

5:1-2

“Hear this, O priests! Take heed, O house of Israel! Give ear, O house of the king! For yours is the judgment, who owns this calamity? The priests! Because you have been a snare to Mizpah And a net spread on Tabor.

As Mizpah and Tabor mean a “watch tower,” and a “lofty place,” a fit scene for hunters, playing on the words, the prophet implies, in the lofty place in which I have set you, whereas ye ought to have been the watchers of the people, guarding them from evil, ye have been as hunters entrapping them into it.¹ These two places are specified, Mizpah in the east and Tabor in the west, to include the high places throughout the whole kingdom, in which Israel’s rulers set up idolatrous altars.²

5:3-7

3 I know Ephraim, And Israel is not hidden from Me; For now, O Ephraim, you commit harlotry; a repetition of the them introduced in 4:17.

Israel is defiled. 4 “They do not direct their deeds toward turning to their God, To what degree this Scripture played in Paul’s words of Acts 20:28, it would be interesting to tell. **For the spirit of harlotry carried on from 4:12 is in their midst...5 The pride of Israel testifies to his face; Therefore Israel and Ephraim stumble in their iniquity; Judah also stumbles with them.** A prophecy of the impressionable Judah begins. **6 “With their flocks and herds They shall go to seek the LORD, But they will not find Him; He has withdrawn Himself from them.** Proverbs 1:25-28 speaks of this in deep measure. Consider also the Song of Solomon 5:1-3. This is also a theme carried through in the life of Esau (Hebrews 12). **7 They have dealt treacherously with the LORD, For they have begotten pagan children.** Offspring of adulterous relationships become binding covenants and entangling relationships which foster idolatry and last for generations. **Now a New Moon shall devour them and their heritage.** **New Moons** introduce new months—which imply months which have just passed. Could it be that there were deadlines they missed and loans came due?

5:8-15

“Blow the ram’s horn in Gibeah, The trumpet in Ramah! Cry aloud at Beth Aven, Introduced in chapter 4 with a warning to not approach this town appears to be an acknowledgement that they have indeed done so. **‘Look behind you, O Benjamin!’** a lesser section of the southern kingdom?

13 “When Ephraim saw his sickness, And Judah saw his wound, Is this my linkage to Mark? Is Mark 8:31 an ultimate fulfillment to “Judah’s wound?” **Then Ephraim went ⁹to Assyria And sent to King Jareb; Yet he cannot cure you, Nor heal you of your wound.** Then who can heal Judah’s wound? Perhaps the close proximity to Hosea 6:1-2 is the license. **14 For I will be like a lion to Ephraim,** After all, being a moth which simply bothers you a little didn’t work (5:12).

¹Apparently the words of Jerome, says the commentator.

²Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, [*Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*](#), vol. 1 (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), 653–654.

⁹2 Kings 15:19

And like a young lion to the house of Judah. ^sI, even I, will tear them and go away; Here we find a great connection with Mark 12:1-9 where God the Father goes away and sends many in his stead on the way to sending His own heir/son.³ It ends when He approaches like a lion and tears up the city. **I will take them away, and no one shall rescue. 15 I will return again to My place** echoing verse 6.

^sPsalm 50:22; See appendix B of my commentary on the Gospel of Matthew for an overview of this wonderful Psalm.

³Also seen in Hebrews 1:1-2.