

“Seek Me that You May Live”

5:1 **H**EAR this word which I take up for you as a ^adirge, O house of Israel.

2 She has fallen, she will ^anot rise again—

The ^bvirgin Israel.

She *lies* neglected on her land;

There is ^cnone to raise her up.

3 For thus says the Lord ¹GOD, “The city which goes forth a thousand *strong*

Will have a ^ahundred left,

And the one which goes forth a hundred *strong*

Will have ^bten left to the house of Israel.”

4 For thus says the LORD to the house of Israel, “^aSeek Me ^bthat you may live.

5 “But do not ¹resort to ^aBethel,

And do not come to ^bGilgal,

Nor cross over to ^cBeersheba;

For Gilgal will certainly go into captivity,

And Bethel will ²come to trouble.

6 “^aSeek the LORD that you may live,

Lest He break forth like a ^bfire, ¹O house of Joseph,

And it consume with none to quench *it* for Bethel,

7 For those who turn ^ajustice into wormwood

And ¹cast righteousness down to the earth.”

8 He who made the ^aPleiades and Orion

And ^bchanges deep darkness into morning,

¹Who also ^cdarkens day *into* night,

Who ^dcalls for the waters of the sea

And pours them out on the surface of the earth,

The ^eLORD is His name.

9 It is He who ^aflashes forth *with* destruction upon the strong,

So that ^bdestruction comes upon the fortress.

10 They hate him who ^areproves in the ¹gate,

And they ^babhor him who speaks *with* integrity.

11 Therefore, because you ¹impose heavy rent on the poor

And exact a tribute of grain from them,

Though you have built ^ahouses of well-hewn stone,

Yet you will not live in them;

You have planted pleasant vineyards, yet you will ^bnot drink their wine.

12 For I know your transgressions are many and your sins are great,

You who ^adistress the righteous *and* accept bribes,

And ¹turn aside the poor in the ²gate.

13 Therefore, at ¹such a time the prudent person ^akeeps silent, for it is an evil time.

14 Seek good and not evil, that you may live;

And thus may the LORD God of hosts be with you,
^aJust as you have said!

15 ^aHate evil, love good,
And establish justice in the ¹gate!

Perhaps the LORD God of hosts
^bMay be gracious to the ^cremnant of Joseph.

16 Therefore, thus says the LORD God of hosts, the Lord, “There is ^awailing in all the
plazas,

And in all the streets they say, ‘Alas! Alas!’
They also call the ^bfarmer to mourning
And ¹^cprofessional mourners to lamentation.

17 “And in all the ^avineyards *there is* wailing,
Because I shall pass through the midst of you,” says the LORD.

18 Alas, you who are longing for the ^aday of the LORD,
For what purpose *will* the day of the LORD *be* to you?
It *will be* ^bdarkness and not light;

19 As when a man ^aflees from a lion,
And a bear meets him,
¹Or goes home, leans his hand against the wall,
And a snake bites him.

20 *Will* not the day of the LORD *be* ^adarkness instead of light,
Even gloom with no brightness in it?

21 “I hate, I ^areject your festivals,
Nor do I ¹^bdelight in your solemn assemblies.

22 “Even though you ^aoffer up to Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings,
I will not accept *them*;

And I will not *even* look at the ^bpeace offerings of your fatlings.

23 “Take away from Me the noise of your songs;
I will not even listen to the sound of your harps.

24 “But let ^ajustice roll down like waters
And righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

25 “¹^aDid you present Me with sacrifices and grain offerings in the wilderness for forty
years, O house of Israel? 26 “^aYou also carried along ¹Sikkuth your king and ²Kiyyun,
your images, ³the star of your gods which you made for yourselves. 27 “Therefore, I will
make you go into exile beyond Damascus,” says the LORD, whose name is the God of
hosts.

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^a Jer. 7:29; 9:10, 17; Ezek. 19:1

^a Amos 8:14

^b Jer. 14:17

^c Is. 51:18; Jer. 50:32

¹ Heb., *YHWH*, usually rendered *LĪĪÐ*, and so throughout the ch.

^a Is. 6:13

^b Amos 6:9
^a Deut. 4:29; 32:46, 47; Jer. 29:13
^b Is. 55:3
¹ Lit., *seek*
^a 1 Kin. 12:28, 29; Amos 3:14; 4:4; 7:10, 13
^b 1 Sam. 7:16; 11:14
^c Gen. 21:31-33; Amos 8:14
² Or, *become iniquity*
^a Is. 55:3, 6, 7; Amos 5:14
^b Deut. 4:24
¹ Or, in *the house*
^a Amos 2:3; 5:12; 6:12
¹ Lit., *they have put down*
^a Job 9:9; 38:31
^b Job 12:22; 38:12; Is. 42:16
¹ Lit., *And He darkened*
^c Ps. 104:20
^d Ps. 104:6-9; Amos 9:6
^e Amos 4:13
^a Is. 29:5; Amos 2:14
^b Mic. 5:11
^a Is. 29:21; Amos 5:15
¹ I.e., the place where court was held
^b 1 Kin. 22:8; Is. 59:15; Jer. 17:16-18
¹ Another reading is *trample upon*
^a Amos 3:15; 6:11
^b Mic. 6:15
^a Is. 1:23; 5:23; Amos 2:6
¹ Lit., *they turn*
² I.e., the place where court was held
¹ Lit., *that time*
^a Eccl. 3:7; Hos. 4:4
^a Mic. 3:11
^a Ps. 97:10; Rom. 12:9
¹ I.e., the place where court was held
^b Joel 2:14
^c Mic. 5:3, 7,8
^a Jer. 9:10, 18-20; Amos 8:3
^b Joel 1:11
¹ Lit., *those who know lamentation*
^c 2 Chr. 35:25; Jer. 9:17
^a Is. 16:10; Jer. 48:33
^a Is. 5:19; Jer. 30:7; Joel 1:15; 2:1, 11, 31
^b Is. 5:30; Joel 2:2
^a Job 20:24; Is. 24:17, 18; Jer. 15:2, 3; 48:44

¹ Or, *Then*

^a Is. 13:10; Zeph. 1:15

^a Is. 1:11-16; 66:3; Amos 4:4, 5; 8:10

¹ Lit., *like to smell*

^b Lev. 26:31; Jer. 14:12; Hos. 5:6

^a Is. 66:3; Mic. 6:6, 7

^b Lev. 7:11-15; Amos 4:5

^a Jer. 22:3; Ezek. 45:9; Mic. 6:8

¹ Or, *You presented Me with the sacrifices and a grain offering*

^a Deut. 32:17; Josh. 24:14; Neh. 9:18-21; Acts 7:42, 43

^a Acts 7:43

¹ Or, *Sakkuth (Saturn) or shrine of your Moloch*

² Or, *Kaiwan (Saturn) or stands of*

³ Or, *your star gods*

ⁱ*The New American Standard Bible*, (La Habra, California: The Lockman Foundation) 1977.