

Hosea 5:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Ephraim shall be desolate in the day of rebuke: among the tribes of Israel have I made known that which shall surely be.

Analysis

Certain calamity: 'Ephraim shall be desolate in the day of rebuke: among the tribes of Israel have I made known that which shall surely be.' The declaration אֶפְרַיִם לְשָׁמָּה תִּהְיֶה (Ephraim leshamah tihyeh): 'Ephraim shall be for desolation'—absolute certainty. The 'day of rebuke' (יוֹם תּוֹכְחָה, yom tokhechah) references coming judgment. God has 'made known that which shall surely be' (הוֹדַעְתִּי נֶאֱמָנָה, hoda'ti ne'emanah)—declared reliable truth. This emphasizes prophetic certainty: God's word accomplishes what it declares (Isaiah 55:11). The warning among 'tribes of Israel' indicates comprehensive proclamation—none can claim ignorance. When divine patience exhausts, declared judgment certainly arrives. Only Christ's substitutionary atonement averts certain judgment for believers (Romans 8:1).

Historical Context

The prophecy fulfilled completely: northern Israel became desolate in Assyrian conquest (722 BC). The population was deported, foreigners imported (2 Kings 17:24-41), and the region became Samaria—mixed population despised by Jews. The 'ten tribes' disappeared from history as distinct entities. Archaeological evidence shows widespread destruction and population displacement. Cities like Samaria, Megiddo, Hazor show 8th century destruction layers. God's declared word proved absolutely reliable—every prophetic warning materialized. This demonstrates that divine declarations, though delayed by patience, ultimately fulfill with perfect precision. Biblical eschatology similarly teaches certainty of future judgment (2 Peter 3:3-10).

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How should the absolute certainty of fulfilled prophecy strengthen confidence in yet-unfulfilled biblical promises and warnings?
2. What does Ephraim's complete desolation teach about the seriousness of ignoring clear prophetic warnings?

Interlinear Text

אֶפְרַיִם	לְשֹׁמֵה	תְּהִי הַ	בִּי יוֹם	תּוֹכִיחַ הַ	בְּשִׁבְטֵי
Ephraim	shall be desolate	H1961	in the day	of rebuke	among the tribes
H669	H8047		H3117	H8433	H7626

יִשְׂרָאֵל	הוֹדַעְתִּי	נֶאֱמָנָה:
of Israel	have I made known	that which shall surely be
H3478	H3045	H539

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 46:10 (Parallel theme): Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:

Zechariah 1:6 (Parallel theme): But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not take hold of your fathers? and they returned and said, Like as the LORD of hosts thought to do unto us, according to our ways, and according to our doings, so hath he dealt with us.