

“All the Prophets Testify”: Hosea 5:1-7

Midweek Bible Study – 2026 September 23

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<https://www.pilgrimlc.org/bible-studies/prophets>

Invocation & Opening Prayer

Follow-up to last class: pace, depth, other comments or questions?

Outline (the following is from *TLSB* p.1428; we are listing the major divisions and will expand/collapse them as we proceed through them [we previously noted possible alternate explanations for the arrangement, such as *CSSB* p.1351, and *God’s Word for Today*, p.3]):

- I. Superscription (1:1)
- II. Hosea’s Personal Issues as Prophecies (1:2-3:5)
- III. Various Oracles (4:1-14:9)
 - A. Yahweh’s Lawsuit against Israel (4:1-19)
 - B. Court Called to Order (5:1-7)**
 - C. Warfare and False Repentance (5:8-6:6)
 - D. Israel’s Guilt Congenital, but Not Incurable (6:7-11)
 - E. Israel Becomes like All Nations in Apostasy and Judgment (7:1-16)
 - F. Sow the Wind, Reap the Whirlwind (8:1-14)
 - G. Days of Festival and Punishment (9:1-17)
 - H. Israel’s Utter Destruction (10:1-15)
 - I. Possibility of “Second Exodus” (1:1-11)
 - J. Israel as Deceiver (11:12-13:1)
 - K. Israel’s Final Judgment (13:2-16)
 - L. Promise of Restoration (14:1-9)

Court Called to Order (5:1-7; we might discuss the extent to which this subheading is accurate and/or useful, for example, Roehrs-Franzmann titles it “The Guilt of the Guardians of Justice”; a different example, Keil-Delitzsch divides the strophes differently vv.1-5 and vv.6-10):

5:1 *Hear this, O priests! Pay attention, O house of Israel Give ear, O house of the king!:*
Keil-Delitzsch says “Hear this” is a new start of the reproof of Israel’s sins, though the following prophecy is said to be connected to the preceding one (Golden points back to the use of the verb in 4:1 and notes the two equivalent expressions used in this verse). Golden says “this” is “the judgment” that follows. A representative priest was addressed beginning in 4:4 and may have been expanded out to all religious rulers in 4:8. Similarly, 4:12-19 addressed the people of Israel, and now the rulers are addressed, though Golden says not dignified by being named. The “House of Israel” could be the royal house (confer Keil-Delitzsch, “the king and his court”), through Roehrs-Franzmann refers to the “elders of the community” especially “in their capacity as administrators of justice” (a view Keil-Delitzsch rejects), and Kretzmann, Laetsch (who notes the central position), and *CSSB* take it as the Israelites, and *CSSB* comments that “The three groups addressed were all responsible for maintaining justice, but it miscarried at their hands.” The secular rulers were mentioned in 4:18 and now seem to be more-directly the target of the prophecy. Golden discusses the emphasis on them in the Hebrew construction.

For the judgment is for you: Both uses of “you” in 5:1 are masculine plural. *TLSB* comments, “Israel’s religious and political leaders will be held particularly responsible. The sentences they ought to have meted out to the wayward ones committed to their care will be laid on them.” Keil-Delitzsch sees the judgment as related to Israel’s apostasy from God and idolatry, though admittedly the miscarriage of justice arguably follows from those same sins. Regardless, the judgment seems to relate to the case that is being made as the “Court is Called to Order”.

for you have been a snare at Mizpah and a net spread upon Tabor: Regarding the “snare” and “net”, Keil-Delitzsch says, “it can only be the rulers of the nation who are represented as trap and net, and the birds must denote the people generally who are enticed into the net of destruction and caught”. *CSSB* comments, “Devices for catching animals and birds, here used as metaphors for those who by economic and legal devices took cruel advantage of innocent people.” Regarding the locations, Keil-Delitzsch thinks of Mizpah of Gilead and Tabor as representing the land west and east of the Jordan, both “particularly adapted for bird-catching” and further says, “The supposition that they had been used as places of sacrifice in connection with idolatrous worship, cannot be inferred from the verse before us, nor is it rendered probable by other passages.” Nevertheless, *TLSB* comments simply, “Locations of pagan shrines” (confer Laetsch). *CSSB* notes that Mizpah could be either in Gilead east of the Jordan or in Benjamin and that Tabor was “A mountain at the southeastern edge of the Jezreel Valley.” *CSSB* comments, “Reference must have been to well-known events that illustrated Israel’s corruption.” Roehrs-Franzmann is similar regarding the references’ obscurity but nevertheless summarizes, “the guardians of justice have become hunters of men who entrap...those whom they should guard and preserve.” Golden sees Mizpah and Tabor as geographic references significant in the development of the monarchy in Israel: Mizpah as where Samuel named Saul as the first king (1 Samuel 10:17-27), and Tabor as a place where Saul was instructed to wait for three men of God to supply him with provisions (1 Samuel 10:3).

5:2 *And the revolvers have gone deep into slaughter:* Laetsch says, “The rebellious nations together with their priests and kings went to great lengths in their wickedness...Murder was an everyday occurrence.” *TLSB* explains, “Hbr *setim*, difficult to translate. Means ‘mutineers’ or ‘rebels,’ but may also refer to Shittim (near the mouth of the Jordan River), where Israel agreed to serve Baal of Peor (Nu 25:1-4; cf. Hos 9:10); Shittim would join Mizpah and Tabor (v 1) as the third site of Israelite apostasy.” Golden and others reject that approach to the text and its interpretation. Keil-Delitzsch notes the difficulty of the first half of the verse and suggests the translation “they understand from the very foundations how to spread out transgressions” or “They have deepened to stretch out excesses”, that is, “they have gone to great lengths, or are deeply sunken in excesses”, which Keil-Delitzsch describes is “a thought quite in harmony with the context, to which the threat is appended” as follows in the next half of the verse. Kretzmann follows that line of translation, commenting, “the leaders, in their open rebellion against the Lord[,] have carried their transgressions to extremes and beyond”. Golden does not think the text needs to be emended and takes the reference as to the rebels waging war against Jerusalem in 2 Kings 16:5.

But I will discipline all of them: If indeed the secular rulers are being criticized for their failure to discipline the people, then God through Hosea is emphasizing His intent to discipline them Himself. (Perhaps compare not punishing the daughters and brides back in 4:14?) *CSSB* notes that “discipline” is “A significant word in the prophets for God’s corrective action against his people.” Kretzmann, like the KJV has, “I have been a rebuker of them all”, and refers to past admonitions to bring the people “back to the right way”. Golden mentions Isaiah 53:5 where the “chastisement” is laid upon the Suffering Servant and brings us peace.

5:3 *I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hidden from me; for now, O Ephraim, you have played the whore; Israel is defiled:* as at 4:17, *TLSB* again refers to Ephraim as “Strongest of the 10 northern tribes; stands as an embodiment of Israel” (confer 5:5). Golden says the two are synonyms or near synonyms, with Ephraim perhaps having political connotations and so referring more to the leadership of the northern kingdom. The Lord knows Ephraim/Israel as the Lord also knows each one of us. Again whoredom/defilement (the NIV translates “turned to prostitution”) is central to the prophetic complaint and continues in what follows. In this case, Golden includes in the whoring the rulers’ “reliance on an allegiance with Damascus rather than on Yahweh to fend off the Assyrian threat.” Also in what follows, the Lord’s knowledge of Israel/Ephraim seems to be contrasted with the people’s lack of knowledge of the Lord (confer, for example, Golden). Finally, Hosea 5:3-4 is thought by some to be in view in Revelation 7:6, where 12,000 people are being sealed from each of the tribes of Asher, Naphtali, and Manasseh and Ephraim is not named, though Joseph is in Revelation 7:8.

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:* Keil-Delitzsch comments, “Their works do not allow them to return to their God, because their works are merely an emanation of the character and state of the heart, and in their hearts the demon of whoredom has its seat (cf. ch. iv. 12), and the knowledge of the Lord is wanting; that is to say, the demoniacal power of idolatry has taken complete possession of the heart, and stifled the knowledge of the true God.” *TLSB* comments, “Though the Lord has already tried to rescue His people and stands ready to forgive (e.g., 2:14-23), Israel remains immersed in rebellion.” *CSSB* comments, “Persistent sin can make repentance impossible”, though care needs to be taken in understanding that comment correctly. Maybe a distinction between “ongoing” as an unbroken line and “repeated” as a dashed or dotted line is helpful? True repentance includes a turning in sorrow from sin, and the Holy Spirit can lead anyone to be contrite over any sin and to trust God to forgive any sin, which He will do when the sinner is repentant. We often persist in sin or sin repeatedly in the same ways but can be genuinely repentant in between/after each occurrence of the sin. Self examination and the examination of private Confession and individual Absolution can be helpful in this regard. Certainly instead of sorrow over the sin, the next verses can be taken to suggest there is pride over the sin (confer Roehrs-Franzmann).

5:5 *The pride of Israel testifies to his face*: for “to his face”, the ESV text notes provides the alternate translation “in his presence”. The Hebrew *ga’own* that the ESV translates as “pride” can refer to God by his “pride/majesty/excellency” (confer Keil-Delitzsch; Golden calls the Lord the “proper locus of Israel’s pride” but does not think that Israel’s pride in this verse is proper). *TLSB* notes of “pride”, “‘Majesty’ or ‘excellence,’ but also pride in the negative sense (e.g., Ps 59:12; Pr 8:13; Is 16:6)” (the NIV translates “Israel’s arrogance”). Roehrs-Franzmann refers to “the cultural, political, and ‘religious’ successes and attainments of which Israel was proud.” Regarding “his face” (or “presence”), *TLSB* notes, “Israel makes no attempt to hide willful sin from God; we might call this sin ‘bald-faced.’” Perhaps whether “the pride of Israel” refers to God or to Israel itself determines whether “his face” or “his presence” refers to the other, that is, to Israel’s face/presence or to God’s face/presence, although Golden renders, “Israel’s pride testifies against him”. Regarding “testifies”, *CSSB* comments, “In the case God presented against his people”.

Israel and Ephraim shall stumble in his guilt: back in 4:5 priest and prophet were described as stumbling day and night. Regarding stumbling, *CSSB* says simply, “Experience calamity”. Laetsch is a little more descriptive, “fall, reel, stagger, crash to the ground because of their guilt”. Golden and others discuss the use of the prophetic perfect tense indicating that future content is certain. Regarding “his guilt, *TLSB* comments, “Singular. Includes all the people of the wayward tribes.” The singular collective may become the plural “them” in what follows.

Judah also shall stumble with them: Judah was mentioned in 4:15 as Israel was told not to let Judah become guilty (we remember that at this time Judah may have been a vassal kingdom of Israel, and Golden discusses other political machinations related to the inclusion of Judah at this point in the prophecy). The plural “them” seems to refer to the plural people of Israel, not necessarily to Israel and Ephraim, as if they are referring to different people (though to some extent compare Golden). Roehrs-Franzmann comments, “Judah will not heed the prophet’s warning (4:15) and shall share Ephraim’s fate.”

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*: regarding the seeking, *CSSB* says, “Go to him with prayer and sacrifices” and further explains, “The Lord would be ‘found’ by Israel only when she turned to him with integrity of heart”. Similar is Roehrs-Franzmann, who comments, “they seek the Lord with offerings...but not with their hearts”. *TLSB* comments, “Israel might halfheartedly try to appease God, but He will not be deceived (cf 1 Sm 15:10-23).” This past Sunday the Old Testament Reading from Isaiah 55:6 said to seek the Lord while He may be found, to call upon Him while He is near. We remember that the day of grace can pass for an individual or people, though, in this case, regarding “withdrawn”, *TLSB* comments, “Though God promises that He will eventually gather and restore His people (2:14-23; 11:8-9; 14:4-7), He will remain withdrawn from them so long as they remain rebellious. This recalls not only the name of Hosea’s children (No Mercy and Not My People) but also other threats of withdrawal (e.g., Dt 31:16-18).”

5:7 *They have dealt faithlessly with the Lord; for they have borne alien children*: Golden says the plural subject “They” is Israel, Ephraim, and Judah. Regarding dealing faithlessly, Keil-Delitzsch notes the verb “is frequently applied to the infidelity of a wife towards her husband” and so “points to the conjugal relation in which Israel stood to Jehovah. Hence the figure which follows.” Thus, regarding the “alien children”, Keil-Delitzsch says they “do not belong to the home”, that is, are “such as have not sprung from the conjugal union”, making them “an adulterous generation” (presumably confer Jesus’s use of the expression in Matthew 12:39; 16:4). Kretzmann refers to the children “as though by illicit intercourse with idols”. Roehrs-Franzmann says, “Since they have broken the covenant...their children do not come under the blessings of the covenant; they are ‘Not my people,’ no longer ‘sons of the living God.’” *CSSB* explains, “Children they had prayed to the Baals for and had credited to their fertility rites”. *TLSB* comments, “Those who have abandoned the Lord and sacrificed to Baal have relinquished their birthright. This again recalls the symbolic name of Hosea’s second son (Not My People).” Luther and *GWfT* refer to bringing up children “in an atmosphere of idolatry”. Golden refers to Hosea’s call to have children of whoredom in 1:2 and discusses the passage in its context referring to political alliances in the northern and southern kingdom producing foreign sons in them.

Now the new moon shall devour them with their fields: Golden says the syntax literally is “them—their”, as an appositive, not a compound object. *TLSB* somewhat obviously notes, “New moon sacrifices are equated with impending judgment.” *CSSB* somewhat more-helpfully suggests that the New Moon, “Usually a festive occasion” now would be “a time of judgment” or that “one month would be sufficient to accomplish their punishment.” Laetsch mentions the change of the observance of the Passover by one month. Roehrs-Franzmann refers to the New Moon as an example of their religious observance that does not save but destroys them. Similarly, Keil-Delitzsch paraphrases, “your sacrificial feast, your hypocritical worship, so far from bringing you salvation, will rather prove your ruin”. Similarly, Golden refers to the new moon festival described in Numbers 28:11-15 as being misused in Hosea’s time and serving poetic justice by consuming the Israelites. Keil-Delitzsch further explains that the “fields” are “the hereditary portions of Israel, the portions of land that fell to the different families and households, and from the produce of which they offered sacrifices to the Lord.” Kretzmann warns us, “Many a person will find that his self-appointed worship of God will bring down upon him the wrath of the Lord instead of His mercy.”

What are you taking home from the prophecy considered tonight?

TLSB’s Law and Gospel Application Note for Hosea chapter 5 (1-7 and 8-15) says, “God warns Israel and Judah that putting their hope in foreign kings is useless. As long as they continue in idolatry, they may seek God, but they will not find Him; only in repentance can they be healed. We similarly try to play both sides of the fence, claiming to be children of God while living as friends of the world. It is a great comfort, therefore, to know that the Lord stands as near as the word of Absolution.” (Again, we might note the connection between repentance and that Absolution.)

Golden notes that “The political scaffolding of ancient Israel and Judah has fallen away”, that Christ’s “kingly rule includes his oversight of earthly authorities, whether or not those authorities confess him.” Golden says Christians should engage in the civil realm but not pin our hopes on a particular candidate. We should seek those committed to things such as God’s created order, pray for them, and maybe engage in working with them, but not place our hope for the future on them and so not lose heart when they stumble and fall. Golden also discusses allegiances such as a congregation’s membership in a synod that can prove to be unwise.

Next time, September 30, Hosea 5:8-6:6

Closing Prayer & Benediction

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What are you taking home from the prophecy considered tonight?

TLSB’s Law and Gospel Application Note for Hosea chapter 5 (1-7 and 8-15) says, “God warns Israel and Judah that putting their hope in foreign kings is useless. As long as they continue in idolatry, they may seek God, but they will not find Him; only in repentance can they be healed. We similarly try to play both sides of the fence, claiming to be children of God while living as friends of the world. It is a great comfort, therefore, to know that the Lord stands as near as the word of Absolution.” (Again, we might note the connection between repentance and that Absolution.)

Golden notes that “The political scaffolding of ancient Israel and Judah has fallen away”, that Christ’s “kingly rule includes his oversight of earthly authorities, whether or not those authorities confess him.” Golden says Christians should engage in the civil realm but not pin our hopes on a particular candidate. We should seek those committed to things such as God’s created order, pray for them, and maybe engage in working with them, but not place our hope for the future on them and so not lose heart when they stumble and fall. Golden also discusses allegiances such as a congregation’s membership in a synod that can prove to be unwise.

Next time, September 30, Hosea 5:8-6:6

Closing Prayer & Benediction

“All the Prophets Testify”: Hosea 5:1-7

Midweek Bible Study – 2026 September 23

Rev. Dr. Jayson S. Galler, Pastor, Pilgrim Lutheran Church, Kilgore, TX

<https://www.pilgrimlc.org/bible-studies/prophets>

Invocation & Opening Prayer

Follow-up to last class: pace, depth, other comments or questions?

Outline (the following is from *TLSB* p.1428; we are listing the major divisions and will expand/collapse them as we proceed through them [we previously noted possible alternate explanations for the arrangement, such as *CSSB* p.1351, and *God’s Word for Today*, p.3]):

- I. Superscription (1:1)
- II. Hosea’s Personal Issues as Prophecies (1:2-3:5)
- III. Various Oracles (4:1-14:9)
 - A. Yahweh’s Lawsuit against Israel (4:1-19)
 - B. Court Called to Order (5:1-7)**
 - C. Warfare and False Repentance (5:8-6:6)
 - D. Israel’s Guilt Congenital, but Not Incurable (6:7-11)
 - E. Israel Becomes like All Nations in Apostasy and Judgment (7:1-16)
 - F. Sow the Wind, Reap the Whirlwind (8:1-14)
 - G. Days of Festival and Punishment (9:1-17)
 - H. Israel’s Utter Destruction (10:1-15)
 - I. Possibility of “Second Exodus” (1:1-11)
 - J. Israel as Deceiver (11:12-13:1)
 - K. Israel’s Final Judgment (13:2-16)
 - L. Promise of Restoration (14:1-9)

Court Called to Order (5:1-7; we might discuss the extent to which this subheading is accurate and/or useful, for example, Roehrs-Franzmann titles it “The Guilt of the Guardians of Justice”; a different example, Keil-Delitzsch divides the strophes differently vv.1-5 and vv.6-10):

5:1 *Hear this, O priests! Pay attention, O house of Israel Give ear, O house of the king!:*
Keil-Delitzsch says “Hear this” is a new start of the reproof of Israel’s sins, though the following prophecy is said to be connected to the preceding one (Golden points back to the use of the verb in 4:1 and notes the two equivalent expressions used in this verse). Golden says “this” is “the judgment” that follows. A representative priest was addressed beginning in 4:4 and may have been expanded out to all religious rulers in 4:8. Similarly, 4:12-19 addressed the people of Israel, and now the rulers are addressed, though Golden says not dignified by being named. The “House of Israel” could be the royal house (confer Keil-Delitzsch, “the king and his court”), through Roehrs-Franzmann refers to the “elders of the community” especially “in their capacity as administrators of justice” (a view Keil-Delitzsch rejects), and Kretzmann, Laetsch (who notes the central position), and *CSSB* take it as the Israelites, and *CSSB* comments that “The three groups addressed were all responsible for maintaining justice, but it miscarried at their hands.” The secular rulers were mentioned in 4:18 and now seem to be more-directly the target of the prophecy. Golden discusses the emphasis on them in the Hebrew construction.

For the judgment is for you: Both uses of “you” in 5:1 are masculine plural. *TLSB* comments, “Israel’s religious and political leaders will be held particularly responsible. The sentences they ought to have meted out to the wayward ones committed to their care will be laid on them.” Keil-Delitzsch sees the judgment as related to Israel’s apostasy from God and idolatry, though admittedly the miscarriage of justice arguably follows from those same sins. Regardless, the judgment seems to relate to the case that is being made as the “Court is Called to Order”.

for you have been a snare at Mizpah and a net spread upon Tabor: Regarding the “snare” and “net”, Keil-Delitzsch says, “it can only be the rulers of the nation who are represented as trap and net, and the birds must denote the people generally who are enticed into the net of destruction and caught”. *CSSB* comments, “Devices for catching animals and birds, here used as metaphors for those who by economic and legal devices took cruel advantage of innocent people.” Regarding the locations, Keil-Delitzsch thinks of Mizpah of Gilead and Tabor as representing the land west and east of the Jordan, both “particularly adapted for bird-catching” and further says, “The supposition that they had been used as places of sacrifice in connection with idolatrous worship, cannot be inferred from the verse before us, nor is it rendered probable by other passages.” Nevertheless, *TLSB* comments simply, “Locations of pagan shrines” (confer Laetsch). *CSSB* notes that Mizpah could be either in Gilead east of the Jordan or in Benjamin and that Tabor was “A mountain at the southeastern edge of the Jezreel Valley.” *CSSB* comments, “Reference must have been to well-known events that illustrated Israel’s corruption.” Roehrs-Franzmann is similar regarding the references’ obscurity but nevertheless summarizes, “the guardians of justice have become hunters of men who entrap...those whom they should guard and preserve.” Golden sees Mizpah and Tabor as geographic references significant in the development of the monarchy in Israel: Mizpah as where Samuel named Saul as the first king (1 Samuel 10:17-27), and Tabor as a place where Saul was instructed to wait for three men of God to supply him with provisions (1 Samuel 10:3).

5:2 *And the revolvers have gone deep into slaughter:* Laetsch says, “The rebellious nations together with their priests and kings went to great lengths in their wickedness...Murder was an everyday occurrence.” *TLSB* explains, “Hbr *setim*, difficult to translate. Means ‘mutineers’ or ‘rebels,’ but may also refer to Shittim (near the mouth of the Jordan River), where Israel agreed to serve Baal of Peor (Nu 25:1-4; cf. Hos 9:10); Shittim would join Mizpah and Tabor (v 1) as the third site of Israelite apostasy.” Golden and others reject that approach to the text and its interpretation. Keil-Delitzsch notes the difficulty of the first half of the verse and suggests the translation “they understand from the very foundations how to spread out transgressions” or “They have deepened to stretch out excesses”, that is, “they have gone to great lengths, or are deeply sunken in excesses”, which Keil-Delitzsch describes is “a thought quite in harmony with the context, to which the threat is appended” as follows in the next half of the verse. Kretzmann follows that line of translation, commenting, “the leaders, in their open rebellion against the Lord[,] have carried their transgressions to extremes and beyond”. Golden does not think the text needs to be emended and takes the reference as to the rebels waging war against Jerusalem in 2 Kings 16:5.

But I will discipline all of them: If indeed the secular rulers are being criticized for their failure to discipline the people, then God through Hosea is emphasizing His intent to discipline them Himself. (Perhaps compare not punishing the daughters and brides back in 4:14?) *CSSB* notes that “discipline” is “A significant word in the prophets for God’s corrective action against his people.” Kretzmann, like the KJV has, “I have been a rebuker of them all”, and refers to past admonitions to bring the people “back to the right way”. Golden mentions Isaiah 53:5 where the “chastisement” is laid upon the Suffering Servant and brings us peace.

5:3 I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hidden from me; for now, O Ephraim, you have played the whore; Israel is defiled: as at 4:17, *TLSB* again refers to Ephraim as “Strongest of the 10 northern tribes; stands as an embodiment of Israel” (confer 5:5). Golden says the two are synonyms or near synonyms, with Ephraim perhaps having political connotations and so referring more to the leadership of the northern kingdom. The Lord knows Ephraim/Israel as the Lord also knows each one of us. Again whoredom/defilement (the NIV translates “turned to prostitution”) is central to the prophetic complaint and continues in what follows. In this case, Golden includes in the whoring the rulers’ “reliance on an allegiance with Damascus rather than on Yahweh to fend off the Assyrian threat.” Also in what follows, the Lord’s knowledge of Israel/Ephraim seems to be contrasted with the people’s lack of knowledge of the Lord (confer, for example, Golden). Finally, Hosea 5:3-4 is thought by some to be in view in Revelation 7:6, where 12,000 people are being sealed from each of the tribes of Asher, Naphtali, and Manasseh and Ephraim is not named, though Joseph is in Revelation 7:8.

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: Keil-Delitzsch comments, “Their works do not allow them to return to their God, because their works are merely an emanation of the character and state of the heart, and in their hearts the demon of whoredom has its seat (cf. ch. iv. 12), and the knowledge of the Lord is wanting; that is to say, the demoniacal power of idolatry has taken complete possession of the heart, and stifled the knowledge of the true God.” *TLSB* comments, “Though the Lord has already tried to rescue His people and stands ready to forgive (e.g., 2:14-23), Israel remains immersed in rebellion.” *CSSB* comments, “Persistent sin can make repentance impossible”, though care needs to be taken in understanding that comment correctly. Maybe a distinction between “ongoing” as an unbroken line and “repeated” as a dashed or dotted line is helpful? True repentance includes a turning in sorrow from sin, and the Holy Spirit can lead anyone to be contrite over any sin and to trust God to forgive any sin, which He will do when the sinner is repentant. We often persist in sin or sin repeatedly in the same ways but can be genuinely repentant in between/after each occurrence of the sin. Self examination and the examination of private Confession and individual Absolution can be helpful in this regard. Certainly instead of sorrow over the sin, the next verses can be taken to suggest there is pride over the sin (confer Roehrs-Franzmann).

5:5 *The pride of Israel testifies to his face*: for “to his face”, the ESV text notes provides the alternate translation “in his presence”. The Hebrew *ga’own* that the ESV translates as “pride” can refer to God by his “pride/majesty/excellency” (confer Keil-Delitzsch; Golden calls the Lord the “proper locus of Israel’s pride” but does not think that Israel’s pride in this verse is proper). *TLSB* notes of “pride”, “‘Majesty’ or ‘excellence,’ but also pride in the negative sense (e.g., Ps 59:12; Pr 8:13; Is 16:6)” (the NIV translates “Israel’s arrogance”). Roehrs-Franzmann refers to “the cultural, political, and ‘religious’ successes and attainments of which Israel was proud.” Regarding “his face” (or “presence”), *TLSB* notes, “Israel makes no attempt to hide willful sin from God; we might call this sin ‘bald-faced.’” Perhaps whether “the pride of Israel” refers to God or to Israel itself determines whether “his face” or “his presence” refers to the other, that is, to Israel’s face/presence or to God’s face/presence, although Golden renders, “Israel’s pride testifies against him”. Regarding “testifies”, *CSSB* comments, “In the case God presented against his people”.

Israel and Ephraim shall stumble in his guilt: back in 4:5 priest and prophet were described as stumbling day and night. Regarding stumbling, *CSSB* says simply, “Experience calamity”. Laetsch is a little more descriptive, “fall, reel, stagger, crash to the ground because of their guilt”. Golden and others discuss the use of the prophetic perfect tense indicating that future content is certain. Regarding “his guilt, *TLSB* comments, “Singular. Includes all the people of the wayward tribes.” The singular collective may become the plural “them” in what follows.

Judah also shall stumble with them: Judah was mentioned in 4:15 as Israel was told not to let Judah become guilty (we remember that at this time Judah may have been a vassal kingdom of Israel, and Golden discusses other political machinations related to the inclusion of Judah at this point in the prophecy). The plural “them” seems to refer to the plural people of Israel, not necessarily to Israel and Ephraim, as if they are referring to different people (though to some extent compare Golden). Roehrs-Franzmann comments, “Judah will not heed the prophet’s warning (4:15) and shall share Ephraim’s fate.”

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