

Hosea 6:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And as troops of robbers wait for a man, so the company of priests murder in the way by consent: for they commit lewdness.

Analysis

And as troops of robbers wait for a man, so the company of priests murder in the way by consent: for they commit lewdness.' Priests acting like robber gangs - ambushing travelers, committing murder 'by consent' (unanimous evil). 'Murder in the way' (derek) might reference road to Shechem (v. 9b context) or generally indicate violent crime. 'Commit lewdness' (zimmah) means planned wickedness. When spiritual leaders become criminals, society faces total corruption. Jesus confronted similar corruption (Matthew 21:13): 'you make it a den of robbers.' Only Christ provides perfect High Priest (Hebrews 7:26), holy and unstained by corruption.

Historical Context

Israel's priesthood had abandoned spiritual duties for violent crime - using sacred office for predatory gain. Specific historical details aren't preserved, but pattern is clear: systematic priestly corruption. This recalls Eli's sons (1 Samuel 2:12-17) who treated the Lord's offering with contempt and committed sexual sin. When priests murder and rob, entire society loses moral foundation. Modern parallel: clergy who abuse authority for personal gain, sexual exploitation, or financial fraud. Such corruption demands both exposure and reformation. Only return to scriptural qualifications for leadership restores integrity.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How do I respond when spiritual leaders engage in criminal or immoral behavior - both personally and institutionally?
2. What accountability structures help prevent ministry from degenerating into 'troops of robbers'?

Interlinear Text

וְכַחֲכֵי י	אָ יֵשׁ	גְּדוּדֵי יָם	חֵ בָר	כֹּהֲנֵי יָם	דֶּ רֶךְ
of robbers wait	for a man	And as troops	so the company	of priests	in the way
H2442	H376	H1416	H2267	H3548	H1870
יִרְצָחוּ	שׁ כְּמָה	כִּי י	זִמָּה	עָשׂוּ:	
murder	by consent	H3588	lewdness	for they commit	
H7523	H7926		H2154	H6213	

Additional Cross-References

Hosea 7:1 (Parallel theme): When I would have healed Israel, then the iniquity of Ephraim was discovered, and the wickedness of Samaria: for they commit falsehood; and the thief cometh in, and the troop of robbers spoileth without.

Hosea 5:1 (Parallel theme): Hear ye this, O priests; and hearken, ye house of Israel; and give ye ear, O house of the king; for judgment is toward you, because ye have been a snare on Mizpah, and a net spread upon Tabor.