

-- because seeking political aid won't help them (vv. 13-15)

^{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. 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. ¹⁵ I will return again to my place, until they acknowledge their guilt and seek my face, and in their distress earnestly seek me.

“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.”

“For **I will be like** a lion to **Ephraim**, and 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.”

“**I** will return again to my place, until **they** acknowledge their guilt and seek my face and in their distress earnestly seek me.”

desolation...punishment...wrath

oppressed...crushed...judgment

moth...dry rot

sickness...wound...cure...heal

lion...young lion...tear...carry off

- God's perspective vs their perspective
- God's standing vs their standing
- Their response vs God's response

Sunday, February 22, 2026
Danny Capon, *Pastor*

Hosea—Faithless People Faithful God
No. 11 | God's Contention with Israel—
The Princes and the People, pt. 4
Hosea 5:8-15

Review

The Book of Hosea: (1) It is the first book of the minor prophets in the Old Testament (starting on page 751 in the ESV Pew Bible); (2) It recounts the “word of the LORD” to Hosea, a man who served as a prophet in deed and in word; (3) His prophetic ministry was most immediately to the northern kingdom of Israel (Samaria), then to the southern kingdom of Judah (Jerusalem); (4) He began his prophetic ministry likely shortly before Jeroboam II died (753 BC) and concluded shortly after Hezekiah began to reign (729 BC).



The Book of Hosea is about the *faithlessness* of God's people and his *faithfulness* to them, illustrated most poignantly through marital (in)fidelity.

God's Contention with Israel—Princes and People, pt. 4

5:8-15

^{ESV} **Hosea 4:1** Hear the word of the LORD, O children of Israel, for the LORD has a **controversy** with the inhabitants of the land.

What is the “**controversy**” (contention) God has with Israel?

^{ESV} **Hosea 1:2** "...the land commits great whoredom by forsaking the LORD."

^{ESV} **Hosea 3:1** "...the children of Israel...turn to other gods and love cakes of raisins."

^{ESV} **Hosea 4:** ¹ There is **no** faithfulness or steadfast love, and no knowledge of God in the land; ² there is swearing, lying, murder, stealing, and committing adultery; they break all bounds, and bloodshed follows bloodshed.

How does God's contention with Israel (4:1-3) relate to 4:4-7:16?

God's contention with Israel (4:1-3)

Against the priests and people—the religious life of Israel (4:4-5:7)

Against the princes and people—the political life of Israel (5:8-7:16)

God tells Israel to listen up because he has a contention against them, which also includes the princes and the people.

Approach

V. 8 indicates a shift in the LORD's contention against Israel—whereas he had primarily been addressing the *religious* faithlessness of Israel in the verses just prior, now he will be primarily addressing the *political* faithlessness of Israel.

Politically...

- **the princes and the people should expect conflict** (5:8-15)

How should they expect political (national) conflict?

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

What is going on in v. 8?

“Blow the horn...the trumpet... Sound the alarm”

“in Gibeah...Ramah... at Beth-aven”

Gibeah

Judges 19-20 (the city of Gibeah, the tribe of Benjamin)
1 Samuel 10 (Saul, Israel’s first king, was from Gibeah)
Hosea 9:9; 10:9 (“the days of Gibeah”)

Ramah

1 Samuel 7 (Samuel, Israel’s last judge, was from Ramah)

Beth-aven

Hosea 4:15 (likely, a pejorative nickname for Bethel)

“We follow you, O Benjamin!” (or, “Watch your back, Ben!”)

All three cities were Benjamite cities
All three cities were, from south to north, along a major route
All three cities were considered, at different times, a part of the northern kingdom then a part of the southern kingdom

^{ESV} **Judges 5:14** From Ephraim their root they marched down into the valley, following you, Benjamin, with your kinsmen...

In other words, Israel (and Judah), be advised—you better muster your troops, for you’re going to have a hard time standing!

What is the historical situation surrounding this verse and passage?

Israel (northern kingdom) + Judah (southern kingdom)

Syria (Damascus) + Assyria (Nineveh) + Egypt + (Others)

Jehoash (c. 798-782 BC), 2 Kings 14:8-16 | Judah against Israel

Menahem (c. 752-742 BC), 2 Kings 15:16, 17-22 | Israel tributes Assyria

Pekah (c. 752-732 BC), 2 Kings 16:1-18 | Israel + Syria against Judah

The Syro-Ephraimite War (c. 734-732 BC)

Hosea (c. 732-722 BC), 2 Kings 15:30; 17:1-6 | Israel tributes Assyria + Egypt

Hosea 5:8f could be anticipating (or reflecting on) either the events surrounding (1) **Menahem** giving “Pul (Tiglath-pileser III, king of Assyria) a thousand talents of silver, that he might help him to confirm his hold on the royal power” (2 Kgs 15:19), or the events surrounding (2) **Pekah** allying with Syria (Rezin, king of Syria) “to wage war on Jerusalem” while Ahaz sought Assyria for help (2 Kgs 16:1-9).

“The disastrous policies of the Israelite kings, both in looking outwardly to foreign powers as well as yielding inwardly to socio-religious compromise, eventually led to the destruction and exile of Samaria in 722 BCE.” (Hwang, p. 31)

Why should they expect political (national) conflict?

-- **because politically they deserve judgment** (vv. 9-12)

^{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. ¹⁰ The princes of Judah have become like those who move the landmark; upon them I will pour out my wrath like water. ¹¹ Ephraim is oppressed, crushed in judgment, because he was determined to go after filth. ¹² But I am like a moth to Ephraim, and like dry rot to the house of Judah.

Note: Ephraim (the northern kingdom) and Judah (the southern kingdom)

“**Ephraim** shall become a desolation in the day of punishment...”

What’s going to happen and what does it mean?

“...among the tribes of Israel **I** make known what is sure.”

Who’s ultimately behind what’s going to happen and will it happen?

“The princes of **Judah** have become like those who move the landmark...”

“...upon them **I** will pour out my wrath like water.”

“**Ephraim** is oppressed, crushed in judgment, because he was determined to go after filth.”

“But **I am like** a moth to **Ephraim**, and like dry rot to the house of **Judah**.”