

Hosea 10:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The inhabitants of Samaria shall fear because of the calves of Beth-aven: for the people thereof shall mourn over it, and the priests thereof that rejoiced on it, for the glory thereof, because it is departed from it.

Analysis

Fear for golden calves: 'The inhabitants of Samaria shall fear because of the calves of Beth-aven: for the people thereof shall mourn over it, and the priests thereof that rejoiced on it, for the glory thereof, because it is departed from it.' The people fear *yagur* (עֲגָלוֹת בֵּית אָוֹן, *gitor*) for the calves of Beth-aven. They mourn *aval* (אֲבָל); priests who rejoiced *gilu* (גִּלּוּ) over it lament because *kavod* (כָּבֹוד, glory) departed. This demonstrates idolatry's futility: worshiping what cannot save, grieving over powerless gods. Only the living God deserves worship; idols inevitably disappoint. Christ alone has glory that doesn't depart (John 1:14, Hebrews 1:3).

Historical Context

The 'calves of Beth-aven' references Jeroboam I's golden calves at Bethel (1 Kings 12:28-29), which Hosea mockingly calls Beth-aven ('house of wickedness,' 4:15). When Assyria conquered, these calves—symbols of Israel's apostasy—were carried off as booty. Historical records confirm Assyrians plundering temples and taking cult objects. The irony: what they trusted for protection couldn't protect itself. Priests who profited from false worship lost their livelihood. 'Glory departed' echoes 1 Samuel 4:21 (Ichabod). This demonstrates that false gods ultimately fail

their worshipers. Archaeological evidence shows temples destroyed and cult objects removed during Assyrian conquests.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does mourning over departed 'glory' of false gods demonstrate idolatry's ultimate futility?
2. What modern idols do people fear for and mourn over when they 'depart'?

Interlinear Text

שָׁמָר וְיַעֲגֹלֹת	לְעַגְלֹת	בְּ יַת	אֵל	יְהוָה	שָׁכְבָּי	שָׁכְבָּי	שָׁמָר וְיַעֲגֹלֹת
because of the calves		of Bethaven	shall fear	The inhabitants			of Samaria
H5697	H1007	H1481	H7934				H8111
עַל יְהוָה אֱבָל אֱבָל							
H3588	H5921	H5971	H3649	H5921			H5921
thereof shall mourn	for the people	over it and the priests					
H56	H5921	H5971	H3649				
עַל יְהוָה כְּבוֹד יְהוָה							
thereof that rejoiced	on it for the glory						
H1523	H3519	H3588	H1540				
מְתַפֵּן							
H4480							

Additional Cross-References

Hosea 9:11 (Glory): As for Ephraim, their glory shall fly away like a bird, from the birth, and from the womb, and from the conception.

Hosea 5:8 (Parallel theme): Blow ye the cornet in Gibeah, and the trumpet in Ramah: cry aloud at Beth-aven, after thee, O Benjamin.

Hosea 4:15 (Parallel theme): Though thou, Israel, play the harlot, yet let not Judah offend; and come not ye unto Gilgal, neither go ye up to Beth-aven, nor swear, The LORD liveth.

2 Kings 23:5 (Parallel theme): And he put down the idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah, and in the places round about Jerusalem; them also that burned incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of heaven.

Hosea 13:2 (Parallel theme): And now they sin more and more, and have made them molten images of their silver, and idols according to their own understanding, all of it the work of the craftsmen: they say of them, Let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves.

Acts 19:27 (Parallel theme): So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth.

2 Kings 10:29 (Parallel theme): Howbeit from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not from after them, to wit, the golden calves that were in Beth-el, and that were in Dan.

2 Kings 17:16 (Parallel theme): And they left all the commandments of the LORD their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal.

2 Chronicles 11:15 (Parallel theme): And he ordained him priests for the high places, and for the devils, and for the calves which he had made.

Zephaniah 1:4 (Parallel theme): I will also stretch out mine hand upon Judah, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place, and the name of the Chemarims with the priests;