treacherously or deceitfully” which is used to refer to an unfaithful wife.
- 2. “alien” or “illegitimate” – *zar* – literally means “strange” children. This could refer to:

- a. A generation of unbelievers who do not know the God of their fathers. These children were raised by their unbelieving parents.
  - b. Child conceived during sexual fertility rites performed while worshipping idols
3. "New Moon" is the word "month" – *hodes* – which refers to the monthly sacrifices to the YHWH that had been paganized and were now meaningless rituals



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

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

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

**5:11 – “Ephraim is oppressed, crushed in judgment,  
because he was determined to go after filth.**

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

**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.**

**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.**

**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.**