

Sermon Discussion Questions & Follow-up Notes

April 26, 2026 // Pastor Andrew Keuer (andrew@firstprotestant.com)

Sermon Texts: Hosea 5:13-15
Sermon Title: "Hope in Judgment"

Series: Anchored in Hope, part 3 (Easter Season 2026)
(a series on the prophet Hosea)

Link to Easter 4 sermon: <https://youtu.be/NWYy9n1yNJ8?t=1593>

Key Points & Observations of the Text

Key Points & Observations of the Text: It is suggested to read the passage aloud as a group (Hosea 5:14-15, and optionally verses 12-13 for context).

Opening discussion: What words or images in this text made you uncomfortable? Why does the Bible include such "tough" passages that portray God in fierce, unsettling ways rather than only as comforting or gentle?

The big idea: A domesticated, predictable "nice neighbor" God cannot save us. The real God—the fierce, wild Lion who demands to be our everything—loves us with a jealous love that tears apart our false solutions so He can bring deep, true healing. He is not safe, but He is good. Being a people of HOPE means facing the danger in God, admitting our guilt, and desperately seeking the One whose heart breaks even as He judges.

A few words about four dimensions of this text:

1. We have domesticated God: Americans (across political and theological lines) reshape God into a predictable, middle-class Mr. Rogers figure: helpful when convenient, quick to say "shucks, it's all right" when we mess up, and never threatening our plans or comfort. America has promoted a religion that no longer needs saving because we've worked things out with economics, politics, and strategy.

Discussion: Where do you see signs of a "domesticated God" in contemporary Christianity or in your own life? What false saviors (economic, relational, political, or personal) do we tend to rely on instead of the living God?

2. The internal sickness: Israel's deepest problem was not external enemies but internal collapse - loss of eagerness to know God, breaking of commandments, and a culture of blame and finger-pointing. God was already at work like a moth quietly eating away at the fabric of the nation (see Hosea 5:12 and chapter 4). External fixes, like bribing Assyria with taxed money, only delayed the inevitable.

Discussion: What "external solutions" are tempting you right now instead of facing spiritual realities?

3. God as the prowling Lion: In one of Scripture's most shocking images, God declares He will be like a lion to Ephraim and Judah: tearing to pieces, carrying off with no one to rescue, then withdrawing to His place. The image carries deep emotion: the Lion tears and then goes away, longing to be sought. Ancient views of lions as emotionally expressive underline God's broken heart in judgment.

Discussion: Why is it important to recover a sense of "danger" in God? How does this image challenge comfortable views of God as only friend, teacher, or burden-sharer?

4. Judgment for the sake of deep healing: God's fierce action is not the end; it aims at restoration. He withdraws "until they admit their guilt and seek my face" (Hosea 5:15). False religion and superficial fixes only treat symptoms. The Lion rips apart our false salvations so we can receive the grander salvation in Jesus Christ. Pastor Andrew mentioned how our pillars in the sanctuary depict the Gospel of Mark as the "Lion Jesus", who both 'tears apart' but also rises to new life to keep His people on the move.

Discussion: Though some tone down "fear of God" language by speaking of "reverence" or "awe", how might being afraid of God who is good do us some good? How might fearing good be better than fearing evil?