

Outline of the Book of Hosea

“For the spirit of whoredom hath caused them to err”
Hosea 4:12

Author and Date

Hosea 1:1 gives us both the author and date. The book is clearly written by Hosea during the days Jeroboam II king of Israel. Jeroboam reigned forty-one years (cf. II Kg. 14:23) (788 to 747 BC). Hosea’s days were likely around 760 to 725 BC (the dates that the kings of Israel and Judah occupy as listed at Hosea 1:1).

The Message of Hosea

Hosea, by divine inspiration, depicted Israel as a wife that had “*departed*” from her husband (i.e., God) (Hos. 1:2; 9:1). Israel’s departure was a heart-wrenching experience for her husband, Jehovah God. She had committed adultery against her first love. Hosea wrote, “*Contend with your mother, contend; for she is not my wife, neither am I her husband; and let her put away her whoredoms from her face, and her adulteries from between her breasts;*” (Hos. 2:2). To effectively communicate God’s feelings toward His departed wife, He requested Hosea to take a wife of whoredom (Hos. 1:2). Hosea faithfully obeyed the Lord, taking Gomer as his wife. Gomer committed adultery against Hosea, having three children (two sons and one daughter) through her acts of whoredom (i.e., Jezreel, Loruhamah, and Loammi). The meaning of Loammi’s name (the last son) is “*ye are not my people, and I will not be your God*” (Hos. 1:9).

Israel’s Sin

Hosea wrote that God had a “*controversy with the inhabitants of the land*” due to their sinfulness (Hos. 4:1). The people were “*defiled*” in their harlotry (Hos. 5:3; 6:10). Their sins included sexual immorality (Hos. 4:14), ungratefulness (cf. 2:8-9; 9:10, 13; 11:3-4), idolatry (Hos. 4:17; 11:2; 13:1), pride (Hos. 5:5; 7:10), walking after “*man’s commands*” (Hos. 5:11; 11:6), drunkenness (Hos. 4:11; 7:5), lying (Hos. 10:4), and cheating (Hos. 12:7). Furthermore Israel had completely forgotten God (Hos. 4:6; 8:14; 13:6). The deeper they went into sin, the less they called upon the name of Jehovah for help in time of need (cf. Hos. 7:7). Rather than looking to God, they turned to their idols (Hos. 4:12; 11:2), their king (Hos. 10:3; 13:10), Assyria and Egypt (Hos. 5:13; 7:11), their mighty men of war (Hos. 10:13), and their wealth (Hos. 12:8). Every aspect of Israel’s society was corrupt. Israel’s prophets (Hos. 9:7-8), princes (Hos. 9:15), king (Hos. 10:3), judges (Hos. 7:7), and priest (Hos. 10:5) perverted justice.

Consequences of Sin

God’s wrath against the disobedient would be poured out upon Israel in the form of the Assyrian Empire (Isa. 10:5; Hosea 11:5). Israel was to be exiled to Assyria for her refusal to return to the Lord in repentance (Hos. 10:6). Samaria would bear her guilt and she shall die grievous deaths (Hos. 13:16). No king, judge, prophet, priest, idol, other nation, riches, or mighty men would be able to save them from God’s wrath (Hos. 13:10).

The Misdirected Thinking of Israel

Hosea used the contrast of the patriarchs Jacob and Israel to illustrate the misdirected and unspiritual thinking of Israel (Hos. 12:3ff). The more Israel sinned, the deeper they sunk and the further from God they went (Hos. 7:13; 9:9; 13:2). It was not long until Israel viewed God’s laws as “*strange*” (Hos. 8:12). Israel was simply not thinking right. Hosea wrote, “*Their doings will not suffer them to turn unto their God; for the spirit of whoredom is within them, and they know not Jehovah*” (Hos. 5:4). The “*spirit of whoredom*” appears to be Israel’s problem (cf. Hos. 4:12). The idea of a “*spirit*” is the direction of one’s thinking. Israel cheated, lied, committed sexual immorality, drank intoxicants, turned to everyone but God for help, and was filled with pride

because she had a “*spirit of whoredom.*” She was “*bent on backsliding*” (Hos. 11:7). God’s people no longer cared about Him. They looked to the surrounding nations and desired their ways and deities (Hos. 2:13). The grass appeared greener on the other side, yet when they walked in the counsel of the wicked they produced trouble with God.

God’s Desire for His People Then and Now

Though the book of Hosea brings out the truth that God will not allow sin to go unpunished, it also tells of God’s mercy (Hos. 1:10-11; 2:14-17, 21-23). God’s earnest desire was that His people would repent of their sins (Hos. 14:1). God wants us all to serve him because that is what our hearts truly desire to do. He wants our “*words*” to reveal a heart of humility and subjection to His will (Hos. 14:2). God desires His people to “*acknowledge*” (Hos. 5:15) and confess (Hos. 14:2) their sins. The Lord wants to hear His people reject the help of other entities (such as idols and the Assyrians / cf. Hos. 14:3) in spiritual matters. To such people God will turn away his anger (Hos. 14:4). Hosea’s final words define the “*wise*” and “*prudent*” of all history as those who will humble themselves to God and follow Him with all their hearts (Hos. 14:9). Nothing has changed through the years. God still demands our interest, humility, subjection, and overall heart (Matt. 12:33). The Christian today must be careful not to allow an interest in this world to interfere with their eternal interest in God.

Introduction:

During the days of Jehu, 10th king of Israel, God had pronounced the end of the Northern kingdom (cf. II Kg. 9; Hos. 1:3-5). Hosea comes on the scene in Israel at time that had just experienced civil war between Israel and Judah (cf. II Kings 14:8ff). Israel, under the reign of Jehoash, attacked Judah (Amaziah) and defeated her taking much spoil. Jeroboam continued the wars against Judah that his father participated in and took Damascus and Hamath by force from Judah (cf. II Kg. 14:28f). The next king of Israel, Zechariah, ruled only six months over Israel before being assassinated by Shallum. Shallum’s reign lasted only one month before being killed by Menahem.

Israel first came in contact with Assyria during the reign of Menahem. Tiglath-pileser (Pul), king of Assyria, had marched on Israel, and Menahem taxed his people to pay off the Assyrians (II Kings 15:17-22). Pul accepted the money and left (750 B. C.). Five years later Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, marched again on Israel. The tribes of Naphtali, Gad, Reuben and Manasseh were carried away as captives during the days of Pekah, king of Israel (II Kings 15:29). After this successful campaign against Israel, Assyria became weakened and preoccupied by the rising power of Babylon. Israel regained its strength. Pekah formed an alliance with Rezin, king of Syria, to attack its brother nation Judah (II Kg. 16:5-6). Ahaz foolishly offered Tiglath-pileser all the treasures of the temple of Jehovah for help (II Kings 16:7-10). Tiglath-pileser agreed and defeated Israel and Syria at Damascus.

Hoshea conspired against Pekah, murdering him and taking the throne (II Kings 15:30). Eight years were spent in power struggles as Hoshea held office in Israel. During this time Shalmaneser V, the successor of Tiglath-pileser, came up against Israel and utterly defeated them, making them tributary. One last effort was made by Israel to maintain their independence through an alliance with Egypt; however, it failed (II Kg. 17:4). 727 BC effectively ended the kingdom of Israel for good. God’s rod of correction had run its full course.

Judah alone was left as God’s faithful people, yet they too were sinful and subject to God’s wrath. Hezekiah replaced Ahaz as king of Judah in 727 BC. The author of II Kings stated that Hezekiah “*did that which was right in the eyes of Jehovah, according to all that David his father had done*” (18:3). Sennacherib came up against Hezekiah in II Kings 19. Hezekiah prayed unto the Lord, and Judah was delivered from the Assyrians. God killed 185,000 Assyrians and gave Judah peace from their enemy. It was during these days of war with Assyria and luxurious living that Isaiah came on the scene to warn God’s people of their ungodly works and motivate them to repent. Israel had before cried out for help from Syria (cf. II Kg. 16:5-6) and Egypt (II Kg. 17:4ff) in the time of their calamity. Judah too called out to Assyria for help (II Kg. 17:7ff). The Lord’s anger was kindled against Israel and Judah not only for not following His commandments and participating in idolatry

(II Kg. 17:16) but also for their reliance on other nations for help when they should have prayed to God as did Hezekiah (II Kg. 16:5ff).

Date	King of Israel	king of Judah	king of Assyria	Prophet
788 BC	Jeroboam (II k. 14:23)	Amaziah (15 th year)		Jonah
761	27 th year of Jeroboam	Uzziah (beginning of Hosea's Prophecy)		Hosea ~ 760 – 725 BC
747	Zechariah (6 months)	38 th year of Uzziah		Amos
746	Shallum (1 month)	39 th year of Uzziah (II Kings 15:13)		
746	Menahem		Tiglath-Pileser III (Pul) (cf. II K. 15:19) (745 – 727)	
711-735	Pekahiah (2 years)	50 th year of Uzziah		Isaiah Micah
733	Pekah (20 years)			
731		Jotham (16 years)		
? Overlapping time with other kings.		Ahaz (16 years) (sought help from Tiglath-Pileser (16:7)	Pekah and king of Syria war with Jerusalem (II K. 16:5f)	
725	Hoshea (kingdom of Israel ends cf. II Kg. 16:7- 18)		Shalmaneser V (727 – 722) ISBE V. 1, pp. 335.	
725		Hezekiah		
			Sargon II (722 – 705)	
			Sennacherib (705 – 681)	
			Esarhaddon (681 – 669)	

The Kingdom of Israel will cease due to her whoredom (cf. Hos. 1:2,):

- Israel did not follow God's commandments and they participated in idolatry (II Kg. 17:16).

- Relied on other nations for help when they should have prayed to God as did Hezekiah (cf. II Kings 16:5-6; 17:4ff).
- Israel practiced idolatry (cf. II Kg. 17:16).

Chapter 1

I. Gomer Bears Three Children that Illustrate Jehovah's Disposition toward Sinful Israel (1:1-9):

- A. *"The word of Jehovah that came unto Hosea the son of Beeri, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel"* (1:1).
1. There is not much written about Hosea other than his father's name was Beeri. Hosea and Amos prophesied to the Northern tribe of Israel.
 2. The date of Hosea's work is given by the kings that are associated with his work. Jeroboam II began his reign as king over Israel (the northern kingdom) around the year 788 BC and he ruled until ~ 747 BC. The kings of Judah (i.e., Uzziah to Hezekiah) span a period of approximately 90 years (i.e., 785 to 695 BC). The dates given by Hosea, Amos (1:1), Isaiah (1:1), and Micah (1:1) are all overlapping. These four prophets worked as God's mouth piece to warn both Israel and Judah of the consequence of their continued disobedience.
 3. The beginning and ending of Hosea's work could have spanned from the 27th year of Jeroboam which was the 1st year of Uzziah (i.e., 761 BC to the last year of Hezekiah (i.e., ~ 695 BC). These dates illustrate that Babylonian supremacy was not many years in the future. During these days, Assyria was the World ruling power; however, Babylon was on their heels and they felt the pressure as the two struggled for dominance.
 4. The word of God reveals Israel's wickedness under Jeroboam II at II Kings 14:24, *"And he did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah: he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam (I) the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin."* Due to Israel's sin and rejection of God's pleas, through the prophets, for their repentance the Lord would bring them down. Assyria would be the rod of God's correction for Israel (cf. Isa. 10:5-6). Later, Jehovah would use the Babylonians as a battleaxe in His hand to punish sinful Judah (cf. Jer. 51:20).
- B. *"When Jehovah spake at the first by Hosea, Jehovah said unto Hosea, Go, take unto thee a wife of whoredom and children of whoredom; for the land doth commit great whoredom, departing from Jehovah"* (1:2).
1. The Lord was to use Hosea as a living illustration to Israel to indicate to them their great offences. Gomer was not a harlot at the beginning of their relationship, however, she was a woman of the world and would soon commit adultery against Hosea.
 2. Note the process of inspiration. The Lord *"spoke by Hosea."* The prophets were simply mouthpieces for God to get His message across to the people (see study # 1; Inspiration and Revelation).
 3. What *"whoredom"* (i.e., departure from Jehovah) was Israel guilty of?
 - a. Israel did not follow God's commandments and they participated in idolatry (II Kg. 17:16).
 - b. Relied on other nations for help when they should have prayed to God as did Hezekiah (cf. II Kings 16:5-6; 17:4ff).
- C. *"So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim; and she conceived, and bare him a son. And Jehovah said unto him, Call his name Jezreel; for yet a little while, and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause the kingdom of the house of Israel to cease. And it shall come to pass at that day, that I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel"* (1:3-5).
1. The first of three children born to Hosea and Gomer was Jezreel (i.e., 'God will scatter'). Israel was to cease as a kingdom partly because of Jehu's sins.
 2. Jehu was the 10th king of Israel. God had anointed him king and commanded him to *"smite the house of Ahab thy master, that I may avenge the blood of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of Jehovah, at the hand of Jezebel"* (II Kg. 9:6-8). Jehu did so as God commanded (cf. II Kings 10:1ff) and the Lord commended him (cf. II Kg. 10:30). Jehu had the opportunity to change the way the kings of Israel had sinfully operated; however, he chose to

participate in the same sinful activity as did his forefathers (cf. II Kg. 10:29-31). Those who reject God will also be rejected.

3. Israel as a nation was to cease by divine decree for her whoredom.
- D. *“And she conceived again, and bare a daughter. And Jehovah said unto him, Call her name Loruhamah; for I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel, that I should in any wise pardon them”* (1:6).
 1. Gomer bore a second child and the Lord commanded Hosea to name the girl *“Loruhamah”* which means ‘no pity.’ The child’s name symbolized God’s disposition toward Israel.
 2. Israel, the Northern kingdom, had been destined by God to be destroyed. Nothing would change the Lord’s heart that he may *“pardon”* and save them as a nation. Two hundred years were spent in wickedness (the length of time that Israel remained as a nation separate from Judah).
- E. *“But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by Jehovah their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen”* (1:7).
 1. No mercy for Israel but mercy for Judah. Hosea will go on to expose the sins of Judah as well in this book; however, it was God’s intention to save a remnant of people to bring forth His eternal promise of the forgiveness of sins.
 2. The Lord saved Judah without sword when during the days of Hezekiah He struck 185,000 Assyrians dead (cf. Isa. 37:36). The returning captives of Babylon under Zerubbabel and Esther rebuilt the city of Jerusalem and restored the people’s faith without sword or battle (Ezra and Nehemiah). Lastly, Jehovah will save all of humanity from the consequences of their sins without sword or battle fields. The Lord’s people shall use His word as their sword (cf. Eph. 6:17) and the battlefield will be life itself as Satan attempts to destroy each person’s soul (I Pet. 5:8).
- F. *“Now when she had weaned Loruhamah, she conceived, and bare a son. And Jehovah said, Call his name Loammi; for ye are not my people, and I will not be your God”* (1:8-9).
 1. At this point, we see the whoredoms of Gomer. While we may think it possible that the first two children belonged to Hosea it is certain that this third one (i.e., Loammi) is not his. Gomer has committed adultery against Hosea and has born a child out of wedlock. The child’s name, Loammi, means *“not my people.”* Hosea could feel the pain of Jehovah God as his beloved wife Gomer had cheated on him and bore a son from someone else.
 2. Israel had come to be so far removed from following God’s commandments that the Lord did not recognize them as His people. When Christians today remove themselves from the Lord’s commandments they are as lost as those of the world. Such a state will cause one to be alienated from the Lord so that He will not be their God any longer (cf. I Jn. 1:5ff).

II. Hope for Both Israel and Judah (1:10-11):

- A. *“Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass that, in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God”* (1:10).
 1. Though Israel, the Northern kingdom, would be cast off by God it was not to be permanent. At an unspecified time in the future God would take those who were *“not my people”* and recognize them as *“the sons of the living God.”*
 2. The apostle Paul quotes from this verse at Romans 9:25-26 and the apostle Peter at I Pet. 2:10. The indication is that both Jew and Gentile are on equal ground when it comes to salvation from past sins through the blood of Jesus Christ. Those whom the Lord rejected (i.e., the disobedient Jews and Gentiles) will He accept through their faith in Jesus Christ (cf. Rom. 9:30-33). There is always hope for any man or woman who seeks diligently after it. Those who by faith live obediently to the Lord shall be *“sons of the living God”* (cf. Gal. 3:26; I Jn. 3:9-10) (see study # 2; The Gospel is for All).
- B. *“And the children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together, and they shall appoint themselves one head, and shall go up from the land; for great shall be the day of Jezreel”* (1:11).

1. The “*day of Jezreel*” is a reference to Hosea 1:4 where God would put an end to the kingdom of Israel (the Northern kingdom) because of her sins. All those of the spirit of Jehu (i.e., those who reject the commandments of Jehovah God) will have their end likened unto sinful Israel’s kingdom.
2. At that time (i.e., when the kingdom of sin falls), the Lord shall establish an everlasting kingdom that has one head being Jesus Christ. All peoples; i.e., those of Israel, Judah, and even Gentiles, shall come together in this one kingdom (Acts 2:38ff; 10:1ff).

Lessons Learned from chapter 1

- Sin separates man from God (Hos. 1:2). The whoredom or departure from the Lord was due to Israel’s not following God’s commandments (cf. II Kg. 17:16) and relying upon other nations for help rather than God (II Kg. 16:5-6; 17:4ff). When people remove themselves from God’s word He will no longer recognize them as His people (cf. Hos. 1:9) (see study # 3; Sin Separates one from God).
- People’s words and actions prove what is truly in the heart (Hos. 1:3-5).
- God’s mercy always exists for those who humbly seek it even though it may seem at times that God has given up on the lost of the world (Hos. 1:10-11).

Chapter 2

I. God’s Wrath Exercised upon His Unholy, Unthankful, and Unfaithful Wife Israel (2:1-13):

- A. *“Say ye unto your brethren, Ammi; and to your sisters, Ruhamah. Contend with your mother, contend; for she is not my wife, neither am I her husband; and let her put away her whoredoms from her face, and her adulteries from between her breasts; lest I strip her naked, and set her as in the day that she was born, and make her as a wilderness, and set her like a dry land, and slay her with thirst”* (2:1-3).
1. Jehovah speaks as the husband of the nation of Israel (the unfaithful wife). The children would be the people of God living in Israel. Jehovah proclaims that “*she is not my wife, neither am I her husband.*” While Israel continued in their sinful works of idolatry God could not possibly be a husband unto her. Her whoredom included not following God’s commands (II Kg. 17:16), relying upon other nations for help in her time of need (II Kg. 16:5-6; 17:4ff), and practicing idolatry (cf. II kg. 17:16). Here the picture is clearer than at the beginning of this study. Hosea’s wife was unfaithful to him and even had children of other men. Likewise, Jehovah’s wife Israel would not listen to His commands, relied on others for help, and even went in to others in the form of idolatry. Israel’s heart was no longer with God.
 2. The Lord calls upon His wife to changer her ways or pay the price of being stripped of all that He had blessed her with. She was once a dry waste land and now she flowed with milk and honey (cf. Deut. 32:8-13).
- B. *“Yea, upon her children will I have no mercy; for they are children of whoredom; for their mother hath played the harlot; she that conceived them hath done shamefully; for she said, I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink. Therefore, behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and I will build a wall against her, that she shall not find her paths. And she shall follow after her lovers, but she shall not overtake them; and she shall seek them, but shall not find them: then shall she say, I will go and return to my first husband; for then was it better with me than now. For she did not know that I gave her the grain, and the new wine, and the oil, and multiplied unto her silver and gold, which they used for Baal. Therefore will I take back my grain in the time thereof, and my new wine in the season thereof, and will pluck away my wool and my flax which should have covered her nakedness. And now will I uncover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers, and none shall deliver her out of my hand”* (2:4-10).
1. God had no mercy on the children of adultery because they were likened unto their whore mother in that they too followed the lust of the world.

2. Israel is depicted as a silly woman laden with sin whose mind has been corrupted by the quest of worldly pleasures and material. She considered the source of her well being to be that of the idols Baal and the Ashterah (Canaanite gods). When God brings a wall of adversity before her she seeks after her lovers but cannot find them because in all reality they do not exist but in the minds of the foolish. She had forgotten the source of her true blessings and attributed it to the filth of the world. The unfaithful wife finds, through the university of hard knocks, that her true husband is the only one who truly loves and cares for her.
 3. For her unfaithfulness, God would take away His blessings and she would be left in shame with her children of fornication. The Assyrians would eventually destroy Israel and take away all her treasures leaving her stripped.
- C. *“I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feasts, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn assemblies. And I will lay waste her vines and her fig-trees, whereof she hath said, These are my hire that my lovers have given me; and I will make them a forest, and the beasts of the field shall eat them. And I will visit upon her the days of the Baalim, unto which she burned incense, when she decked herself with her earrings and her jewels, and went after her lovers, and forgot me, saith Jehovah”* (2:11-13).
1. God would take away the happiness in Israel. Worship and harvest would cease in the land of Israel at the hand of enemies.
 2. The utter foolishness, ungratefulness, and forgetfulness of Israel is depicted in her decking herself out in beautiful apparel and jewels to present herself to Baal in her adultery. Where was her first husband, Jehovah God, in her mind? She had utterly *“forgot”* Him.

II. **Future Restoration and Betrothal for Israel (2:14-23):**

- A. *“Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope; and she shall make answer there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt. And it shall be at that day, saith Jehovah, that thou shalt call me Ishi, and shalt call me no more Baali. For I will take away the names of the Baalim out of her mouth, and they shall no more be mentioned by their name”* (2:14-17).
1. The alluring of God toward Israel would come by his unmerited love and mercy exercised upon her. She (Israel) would be brought to the valley of Achor (west of the North side of the Dead Sea). As the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt into the wilderness of Sinai to give her law and hope so now the Lord was to bring Israel out of her captivity of sin through doors of hope. Israel would have to spend years in Assyrian captivity and dominance yet there would be hope for her.
 2. A day comes in which Israel would return to the Lord and call him *“Ishi”* (Heb. for ‘my husband’) rather than *“Baali”* (my master / a term that only equated God with other idols they worshipped). At this time the Lord would take the names of Baalim and other idols from Israel’s mouth so that their names are not even mentioned in His presence for He is a jealous God.
- B. *“And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the birds of the heavens, and with the creeping things of the ground: and I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the land, and will make them to lie down safely. And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in justice, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know Jehovah”* (2:18-20).
1. The day in which Israel had a change in heart and now calls upon Jehovah God as her Husband rather than simply master due to His alluring call of mercy toward her is the time of her renewal. Israel is depicted as an unfaithful wife who has gone through much agonizing emotional and physical duress to come to understand that her true love is God.
 2. At this state of mind Jehovah God would once again *“betroth”* her as a wife for ever. Vows or a *“covenant”* shall be made and the Lord shall promise, in faithfulness, that His righteousness, justice, loving-kindness, and mercies shall not depart from His faithful wife again.

- C. *“And it shall come to pass in that day, I will answer, saith Jehovah, I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth; and the earth shall answer the grain, and the new wine, and the oil; and they shall answer Jezreel. And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them that were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God”* (2:21-23).
1. *“That day”* is the time of the new covenant made with Israel. God betroths His bride Israel through the covenant of the forgiveness of sins through His beloved Son Jesus. We know that the grand blessings of Christ are under consideration because the apostle Paul (Rom. 9:25-26) and Peter (I Pet. 2:10) quote from Hosea and apply the passage to Jesus.
 2. This prophecy has thereby been fulfilled. Consider the blessings mentioned by Paul at Ephesians 1:3ff.
 3. It would be many years before the unfaithful wife Israel would experience this new covenant, however, it gave the children of Israel future hope.

Chapter 3

I. God would receive Israel back as a wife in the *“latter days”* (3 all):

- A. *“And Jehovah said unto me, Go again, love a woman beloved of her friend, and an adulteress, even as Jehovah loveth the children of Israel, though they turn unto other gods, and love cakes of raisins. So I bought her to me for fifteen pieces of silver, and a homer of barley, and a half-homer of barley; and I said unto her, Thou shalt abide for me many days; thou shalt not play the harlot, and thou shalt not be any man's wife: so will I also be toward thee”* (3:1-3).
1. It seems that the adulterous woman Hosea is to purchase is Gomer. The *“friend”* is Hosea (rather than a beloved husband). This action not only indicates Hosea’s continued love for his wife but Jehovah God’s love for his adulterous wife Israel.
 2. Gomer was to abide with Hosea alone and she was to prove herself to the prophet before the husband wife relationship could resume.
- B. *“For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king, and without prince, and without sacrifice, and without pillar, and without ephod or teraphim: afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek Jehovah their God, and David their king, and shall come with fear unto Jehovah and to his goodness in the latter days”* (3:4-5).
1. Through the days of their hardened heart Israel would be captives and without God.
 2. They would, however, return unto the Lord *“in the latter days”* (i.e., the days of Jesus / David their king / see Isa. 2:2-3; Dan. 2:28; Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17; 3:24-26) (see study # 4; The Church in Prophecy). This would be a time of merciful forgiveness on the part of God. The Lord never stopped loving His people.

Chapter 4

I. Hosea gives a list of Israel’s sin (4 all):

- A. *“Hear the word of Jehovah, ye children of Israel; for Jehovah hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor goodness, nor knowledge of God in the land. There is nought but swearing and breaking faith, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery; they break out, and blood toucheth blood. Therefore shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the beasts of the field and the birds of the heavens; yea, the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away. Yet let no man strive, neither let any man reprove; for thy people are as they that strive with the priest. And thou shalt stumble in the day, and the prophet also shall stumble with thee in the night; and I will destroy thy mother”* (4:1-5).
1. Before Israel could be received by the Lord through His mercy in *“the latter days”* they would have to go through the fiery trials of Assyria brought on by the Lord (cf. Isa. 10:5).

2. Note that the people of Israel are the children and Israel as a whole the mother (wife of Jehovah's).
 3. Why did God have a "*controversy with the inhabitants of the land?*"
 - a. No truth among the inhabitants.
 - b. No goodness among the people.
 - c. The people had no knowledge of God.
 - d. They were a people who swore, broke faith, murdered, stole, and committed adultery with other's wives and husbands.
 4. Each of their sins listed indicates a heart of deception, selfishness, ignorance, and filled with evil desires. Israel could not be reasoned with because they were too thick headed and far removed from God. Their destruction was inevitable.
- B.** "*My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I also will forget thy children*" (4:6).
1. Jeremiah would later convict Judah of the same sin. The prophet writes, "*Yea, the stork in the heavens knows her appointed times; and the turtledove and the swallow and the crane observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the law of Jehovah*" (Jer. 8:7).
 2. Forgetting God's laws is equated to forgetting God himself. Those who do not stand by a moral standard in any given society will be given over to corruption and violence. When problems arise in the church today it can always be traced back to someone's lack of knowledge. God's people had set God on the shelf and forgot Him.
- C.** "*As they were multiplied, so they sinned against me: I will change their glory into shame. They feed on the sin of my people, and set their heart on their iniquity. And it shall be, like people, like priest; and I will punish them for their ways, and will requite them their doings. And they shall eat, and not have enough; they shall play the harlot, and shall not increase; because they have left off taking heed to Jehovah*" (4:7-10).
1. The greater the people's numbers the greater they sinned. God would thereby change what the people considered glorious into shame.
 2. The priests should have taught and persuaded the people not to sin, however, in this wicked society the priests encouraged sin so that they would gain from the sacrifices.
 3. Due to their leaving God in the lurch the Lord proclaims their demise (hunger and empty wombs).
- D.** "*Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the understanding*" (4:11).
1. Three things that take away the understanding are spiritual whoredom, intoxicating drinks, and luxury.
 2. Spiritual whoredom came in the form of idolatry and setting aside the laws of Jehovah God.
 3. New wine (Heb. *tirosh*) = freshly pressed juice of the grape. How could pure grape juice "take away the understanding?" Consider the fact that *tirosh* is associated with luxury at both Amos 6:1-6 and Micah 2:6-11. Wine of this sort was considered a blessing throughout the scriptures; however, the more Israel obtained the greater their wealth. Wealth has a way of deluding one's ability to reason in the areas of morality. The seducing qualities of money are well known by all. When I obtain wealth I often feel self sufficient and content with the materials of this world. I no longer see the need for God.
 4. Lastly, *yayin* (wine) is an intoxicating wine. Intoxication certainly seduces and takes away the ability of reason within the mind of man (cf. Prov. 23:32-33). The word of God also tells us that intoxicating drinks perverts individual judgment (Prov. 31:5) (see study # 5; The Effects of Drinking Alcohol).
- E.** "*My people ask counsel at their stock, and their staff declareth unto them; for the spirit of whoredom hath caused them to err, and they have played the harlot, departing from under their God. They sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains, and burn incense upon the hills, under oaks and poplars and terebinths, because the shadow thereof is good: therefore your daughters play the harlot, and your brides commit adultery. I will not punish your daughters when they play the harlot, nor your brides when they commit adultery; for the men themselves go apart with harlots,*"

and they sacrifice with the prostitutes; and the people that doth not understand shall be overthrown” (4:12-14).

1. Note that the *“spirit of whoredom hath caused them to err.”* The word *“spirit”* is an interesting word study throughout the word of God. It at times may indicate the spirit of man and at other times a disposition, character, or teaching (cf. Eph. 2:2; I Jn. 4:1). Rather than having knowledge of God they exercised a knowledge and faith in idols (stock) and magic (staff). The spirit (teaching) of error has been around a long time. God’s people did not learn to sacrifice and worship idols from the Lord but rather from their own fleshly reasoning that had been distorted by their dull and seduced minds (cf. Deut. 4:9-16). This appears to be the **theme** of Hosea. Not that Israel practiced idolatry but that their minds were more bent toward worldliness than on God’s ways (cf. Hos. 2:13) (see study # 6, The Spirit of Error). Israel was thinking in all the wrong directions.
 2. Idolatry often occurred under the green trees. Rather than worshipping Jehovah God under His guidance they worshipped by their own will under the trees. Their worship was perverted. Sexual acts often accompanied many idolatrous ways. The people thereby justified their fornication and adultery (lustfulness for one another) by calling it worship to another deity. Note that the Lord would not hold the women accountable for this debauchery but rather the men who led them into these wicked practices.
- F. *“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, As Jehovah liveth. For Israel hath behaved himself stubbornly, like a stubborn heifer: now will Jehovah feed them as a lamb in a large place” (4:15-16).*
1. A stern warning is delivered to Judah to not follow her sister into the depths of spiritual whoredom she has sunk.
 2. Israel, the wife of Jehovah, has conducted herself like a stubborn cow that will not be directed by the laws of its owner. Like a lamb fed in the open fields where dangers of wolves lure so shall Jehovah take Israel.
- G. *“Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone. Their drink is become sour; they play the harlot continually; her rulers dearly love shame. The wind hath wrapped her up in its wings; and they shall be put to shame because of their sacrifices” (4:17-19).*
1. Ephraim (or Israel) is joined to idols to such an extent that it is a waste of time to try to convince them to do otherwise. Their minds are bent on serving their own ways. The Lord thereby commands, *“let them alone.”* Though their intoxicating drinks make them sick they continue in their wicked works like so many in our world today. The negative affects of smoking, doing drugs, and alcohol will not detour the one whose mind is dulled to God’s ways.
 2. Not only the common people but also Israel’s rulers were involved in shameful conduct. Their end will be shame.

Lessons from chapters 2, 3, and 4

- The theme of these chapters may be found in Hosea 4:16, *“For Israel hath behaved himself stubbornly, like a stubborn heifer: now will Jehovah feed them as a lamb in a large place.”* One may ask, “What causes a wife to commit adultery?” “What causes a child to rebel against his parents or a member of the church to fall away in sin?” The answer is found in Hosea 4:12 where the prophet writes, *“My people ask counsel at their stock, and their staff declareth unto them; for the spirit of whoredom hath caused them to err, and they have played the harlot, departing from under their God.”* Israel’s heart was far removed from God. They lacked knowledge of God (Hos. 4:6; I Cor. 3:1ff; Gal. 1:6) and cared more for the ways of the world (Hos. 2:13). Those who display the same spirit of error today will likewise be condemned (cf. Eph. 2:2; I Jn. 4:1ff) (see study # 6).
- A greater understanding of the gracious and merciful God is learned in Hosea chapter 2. Though Israel (and all of us today) do not deserve God’s mercy and grace we nonetheless are offered it. God’s wrath against the disobedient would be poured out upon Israel in the form of the Assyrian Empire (Isa. 10:5; Hosea 11:5), however, those who would seek after God’s grace are promised rest and forgiveness (Hos. 2:23; Rom. 9:25-26; I Pet. 2:10). Truly God is gracious (Hos. 2:4, 19; Eph. 2:8 / 1:7). Hosea tells of God’s full grace being

revealed through the Messiah (“*David their king*”) in the “*latter days*” (Hos. 3:5 compared to Acts 2:25-35) (see study # 7; The Mercy of God).

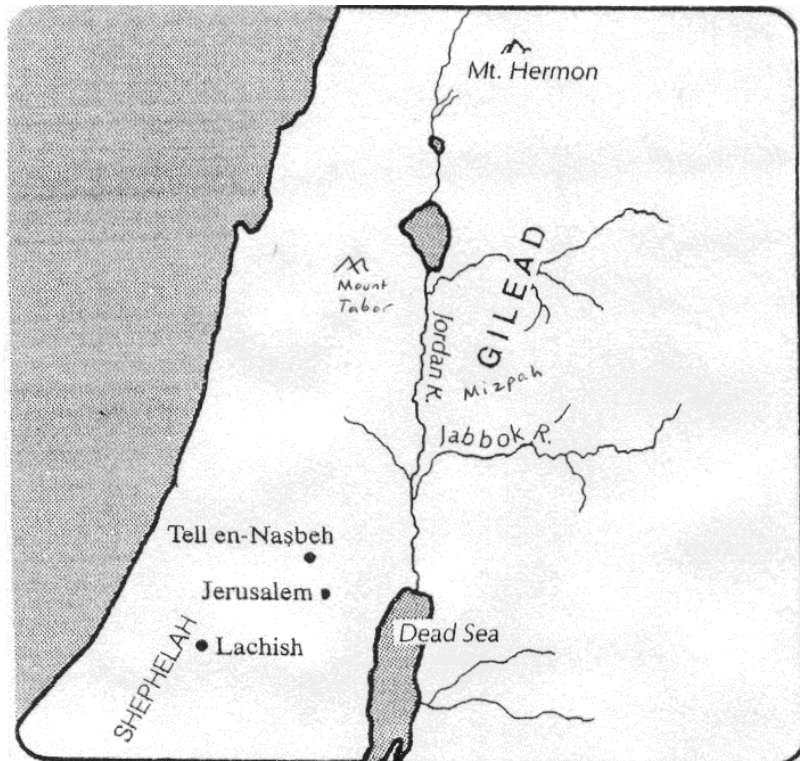
Chapter 5

I. Israel’s spirit of whoredom Exposed (5:1-7):

A. “*Hear this, O ye priests, and hearken, O house of Israel, and give ear, O house of the king; for unto you pertaineth the judgment; for ye have been a snare at Mizpah, and a net spread upon Tabor. And the revolvers are gone deep in making slaughter; but I am a rebuker of them all*” (5:1-2).

1. The term “*Hear this...*” is a resultant statement as to the “*controversy*” that Jehovah has with Israel (cf. Hos. 4:1). Israel had a “*spirit of whoredom*” that had caused her to “*err*” from God’s will (Hos. 4:12). Hosea compares the people to “*a stubborn heifer*” that will not do what it is suppose to do (Hos. 4:16). Truly Israel was a people of ill and misguided affections (cf. Hos. 2:13).

2. Judgment awaits the sinful people of Israel. The nation’s priests, king, and princes ought to have guided them in the paths of righteousness yet these leaders set a snare at Mizpah and Tabor for the entire nation to fall. Mizpah, in Hebrew, means “lookout or watch tower” (ISBE, v. 3, pp. 387). The location is somewhat obscure but appears to be in the region of Gilead north of the Jabbok River. Tabor is a limestone mountain that rises 1843 feet above sea level and located just south west of the Sea of Galilee. Were these two high elevated areas places where idolatrous worship took place? Were these two places representative of all Israel? It seems that the two sights must have been landmarks for unlawful acts of worship.



3. The Day of Judgment was upon Israel.

B. “*I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hid from me; for now, O Ephraim, thou hast played the harlot, Israel is defiled*” (5:3).

1. Ephraim, one of the two sons of Joseph that were somewhat adopted by Jacob as his own as evidenced by the two being given a portion of land in Canaan with the patriarch’s immediate sons. The name is often used in juxtaposition with the Northern nation of Israel (as Hosea now uses it).

2. That which has caused Ephraim / Israel to be “*defiled*” is her whoredoms (cf. Hos. 4:1-2). To be defiled is to exist in a state of sin (cf. Lev. 18:30; Numb. 6:9-11). The word “*defile*” (Gr. *koinoo*) = “to make common, to defile, profane... to deem or pronounce profane (irreverence toward God or things held sacred... disrespect of a sacred name by word or deed) (LS 440 / AHD 988). Another Greek word for “*defile*” is (*molusmos*) = “to stain, sully; to defile, contaminate morally” (Moulton 272). The Hebrew word used here (i.e., *tame*) indicates a moral stain upon the soul of man (see study # 3).

- C. *“Their doings will not suffer them to turn unto their God; for the spirit of whoredom is within them, and they know not Jehovah. And the pride of Israel doth testify to his face: therefore Israel and Ephraim shall stumble in their iniquity; Judah also shall stumble with them”* (5:4-5).
1. Again, we asks, “What causes a wife to be unfaithful to her husband?” “What causes a child or member of the church to be unfaithful?” Hosea continues to enlighten us all as to the answer to these questions. If I am unfaithful to the Lord, my wife, or parents it is because *“the spirit of whoredom is within and I know not Jehovah”* (cf. Hos. 4:12). The human mind has a choice in the direction it takes in this life. If I choose to serve God and keep His commandments I have chosen a life of the Spirit. If I choose to walk after the manner of the world seeking worldly gain and favor I have a spirit of error. The *“spirit of whoredom”* is thereby defined as a *“defiled”* life. Those living in sin are defiled and the *“spirit of whoredom”* (a desire for the ways of the world) has caused error. If I am unfaithful to my Lord, wife, and or parents it is because I care more about the things of this world than Jehovah God. I have erred in judgment and shall pay a high price as those of Israel did (see study # 6).
 2. My *“pride”* is an indicator that I have a *“spirit of whoredom”* and exists in a *“defiled”* state of error having departed from the Lord.
- D. *“They shall go with their flocks and with their herds to seek Jehovah; but they shall not find him: he hath withdrawn himself from them. They have dealt treacherously against Jehovah; for they have borne strange children: now shall the new moon devour them with their fields”* (5:6-7).
1. So ignorant of God, deluded, and self deceived was Israel that they actually looked for His blessings as they went out looking for Him yet He is not to be found. Like many in the denominational and so called Christian world today these Israelites go out to meet God yet He is no where for them to find. God does not hear the sinners prayers and turns His back to their request (cf. Prov. 28:9; Jn. 9:31). A universal principle is established firmly in the minds of all those who study God’s word. Sin separates one from God and without humble repentance there is no hope (cf. Isa. 59:1-2; I Jn. 1:5ff) (see study # 3).
 2. As a loving husband departs from an unfaithful wife even so Jehovah had departed from sinful and adulterous Israel. Their whoredoms of idolatry and the offspring produced thereof have indicated their true love.

II. Judgment pronounced upon Ephraim (5:8-15):

- A. *“Blow ye the cornet in Gibeah, and the trumpet in Ramah: sound an alarm at Bethaven; behind thee, O Benjamin. Ephraim shall become a desolation in the day of rebuke: among the tribes of Israel have I made known that which shall surely be”* (5:8-9).
1. Jehovah God pronounces the end from the beginning and thereby proves His deity (cf. Isa. 46:9-10). Judgment or *“the day of rebuke”* comes quickly.
 2. Gibeah, Ramah, and Bethaven were to sound the alarm now for danger of the enemy was knocking at their doors because of Ephraim’s sin.
- B. *“The princes of Judah are like them that remove the landmark: I will pour out my wrath upon them like water. Ephraim is oppressed, he is crushed in judgment; because he was content to walk after man’s command”* (5:10-11).
1. The Lord leaves nothing to our imagination. We see clearly the picture and justification of His wrath. Israel has oppressed and crushed by the enemy in judgment because *“he was content to walk after man’s command.”* God’s judgments are no different today. Let us learn the valuable lessons of the prophets of God. When I act in this world by my fleshly reasoning and I begin performing acts of religious service without the authority of God I am one who is *“walking after man’s command”* rather than by God’s (Matt. 15:8-9; Rom. 8:1-5; II Pet. 2:10; Ehp. 4:1ff) (see study # 8; Bible Authority).
 2. Judah was also in danger of judgment. The princes of Judah *“are like them that remove the landmark.”* Landmarks identify the corners and boundaries of property. To move a landmark was a despicable thing to do because it confused the true parameters of the property. Likewise, spiritually speaking, the princes of Judah had changed God’s commands and thereby confused the lines of right and wrong among the people. It is fascinating to find such an illustration as a landmark in comparison to God’s commandments. God’s commands are set like landmarks yet

the ungodly move and pervert the lines. One must note that though man may pervert truth it nonetheless stands the test of time and ungodly men. Truth remains in its place as the world revolves on its axis and wicked men come and go. The word of God has been revealed and is set in the hearts of men. Though some may try to change it the truth remains unaltered in the pages of God's word (see study # 9; The Standard of Truth).

- C. *“Therefore am I unto Ephraim as a moth, and to the house of Judah as rottenness. When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah saw his wound, then went Ephraim to Assyria, and sent to king Jareb: but he is not able to heal you, neither will he cure you of your wound”* (5:12-13).
1. Another source of Ephraim's spiritual whoredoms and error in judgment was going to others in their time of need rather than turning to Jehovah God. Israel had before cried out for help from Syria (cf. II Kg. 16:5-6) and Egypt (II Kg. 17:4ff) in the time of their calamity. Judah too called out to Assyria for help (II Kg. 17:7ff).
 2. Israel sought for help in the wrong places. The physicians of a “contending” king Jareb would be unable to heal their spiritual wounds. The very act of reaching out for help from the enemies of Jehovah are once again indicators of a perverted and whoredom filled heart of error (see study # 6).
- D. *“For I will be unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah: I, even I, will tear and go away; I will carry off, and there shall be none to deliver. I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: I their affliction they will seek me earnestly”* (5:14-15).
1. Like a powerful lion that thrashes and devours its prey the Lord would attack and consume Israel and Judah. No one can deliver them from the powerful might of the lion. Their only hope is in breaking the spirit of whoredoms and their pride and turn back to Jehovah God.
 2. It is fascinating to note throughout the word of God that the Lord's desire is that His people be faithful to Him. He has blessed and given cause for rejoicing through our physical and spiritual blessings of hope through Christ Jesus. He desires our faithfulness. When I sin, God wants me to *“acknowledge my offence”* and then *“seek my (God's) face”* (i.e., set the heart to follow His ways). So many lessons to learn from this chapter. Here we find that God demands a spirit of humility on my part (see study # 9; The Humble Mind). When I err I ought to be ashamed and turn from such doings asking Him to forgive me. This principle is established in the book of Leviticus. God's people were to acknowledge their sin, confess it, and take the revealed steps to remedy the sin (cf. Lev. 5:5-6). Such an attitude on the part of the worshipper was recognized as one who, when he sins through error, does all within the instructions of God's word to make amends to the situation. The other side would be the man or woman who sins in a *“high handed”* fashion. This person has no intentions to follow God's laws of atonement and is thereby to be cast out of the camp of Israel (Numb. 15:30). One represents the humble man of faith and the other the proud man of fleshly will. The humble are those God seeks to be His (cf. Isa. 57:15).

Chapter 6

I. Jehovah reveals His will for Israel and Judah (6 all):

- A. *“Come, and let us return unto Jehovah; for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: on the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live before him”* (6:1-2).
1. The function of the *“affliction”* mentioned at Hosea 5:15 was that Israel would *“return unto Jehovah.”* It seems to this author that the thought of chapter 5 continues. True healing from the wounds of sinful and defiled living can come from the spiritual *“balm of Gilead”* (Jer. 8:22) which is offered by Jehovah God alone (See study # ; 11; The chastening of the Lord).
 2. No doubt the next series of verses poses difficulties. Is Israel contemplating their decisions out loud? If we return to God we shall obtain His favor yet if we neglect Him He will neglect us. It seems more appropriate to say that Hosea is reasoning with the people in relation to their sin.

- B. *“And let us know, let us follow on to know Jehovah: his going forth is sure as the morning; and he will come unto us as the rain, as the latter rain that watereth the earth”* (6:3).
1. Hosea reasons with Israel saying that we ought to diligently seek to know Jehovah and His laws.
 2. Those who seek out Jehovah and abide by His commands shall surely gain the blessings of this earth; i.e. rain (suggest a period of drought during their affliction).
- C. *“O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? For your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the dew that goeth early away”* (6:4).
1. The Lord calls out to His beloved bride Ephraim and her sister Judah in anguish of pain due to their unfaithfulness.
 2. God’s people had moments of goodness yet it did not last very long. Fog or dew in the morning quickly dissipates with the morning heat and likewise Israel and Judah soon forget their good intentions. There is a great lesson for us today. How long shall we return to our sin and expect that God will overlook them? We often sin, pray that the Lord would forgive us, and yet turn right back to it. Such a shallow faith and purpose to serve God is exposed in said environments. True repentance and devotion to serve God must be deeper than casual repentance (see study # 12; Bible Repentance).
- D. *“Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth: and thy judgments are as the light that goeth forth. For I desire goodness, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings”* (6:5-6).
1. Due to Israel’s refusal to have knowledge of God and obey Him He would slay them. God had given them ample opportunities to repent using prophets.
 2. The people did contrary to God’s *“desire”* for them was. God desired the people’s heart (i.e. their faithfulness). He desired them to follow His commands because this is what they wanted to do rather than simply going through the motions of sacrifice. The people apparently continued to offer up burnt offerings to God yet their lack of knowledge gave way to a misunderstanding of true sin and its consequences. Samuel had tried to fix this principle into the mind of Saul yet the king of Israel was too hardened in sin to understand (I Sam. 15:22-23).
 3. Those truly interested and faithful to Jehovah God will spend time getting to know Him. We will be interested in what He desires of each of us. Said individual will not only exercise diligence in understanding but in obedience as well. God is real to this individual (see study # 13; God’s Desire for His People).
- E. *“But they like Adam have transgressed the covenant: there have they dealt treacherously against me”* (6:7).
1. God’s covenant with man is law (cf. Ps. 78:10; Hos. 8:1). To *“transgress”* God’s covenant with man is to violate its precepts. Let us understand that God is the God of all flesh (Jer. 32:27).
 2. When man violates God’s covenant law through disobedience he is subject to the wrath revealed therein. Adam was the first sinner thereby separated from God. Mankind has since followed Adam’s example of sin (see Rom. 5:12).
- F. *“Gilead is a city of them that work iniquity; it is stained with blood. And as troops of robbers wait for a man, so the company of priests murder in the way toward Shechem; yea, they have committed lewdness”* (6:8-9).
1. Nothing escapes the omniscient all seeing eyes of God (cf. Jer. 23:23-25).
 2. The area of Gilead had become a refuge for sinners and murderers. Priests acted in unity as a gang of thugs to spill innocent blood and practice lewdness (acts of indecency).
 3. Truly Israel was filled to the brim with sin and a mind of error.
- G. *“In the house of Israel I have seen a horrible thing: there whoredom is found in Ephraim, Israel is defiled. Also, O Judah, there is a harvest appointed for thee, when I bring back the captivity of my people”* (6:10-11).
1. God does not view Israel’s sin of ignorance of his laws, murderous, and lewd ways as humorous. The Lord refers to their defiled state as a *“horrible thing”* (see study # 14; My View Toward Sin).

2. Judah shall not escape the chastening rod of God. God will bring the sickle of wrath and punishment and harvest out the repentant and humble of heart.

Chapter 7

I. Israel presses on in sin being inflamed with Intoxicating Wine (7:1-7):

- A. *“When I would heal Israel, then is the iniquity of Ephraim uncovered, and the wickedness of Samaria; for they commit falsehood, and the thief entereth in, and the troop of robbers ravageth without”* (7:1).
 1. The discussion of Israel’s state of mind as opposed to God’s desired state of mind for them continues to be discussed.
 2. The only way to heal Ephraim is to uncover or expose her wickedness of falsehood through shame. So many today would do well to consider this verse. Without exposure of sinful ways and false doctrines the sinner will continue in a state of comfort until it is too late.
- B. *“And they consider not in their hearts that I remember all their wickedness: now have their own doings beset them about; they are before my face”* (7:2).
 1. Israel’s mind of reason is perverted. The Lord’s people do not consider the fact that God remembers all her wicked ways. They have deluded themselves and do not contemplate the consequences of their wicked actions. Like so many in the world today who live in the sins of pleasure and lewdness, Israel considered not the day of reckoning. Yet Jehovah God reveals that their wicked deeds and our un-repentant of sins are ever before His face (see study # 12).
 2. Jeremiah had foretold of a day when God would remember the sins of man no more (Jer. 31:34). The fulfillment of this time was under the law or covenant of Jesus Christ (Heb. 8:12). Those sins that God will remember no more are the sins that man repents of in a spirit of humility asking God to forgive them (cf. Acts 8:22; I Jn. 1:8-10).
- C. *“They make the king glad with their wickedness, and the princes with their lies. They are all adulterers; they are as an oven heated by the baker; he ceaseth to stir the fire, from the kneading of the dough, until it be leavened”* (7:3-4).
 1. The leaven of sin has gone throughout Israel. All are wicked from the king to the princes and, as earlier stated, the priests. The sins of the people make the heart of the king glad rather than sad. Sin ought to horrify us (cf. Hos. 6:10) in the lives of others yet a people devoid of understanding and hard of heart find joy in sin (see study # 14).
 2. Israel as a whole are guilty of spiritual adultery.
- D. *“On the day of our king the princes made themselves sick with the heat of wine; he stretched out his hand with scoffers. For they have made ready their heart like an oven, while they lie in wait: their baker sleeps all the night; in the morning it burns as a flaming fire. They are all hot as an oven, and devour their judges; all their kings are fallen: there is none among them that calleth unto me”* (7:5-7).
 1. The *“day of our king”* may have been some sort of birthday or anniversary. The people took the opportunity to blast themselves with alcoholic wine to the point of being sick.
 2. The king commended and enjoyed the sinful actions of his subjects yet it all backfired on him. When the opportune time arises Israel murdered their kings and judges. The society was sin sick from the sole of the foot to the head. Sad words in the Bible are found when the Lord proclaims, *“there is none among them that calleth unto me.”* Who shall call upon the name of the Lord today? Shall we allow our minds to enter into a stupor of delusion having never prayed unto the Lord or call upon him in times of joy and pain and somehow expect that I will receive His grand award of heaven? (see study # 16; Calling upon the name of the Lord).

II. Israel’s Deceptive Ways (7:8-16):

- A. *“Ephraim, he mixeth himself among the peoples; Ephraim is a cake not turned. Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not: yea, gray hairs are here and there upon him, and he knoweth it not”* (7:8-9).

1. God's people were called upon to be separate; i.e., sanctified from the surrounding nation's error (cf. Lev. 20:7, 23). When God's people "*mixed*" and "*mingled*" with those erring nations round about them they learned their ways of idolatry and whoredoms (cf. Ps. 106:35ff).
 2. Israel was thereby likened unto a "*cake not turned*" i.e., burned on one side and good for nothing and raw on the other.
 3. Ephraim was so steeped in their mixing and mingling of the sinful nations around them that they had forgot God and did not even know the horrid state of their souls. Here we find a divine principle. Though men sin in ignorance of God's word they are not excused (see study # 15; Sins of Ignorance).
- B.** "*And the pride of Israel doth testify to his face: yet they have not returned unto Jehovah their God, nor sought him, for all this*" (7:10).
1. Once again we find pride at the source of their troubles with God. Their pride "*testifies*" to God of Israel's defiled state.
 2. At times that they should have turned to Jehovah they rather turned away from Him.
- C.** "*And Ephraim is like a silly dove, without understanding: they call unto Egypt, they go to Assyria. When they shall go, I will spread my net upon them; I will bring them down as the birds of the heavens; I will chastise them, as their congregation hath heard*" (7:11-12).
1. Israel cries out to Egypt and Assyria for help in a state of total ignorance (i.e., "*without understanding*"). They should have recognized Jehovah as the one true God that is all powerful and all knowing. Israel did not, however, recognize God's great might and thereby put their trust in the might of this world; i.e., Egypt and Assyria.
 2. Though Israel called the mightiest of nations to help them, in the day of their trouble, Jehovah would still bring them down.
- D.** "*Woe unto them! For they have wandered from me; destruction unto them! For they have trespassed against me: though I would redeem them, yet they have spoken lies against me*" (7:13).
1. The Lord pronounces the woeful condition the defiled nation of Israel is in due to their trespasses.
 2. The Lord has ever stood ready to "*redeem*" them, however, their lies against Him have sealed their fate of doom. They have denied the one true God and have gone after other ways in their whoredoms.
- E.** "*And they have not cried unto me with their heart, but they howl upon their beds: they assemble themselves for grain and new wine; they rebel against me. Though I have taught and strengthened their arms, yet do they device mischief against me. They return, but not to him that is on high; they are like a deceitful bow; their princes shall fall by the sword for the rage of their tongue: this shall be their derision in the land of Egypt*" (7:14-16).
1. Israel cries out in anguish because they have lost their material wealth and freedom to Assyria. Their hearts were not with God though they said it was. They deceitfully promise to return to the Lord; however, the moment the opportunity of sin is there they seize it without thinking twice about the eternal consequences thereof (cf. Hos. 6:4, 7).
 2. Israel is likened unto a bow that is designed to thrust an arrow at the bulls eye. Israel has missed the mark, however, and deceitfully at that. They made empty and deceitful promises to God that they would walk in His statutes yet they lied and fulfilled the lust of their flesh. Egypt will be far from a safe haven for Israel. Assyria would soon destroy them.

Chapter 8

I. Israel has sown the wind and shall now reap the whirlwind (8:1-7):

- A.** "*Set the trumpet to thy mouth. As an eagle he comes against the house of Jehovah, because they have transgressed my covenant, and trespassed against my law*" (8:1).
1. Hosea tells Israel that the "*eagle*" (i.e., Assyria) is coming against them. Let the watchmen blow the trumpet of warning because they are here (see Numbers 10).

2. The destructive forces of Assyria shall swoop down and devour Israel like an Eagle capturing its prey due to her breaking God's covenant laws.
- B. *"They shall cry unto me, My God, we Israel know thee. Israel hath cast off that which is good: the enemy shall pursue him. They have set up kings, but not by me; they have made princes, and I knew it not: of their silver and their gold have they made them idols, that they may be cut off"* (8:2-4).
1. As a last resort; i.e., when all else has failed, Israel now cries unto God claiming *"we know thee."* God will not hear their cries of distress because they had all the long cast off all that was good and right. Jesus said that many will say the same thing on the final Day of Judgment (cf. Matt. 7:21-23) (see study # 16; Self Delusion).
 2. They had set up kings and princes over Israel without even praying to God about it. God was not a part of their lives. Instead of consulting with God they took their blessings of silver and gold and constructed idols of heathen deities and called them their gods.
- C. *"He hath cast off thy calf, O Samaria; mine anger is kindled against them: how long will it be ere they attain to innocency? For from Israel is even this; the workman made it, and it is no god; yea, the calf of Samaria shall be broken in pieces. For they sow the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind: he hath no standing grain; the blade shall yield no meal; if so be it yield, strangers shall swallow it up"* (8:5-7).
1. So certain is God's destructive work to come the prophet speaks of the *"calf of Samaria"* as already being destroyed. A God made by the workmanship of man is no God at all. Where would the calf be in the day of their adversity? Would it give them help, aid, or deliverance from the invading Assyrians? The calf is nothing more than metal and thereby shall in no way do anything (see study # 17; Idols).
 2. Israel has sown the wind (rather than obeying God and seeking His favor) and thereby their harvest shall be a whirlwind of God's anger and wrath.

II. Israel has totally forgotten God (8:8-14):

- A. *"Israel is swallowed up: now are they among the nations as a vessel wherein none delighteth. For they are gone up to Assyria, like a wild ass alone by himself: Ephraim hath hired lovers. Yea, though they hire among the nations, now will I gather them; and they begin to be diminished by reason of the burden of the king of princes"* (8:8-10).
1. At the end of its rope Israel sends ambassadors to Assyria seeking help and peace from their troubles. Like a wild ass they stand alone before the nations. No one will help them. Israel is depicted as a stupid whore that has given herself out for pay and expects people to respect her. She is a piece of trash in their sight and they want nothing to do with her. The nations cast Israel away after they have received what they desired of her.
 2. The same lovers they seek help from are now the very ones that destroy her.
- B. *"Because Ephraim hath multiplied altars for sinning. I wrote for him the ten thousand things of my law; but they are counted as a strange thing"* (8:11-12).
1. Israel did not have the calf alone at Samaria but other deities were multiplied throughout the land. Their allegiance was to the multitude of idols rather than God.
 2. God had delivered to them His laws, *"the ten thousand things of my law."* These laws were designed to sanctify the people and make them God's alone yet they not only were ignorant of these laws but rejected them.
 3. When God's commands or laws come to be *"strange"* to those who would claim to be His disciples then there is a serious problem between that person and the law giver. Some today believe it *"strange"* that the names of false teachers would be called from the pulpit and that unruly members are withdrawn from because they know not the laws of God (see study # 18; My View of God's Laws).
- C. *"As for the sacrifices of mine offerings, they sacrifice flesh and eat it; but Jehovah accepteth them not: now will he remember their iniquity, and visit their sins; they shall return to Egypt"* (8:13).
1. The sacrifices they make to God are nothing more than eating a common meal for them. God does not recognize nor accept their worship because their hearts are far from Him. Israel needed to repent and make their lives right with God; i.e., illustrate to God that they were serious about serving Him before He would accept their worship (cf. Isa. 1:11ff).

2. Now is the time of Israel's punishment for the sins she has committed. She shall go into captivity to Assyria as she once was in Egypt (see study # 19; The Consequences of unlawful Worship).
- D. *"For Israel hath forgotten his Maker, and builded palaces; and Judah hath multiplied fortified cities: but I will send a fire upon his cities, and it shall devour the castles thereof"* (8:14).
1. Israel had put God so far behind them that they did not even remember who He was. They went on in rebellion to him making their palaces or temples to other deities along with fortified cities.
 2. When man becomes so secure in his riches and fortifications the time of worrying ought to begin. The Lord would devour all that Israel and Judah put their trust in.

Lessons from chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8

- Those living in sin are defiled (cf. Hos. 5:3; 6:10).
- Indicators of a defiled whoredom filled heart of error:
 - Pride (Hos. 5:4-5; 7:10)
 - Mental delusion (Hos. 5:6-7)
 - Contentment to walk after man's commands (Hos. 5:11)
 - Turning to all but God for help in time of need (Hos. 5:12-13)
 - Short lived repentance (Hos. 6:4, 7; 7:14-16)
 - A light hearted view of sin (Hos. 7:3-4 compared to 6:10-11)
 - Mixing oneself with the sinful deeds of the world (Hos. 7:8-9)
 - Anguish over worldly losses (Hos. 7:14)
 - Walking in sin (8:1)
 - Turning to God as a last ditch effort to save face (Hos. 8:2-4)
 - Considering God's laws "*strange*" (Hos. 8:12).
 - Forgetting one's Maker (i.e., God) (Hos. 8:14)
- The religious world is deluded by thinking that their service to God is accepted by Him when it is done contrary to His authority (Hos. 5:6-7; 7:8-9).
- God's deep desire for His people is that they would "*acknowledge their offence*" (Hos. 5:14-15) and do right because it is the individual's true desire to please God (Hos. 6:5-6).

Chapter 9

- I. **Israel has "deeply corrupted" themselves (9:1-9):**
- A. *"Rejoice not, O Israel, for joy, like the peoples; for thou hast played the harlot, departing from thy God; thou hast loved hire upon every grain-floor"* (9:1).
1. Israel, under the lengthy reign of Jeroboam II, had experienced wealth and prosperity. Their "*joy*" was not over their spiritual relationship with God but with their prosperity.
 2. Note once again that playing a spiritual harlot is a departure from God (cf. Hos. 1:2). Israel had participated in idolatry (II Kg. 17:16ff), rejected knowledge of God and His commands (Hos. 4:1), God's commands had become "*strange*" to Israel (Hos. 8:12), they cared more for the ways of the world than God (Hos. 2:13), and sought help from other nations rather than from God (II Kg. 16:5-6; 17:4ff; Hos. 7:11-12). Note that the Lord said that Israel had departed. It was clearly their doing. The separation from God, due to sin, is not only God leaving behind the sinner but the sinner leaving behind God (see study # 3).
- B. *"The threshing-floor and the winepress shall not feed them, and the new wine shall fail her. They shall not dwell in Jehovah's land; but Ephraim shall return to Egypt, and they shall eat unclean food in Assyria"* (9:2-3).
1. The blessings of grain and new wine will not always be there for Israel. Israel was about to face difficult days of bondage as in the days of Egypt.

2. Eventually, Israel would find herself exiled to Assyria where they would eat “*unclean bread*” in that it would be food not taken from the holy land and neither would they be able to make their sacrifices of cleanness in this foreign land.
- C. “*They shall not pour out wine-offerings to Jehovah, neither shall they be pleasing unto him: their sacrifices shall be unto them as the bread of mourners; all that eat thereof shall be polluted; for their bread shall be for their appetite; it shall not come unto the house of Jehovah. What will ye do in the day of solemn assembly, and in the day of the feast of Jehovah?*” (9:4-5).
 1. How can the people make sacrifices unto Jehovah in this foreign land? Their food will not be that of eating with hearts of thanksgiving but rather of mourning and to fill their starving bellies. They will be likened unto the heathen around them who care not about giving God thanks and participating in worship with Him.
 2. When the day of set feast or Sabbath comes how will God be worshipped? Israel had cast out of their minds all such spiritual responsibilities. God was a wearisome concept to them.
- D. “*For, lo, they are gone away from destruction; yet Egypt shall gather them up, Memphis shall bury them; their pleasant things of silver, nettles shall possess them; thorns shall be in their in their tents. The days of visitation are come, the days of recompense are come; Israel shall know it: the prophet is a fool, the man that hath the spirit is mad, for the abundance of thine iniquity, and because the enmity is great*” (9:6-7).
 1. Memphis was a great city in Egypt and would be the burial place for the treasures of Israel. The comforts of ease will now leave them and in the place of comfort will be thorns and nettles.
 2. The day of Jehovah’s visitation or recompense had come to Israel for her iniquities. There was a great gulf of enmity between God and Israel due to their sins. The prophet was a fool and the one who claimed to have the spirit of God was actually a mad man. False prophets were proclaiming days of comfort whereas the true prophets; i.e., Hosea, were proclaiming doom and gloom for the people’s iniquity.
- E. “*Ephraim was a watchman with my God: as for the prophet, a fowler’s snare is in all his ways, and enmity in the house of his God. They have deeply corrupted themselves, as in the days of Gibeah: he will remember their iniquity, he will visit their sins*” (9:8-9).
 1. God had set prophets up as watchmen to watch and warn the people against the onslaught of error yet Ephraim actually watched “*against*” God (see footnote at bottom of ASV). God’s ways, laws, and commands were “*strange*” (cf. Hos. 8:12) to the people and thereby they carefully and watchfully alienated themselves from God. Such a state of mind is considered a “*deep corruption*” (see study # 14).
 2. Hosea compares present Israel with God’s people during the days of “*Gibeah*” (cf. Judg. 19-20). At that time the Benjaminites of Gibeah raped and abused a man’s concubine all night and she died. The owner cut the woman into 12 parts and delivered them to the twelve tribes of Israel. Israel rallied and nearly exterminated the Benjaminites for their wickedness. Israel now is no different than the base Benjaminites of the days of Gibeah.

II. A Lack of Interest is the cause of Israel’s Destruction (9:10-17):

- A. “*I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness; I saw your fathers as the first-ripe in the fig-tree at its first season: but they came to Baalpeor, and consecrated themselves unto the shameful thing, and became abominable like that which they loved*” (9:10).
 1. Israel was likened unto fresh grapes in the wilderness and the first ripe figs upon the tree for joy by Jehovah; however, it was not long that their fruit proved to be rotten.
 2. That “*shameful*” deed done at Baalpeor is recorded at Numbers 25:1ff (see study # 14). Israel’s desire was to be like the surrounding nations. They wanted their freedoms from God and the ability to worship and play with those who rejected Jehovah’s creation. Many Christians are likewise casting off their first love of God for the “*fun*” and “*freedoms*” that are offered by the world around us.
- B. “*As for Ephraim, their glory shall fly away like a bird: there shall be no birth, and none with child, and no conception. Though they bring up their children, yet will I bereave them, so that not a man shall be left: yea, woe also to them when I depart from them!*” (9:11-12).
 1. All those worldly interest that Israel had put her trust in shall fly away like a bird.

2. Children will be scarce due to miscarriages and those who do make it will be bereaved by Jehovah so that eventually no one is left. Israel's alienation has been caused with by their sin.
- C. *"Ephraim, like as I have seen Tyre, is planted in a pleasant place: but Ephraim shall bring out his children to the slayer. Give them, O Jehovah – what wilt thou give? Give them a miscarrying womb and dry breasts. All their wickedness of their doings I will drive them out of my house; I will love them no more; all their princes are revolvers"* (9:13-15).
1. Jehovah planted his people in a land that was likened unto Tyre (i.e., secure from the west by the Mediterranean Sea and to the East by the mountains). Though Israel had the same security they would bring out their children to the slayer for their sin.
 2. Jehovah would drive them out of the land so that the slayer would destroy them. Hosea's prayer for Israel is not that they would seek security but rather that God's full wrath would be completed in the unfruitful wombs of women.
- D. *"Ephraim is smitten, their root is dried up, they shall bear no fruit: yea, though they bring forth, yet will I slay the beloved fruit of their womb. My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto him; and they shall be wanderers among the nations"* (9:16-17).
1. Like a tree that has withered away and died so Ephraim shall be in Israel.
 2. The reason for their withering away is given: *"because they did not hearken unto him..."* The idea of *"hearkening"* is to not only listen but to obey ("to listen attentively; give heed" [AHD 600]). One who listens is one who has interest in the topic at hand. To obey is to believe in a cause. Israel neither had interest in God nor believed in His ways (see study # 20; Developing Interest in God). Israel was so wrapped up in desiring to be like the world that they completely forgot about the Lord.

Chapter 10

- I. **Internal Corruption shall cause Assyria to march on Israel plundering and Exiling God's People (10:1-8):**
- A. *"Israel is a luxuriant vine, that puts forth his fruit: according to the abundance of his fruit he hath multiplied his altars; according to the goodness of their land they have made goodly pillars. Their heart is divided; now shall they be found guilty: he will smite their altars, he will destroy their pillars. Surely now shall they say, we have no king; for we fear not Jehovah; and the king, what can he do for us?"* (10:1-3).
1. Israel stood out among the nations like a fruitful and healthy grapevine. Their works were idolatry; however, and rather than worshipping Jehovah they built a multitude of "pillars or obelisks."
 2. The hearts of the people were divided. Part of their minds desired to serve God yet another part desired idolatry and the ways of the surrounding nations. Due to their divided interest God would destroy their idols, altars, and obelisks (see study # 21; A Divided Heart).
- B. *"They speak vain words, swearing falsely in making covenants: therefore judgment springeth up as hemlock in the furrows of the field. The inhabitants of Samaria shall be in terror for the calves of Bethaven; for the people thereof shall mourn over it, and the priests thereof that rejoiced over it, for the glory thereof, because it is departed from it. It also shall be carried unto Assyria for a present to king Jareb: Ephraim shall receive shame, and Israel shall be ashamed of his own counsel"* (10:4-6).
1. The kings of the land of Israel have spoken *"vain words, swearing falsely in making covenants."* The kings of Israel had the integrity of a mad fool among the nations and so they were spoiled. Israel's prophets were *"fools"* (Hos. 9:7). The princes of Israel were *"revolvers"* (Hos. 9:15) and now we see that the priests were just as lost as they have rejoiced over the idolatrous calves of Samaria and Dan. All positions of authority were lost to ignorance and irreverence toward God.
 2. All the folly of Israel shall be carried away into Assyria and God's people will finally be ashamed for listening to the council of fools (i.e., the false prophets, priests, princes, and kings)

- C. *“As for Samaria, her king is cut off, as foam upon the water. The high places also of Aven, the sin of Israel, shall be destroyed: the thorn and the thistle shall come up on their altars; and they shall say to the mountains, Cover us; and to the hills, Fall on us”* (10:7-8).
1. When the king is cut off then the nation falls. Jehovah would cut down the king of Israel along with the nation’s places of idolatry and their place shall be thorns and thistles (i.e., symbols of absolute desolation and non – inhabitant).
 2. At said time the people shall exclaim in their shame to the mountains, *“Cover us; and to the hills, Fall on us.”* Said state of shame indicates anguish the people would go through for their sin. Rather than asking God to forgive them (i.e., acknowledge their sin / cf. Hos. 5:15) they instead asks for death. Later, when Rome shall march upon Jerusalem, the people will once again make the same cry (cf. Lk. 23:30). The prophet Jonah, in a hardened state of rebellion against God’s will, asked for the same thing (cf. Jonah 4:9) (see study # 22; A Hard Heart).

II. Israel’s Bleak Future (10:9-11):

- A. *“O Israel, thou hast sinned from the days of Gibeah: there they stood; the battle against the children of iniquity doth not overtake them in Gibeah. When it is my desire, I will chastise them; and the peoples shall be gathered against them, when they are bound to their two transgressions”* (10:9-10).
1. The ASV foot note states that the sin of Israel was “more than in the days” of Gibeah rather than sinning from the days of Gibeah. We know that Israel had sinned previous to the days of Gibeah so that it is more likely that the thought is “more than in the days of Gibeah.” The sin that occurred in Gibeah of Benjamin was discussed at Hosea 9:9.
 2. At a time that Jehovah shall determine He shall punish Israel for two transgressions. The two transgressions are likely two sins that sum up their *“spirit of whoredom”* (Hos. 4:12). Israel turned to other gods (Hos. 4:12) and other nations (Hos. 7:11) for comfort.
- B. *“And Ephraim is a heifer that is taught, that loveth to tread out the grain; but I have passed over upon her fair neck: I will set a rider on Ephraim; Judah shall plow, Jacob shall break his clods”* (10:11).
1. Ephraim has already been compared to a *“stubborn heifer”* in behavior at Hosea 4:16 (see study # 22).
 2. The stubborn heifer shall no longer find the pleasantries of grain in Palestine but rather be forced into hard labor in the fields of foreigners for her food.

III. True hope rest in Jehovah God (10:12-15):

- A. *“Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap according to kindness; break up your fallow ground; for it is time to seek Jehovah, till he come and rain righteousness upon you. Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies; for thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men”* (10:12-13).
1. Israel is called upon to repent of their wickedness. They ought to sow seeds of righteousness in their minds and thereby reap kindness as a harvest. Before any such spiritual farming can be done they must break up the fallow ground of their hearts (see study # 22).
 2. Rather than repenting and sowing seeds of righteousness in their minds they had plowed and sowed wicked seeds in the wicked fields of their minds. The harvest is nothing but sin and lies. Rather than trusting in God they put their trust in *“thy mighty men.”* We find here a third part of the equation to the spirit of whoredom. Not only did Israel trust in other deities and nations but they also put their trust in the mighty men of Israel (i.e., men of war). No comfort; however, would ever be found in any source other than Jehovah.
- B. *“Therefore shall a tumult arise among thy people, and all thy fortresses shall be destroyed, as Shalman destroyed Betharbel in the day of battle: the mother was dashed in pieces with her children. So shall Bethel do unto you because of your great wickedness: at daybreak shall the king of Israel be utterly cut off”* (10:14-15).
1. Jehovah has pronounced sure doom for their wicked acts. All that they trusted in would be destroyed (i.e., their fortresses).
 2. Hosea gives the example of “Shalman” destroying Betharbel. Though nothing is known about this person or place it is apparent that Israel was fearfully knowledgeable of the incident else

the illustration would have no meaning. Some believe “Shalman” to be the Shalmanezar of Assyria. The Assyrians methods of war were terrifying and so Israel is told that they will experience the full force of this callous and no conscience army of killers.

Chapter 11

I. Israel’s Doom is due to their spirit of Rebellion (11:1-7):

- A. *“When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt. The more the prophets called them, the more they went from them: they sacrificed unto the Baalim, and burned incense to graven images”* (11:1-2).
1. The Lord appears to be pondering the more pleasant days of Israel’s youth as he did at Hosea 9:10 and 10:9. During the infant years of the nation of Israel God has blessed them and brought them out of Egypt. God *“loved him”* as a son.
 2. Through time, Israel sinned and the Lord chastened them by the mouth of prophets. Israel rejected the admonition of the prophets and left Jehovah in the lurch by sacrificing to the Baalim and burning incense to other graven images.
- B. *“Yet I taught Ephraim to walk; I took them on my arms; but they knew not that I healed them. I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love; and I was to them as they that lift up the yoke on their jaws; and I laid food before them”* (11:3-4).
1. Why did Ephraim depart from the loving care of God and worship idols? Jehovah taught them His laws, cared, and healed them of their sicknesses. God’s tenderness, love, and care for Israel is depicted at Exodus 19:4 when Moses records that He *“bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto myself.”* Though Israel faced hardships God was always there for them setting food before them that they perish not (see study # 23; God Cares for His People).
 2. Yet for all this care Israel cast God away and went to serve the deities of the Canaanites (see study # 24; Ungrateful Hearts).
- C. *“They shall not return into the land of Egypt; but the Assyrian shall be their king, because they refused to return to me. And the sword shall fall upon their cities, and shall consume their bars, and devour them, because of their own counsels”* (11:5-6).
1. Due to Israel’s refusal to return from their wicked ways and their ingratitude toward Jehovah God they will be given over to another king; i.e., Assyria. With clear language the prophet now reveals their fate.
 2. During these days of distress by Assyria Israel will realize that their *“own councils”* from their prophets, priests, princes, and king were all lies.
- D. *“And my people are bent on backsliding from me: though they call them to him that is on high, none at all will exalt him”* (11:7).
1. One’s *“bent”* is equated to one’s purpose, objective, and or one’s ways. God’s people were *“bent”* on *“backsliding.”* We now have a further definition of the *“spirit of whoredom”* mentioned at Hosea 4:12.
 2. Israel’s *“bent”* or *“spirit of whoredom”* is characterized by their *“backsliding”* ways. To backslide is to “revert to sin or wrongdoing, esp. in religious practice” (AHD 150) (see study # 25; The spirit of Man).

II. Jehovah’s Compassion to be fully revealed in the Gospel Age (11:8-12):

- A. *“How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I cast thee off, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboiim? My heart is turned within me, my compassions are kindled together”* (11:8).
1. Admah and Zeboiim were the two other wicked cities that were destroyed along with Sodom and Gomorrah.
 2. The heart of Jehovah God is turned within due to His anguish and sorrow over his people’s departure.
- B. *“I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee; and I will not come in wrath. They shall walk after*

Jehovah, who will roar like a lion; for he will roar, and the children shall come trembling from the west. They shall come trembling as a bird out of Egypt, and as a dove out of the land of Assyria; and I will make them to dwell in their houses, saith Jehovah” (11:9-11).

1. Through God’s compassion he will not utterly destroy Israel even though they deserve it. Man may exercise such extreme destruction yet not so with the merciful God. There will be those in the future who shall walk after God’s laws (a far cry from those who “*refused to return*” unto the Lord at Hos. 11:5).
 2. These people that shall “*walk after Jehovah*” are those who hear the roaring of the Jehovah lion and heed to his ways in fear. This would not be a return of the exiled Jews from Assyria. The expression is an illustration of the gospel message that shall call men and women out of their bondage of sin. Those who reverentially and fearfully heed to the gospel’s call shall be saved.
- C. “*Ephraim compasseth me about with falsehood, and the house of Israel with deceit; but Judah yet ruleth with God, and is faithful with the Holy One*” (11:12).
1. Falsehood of error is another indicator of Israel’s whoredom.
 2. What about Judah? The footnote in the American Standard Version reads, “*and Judah is yet unstedfast with God and with the Holy One who is faithful.*” Due to the comments made at chapter 12 it is more probable that the footnote version is more correct. Judah was just as much a disappointment to the Lord as was her northern sister Israel.

Lessons Learned from chapters 9, 10, and 11

- Israel had departed from God (Hos. 9:1) in that they practiced an abundance of wickedness (Hos. 9:7), “*deeply corrupted*” themselves (Hos. 9:9), separated themselves to shameful things such as Baalpeor (Hos. 9:10), and looked to their own counsels rather than consulting with God (Hos. 11:6). Therefore God “*hated*” Israel for her sin (Hos. 9:15).
- God had done so much for Israel yet they were ungrateful (cf. Hos. 2:8-9; 9:10, 13; 11:3-4).
- Israel’s prophets (Hos. 9:7-8), princes (Hos. 9:15), king (Hos. 10:3), and priest (Hos. 10:5) were corrupt.
- Israel was to be exiled to Assyria for her refusal to return to the Lord in repentance (Hos. 10:6; 11:5).
- Not only did Israel trust in other nations (cf. Hos. 7:11) and other deities (Hos. 11:2) but they also put their trust in their “*mighty men*” of war (Hos. 10:13) and their own council (Hos. 11:6).
- Israel’s “*ben*” was on backsliding (Hos. 11:7). Here seems to be the overall problem that Hosea is bringing out in this short book. God’s people no longer cared about God. They looked to the surrounding nations and desired their ways and deities. The grass appeared greener on the other side yet when they walked in the council of the wicked they produced trouble with God. Israel was ungrateful and thereby would pay the price for their spiritual adultery.

Chapter 12

- I. **A Contrast between the faithful character of Jacob and the wicked people of God during Hosea’s Day (12:1-6):**
- A. “*Ephraim feedeth on wind, and follows after the east wind: he continually multiplies lies and desolation; and they make a covenant with Assyria, and oil is carried into Egypt*” (12:1).
1. The erring councils of the priests, princes, and rulers was taken hook, line and sinker by Israel’s people. They “feed” on these falsehoods (cf. Eph. 4:14). The “*lies*” of Ephraim appear to be their words of change yet no change comes (cf. Hos. 6:7; 10:4). Ephraim speaks words of faith yet their actions are far from obedience (Hos. 4:2). Ephraim’s prophets have lied saying that God has spoken when the Lord said no such things (cf. Hos. 7:13; 9:7). Lip service was the order of worship. Ephraim was saying the right things but doing all the wrong things.
 2. One example of their wrong doings is found in the covenants they made with Assyria and Egypt rather than turning to God for help (cf. Hos. 7:11).
- B. “*Jehovah hath also a controversy with Judah, and will punish Jacob according to his ways; according to his doings will he recompense him*” (12:2).

1. Though Hosea has just pronounced commendation upon Judah by saying, "*Judah is faithful with the Holy One*" (Hos. 11:12) we now see that Judah (the Southern Kingdom) was not completely innocent.
 2. Judah and Israel (i.e., Jacob) will be punished for their wrong doings.
- C. "*In the womb he took his brother by the heel; and in his manhood he had power with God: yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed; he wept, and made supplication unto him: he found him at Bethel, and there he spake with us, even Jehovah, the God of hosts; Jehovah is his memorial name. Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep kindness and justice, and wait for thy God continually*" (12:3-6).
1. Hosea reminds Israel and Judah of the faith of Jacob. The events brought up in these few verses indicate Jacobs resolve and intense interest in God's blessings as opposed to Esau who despised his birthright. Let the people of God have such an intense interest in the blessings of the Lord; i.e., the forgiveness of sins through the blood of Jesus Christ (see study # 20).
 2. Jacob illustrated this intense interest for the blessings of God even in the womb by grasping hold of Esau's heel (an indication that he would later wrestle the birthright away from Esau / cf. Gen. 25:23ff).
 3. Later we find Jacob wrestling with the angel of Jehovah God (Gen. 32:24ff). Jacob was to learn, during his wrestling match, that God's blessings cannot be wrestled away from him by physical strength, craft, or deceit but by humility of life and prayer. The angel assures Jacob of Jehovah's great power by touching his thigh and moving it out of socket. Jacob now had no doubts regarding God's favor, power, and protection and neither did he doubt God's promises.
 4. Jacob was a man of prayer: There is a marked change in Jacob's character after serving Laban twenty years for the hand of Rachel and Leah. When Jacob was distressed and filled with fear over the coming of Esau with 400 men he prayed to God and revealed his new spirit of humility. Jacob prays saying, "*I am not worthy of the least of all the lovingkindnesses, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant...*" (Gen. 32:7, 10).
 5. Conviction of the reality of God's promises, a determination to obtain these promises, and prayerful humility were traits exercised by Jacob. A far contrast between this patriarch of faith and the people of God during Hosea's day (see study # 26; Jacob). The wicked people of Hosea's day were governed by pride, ignorance, and a spirit of whoredom (cf. Hos. 4:12).
 6. The call thereby for Ephraim is to "*turn to God*" and seek "*kindness and justice*" and "*wait*" upon the Lord's coming promises by faith.

II. Self Delusion and Ingratitude Lead to God's Wrath (12:7-14):

- A. "*He is a trafficker, the balances of deceit are in his hand: he loves to oppress. And Ephraim said, Surely I am become rich, I have found me wealth: in all my labors they shall find in me no iniquity that were sin*" (12:7-8).
1. Israel had a reputation of being cheaters. Rather than following the godly ways of Jacob and seeking justice Ephraim had become a "*trafficker*" (one who participates in trade) using balances of deceit. Produce and grain was sold by weight. Ephraim had perverted scales so that it favored them. When weighing produce the scales were calibrated to read more than what was actually being weighed. Such a deceitful balance would bring the seller more money for less fruit and grain.
 2. Such activity became so much a part of their ways that they did not see any wrong in their actions (cf. Jer. 2:35) (see study # 16). Ephraim reasoned that since they had become rich using the faulty scales then "*they shall find in me no iniquity that were sin.*" Ephraim was guilty of the greatest deception of all; i.e., self delusion. There is a danger today that our sin may produce a seemingly good outcome yet let us not consider it a blessing from God or a sign of no wrong committed. God's laws determine right from wrong.
- B. "*But I am Jehovah thy God from the land of Egypt; I will yet again make thee to dwell in tents, as in the days of the solemn feast. I have also spoken unto the prophets, and I have multiplied visions; and by the ministry of the prophets have I used similitudes*" (12:9-10).
1. The Lord reminds Israel that he alone is "*Jehovah thy God.*" God had brought them out of Egypt with a mighty arm and caused them to dwell in tents in the wilderness and so they would

return. The days of tent dwelling were days Israel was learning to be dependant upon Jehovah God for all their protection and sustenance.

2. The Lord had not only trained them through the University of Hard Knocks but too had revealed His will to them through the prophets in visions and similitudes (comparisons or implication). The current mind set of Israel was inexcusable in relation to where God had brought them and where they should have been at this point in history.
- C. *“Is Gilead iniquity? They are altogether false; in Gilgal they sacrifice bullocks; yea, their altars are as heaps in the furrows of the field”* (12:11).
1. Gilead was the sin city of their day (cf. Hos. 6:8).
 2. Gilgal was located about 15 miles due north of Jerusalem. The temple of Jehovah was located in the city of David (i.e., Jerusalem). Sacrifices were to be made there alone rather than in other parts of the country. Israel had their worship and intentions all whacked.
- D. *“And Jacob fled into the field of Aram, and Israel served for a wife, and for a wife he kept sheep. And by a prophet Jehovah brought Israel up out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved. Ephraim hath provoked to anger most bitterly: therefore shall his blood be left upon him, and his reproach shall his Lord return unto him”* (12:12-14).
1. Once again Hosea goes back to the comparison with Jacob. Jacob had left his home in Canaan traveling to Haran to find a wife of his kindred. Fourteen years would pass as he served Laban by keeping sheep for two wives (7 additional years for Rachel due to Laban’s deception). Why do this Jacob? Because his grandfather Abraham (cf. Gen. 24:1-3) and father Isaac (Gen. 28:1) had spoke by divine revelation commanding not to take a wife from among the Canaanites.
 2. Jacob was obedient even though it caused him much grief and time of life. Ephraim; however, will not obey the voice of God and thereby show themselves ungrateful for all that He has done by removing them from Egypt and making them into a mighty nation. They shall thereby pay the price of God’s wrath for their ingratitude, self deception, and false ways.

Chapter 13

I. **Israel’s Progression of Sin has lead them to be winnowed by the wind of God’s Wrath (13:1-3):**

- A. *“When Ephraim spake, there was trembling; he exalted himself in Israel; but when he offended in Baal, he died”* (13:1).
1. There was a time when Ephraim (Israel) spoke that they were feared as a nation due to God’s favor. Israel was exalted high.
 2. Israel; however, fell from the lofty heights of God’s favor to the depths of sin as they worshipped Baal. When Israel committed adultery against Jehovah God they died in the eyes of God and thereby lost favor with the Lord.
- B. *“And now they sin more and more, and have made them molten images of their silver, even idols according to their own understanding, all of them the work of the craftsmen: they say of them, Let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves”* (13:2).
1. Israel’s sin grew deeper and deeper. To begin with, Israel worshipped God through the calf. Jeroboam I had convinced Israel to worship at Samaria and Dan rather than going all the way to Jerusalem. The calf stood as a symbol of God yet was indeed a perversion of God’s will (see Deut. 4:9ff).
 2. Israel eventually left off God in the calf worship and moved toward serving Baal. Those who sacrificed to the idols *“kiss the calves”* in that they showed forth their faith and dedication to the idol.
- C. *“Therefore they shall be as the morning cloud, and as the dew that passes early away, as the chaff that is driven with the whirlwind out of the threshing-floor, and as the smoke out of the chimney”* (13:3).
1. Hosea gives four illustrations to indicate the futility and short lived pleasure of idolatry among the Israelites.

2. Israel will fade away as the morning fog, as the dew that dissipates with the midmorning heat, as the chaff that is thrown into the air to be separated from the good grain, and as smoke that comes from the chimney that is carried away by the wind.

II. God will devour the ungrateful, disobedient, and self deluded people of contentment of all Ages (13:4-8):

- A. *“Yet I am Jehovah thy God from the land of Egypt; and thou shalt know no god but me, and besides me there is no savior”* (13:4).
1. Who should Israel look for in this prophetic time of calamity? Shall the Baal and or any other idol saved them?
 2. Isaiah quoted from God saying, *“Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me”* (Isa. 46:9).
 3. This same principle is established at Acts 4:12 when Peter had addressed the Sanhedrin council saying, *“And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men wherein we must be saved.”*
- B. *“I did know thee in the wilderness, in the land of great drought. According to their pasture, so were they filled; they were filled, and their heart was exalted: therefore have they forgotten me”* (13:5-6).
1. When Israel was in the wilderness of Sinai God fed them manna and quail. When they were thirsty in the dry land God gave them water from the rocks. Truly God had born Israel *“on eagle’s wings”* (Ex. 19:4).
 2. Israel was filled with the blessings and care of God and so they forgot the Lord in their comfort. What a great danger for people today. When all is well in our lives we tend to take the credit rather than giving God the glory and thanksgiving He deserves. Throughout the history of God’s people they tend to forget Him when things go well (cf. Isa. 17:10; Jer. 3:21; Ezek. 22:12; Hos. 4:6; 8:14 and here at 13:6) (see study # 23 and # 24).
- C. *“Therefore am I unto them as a lion; as a leopard will I watch by the way; I will meet them as a bear that is bereaved of her whelps, and will rend the caul of their heart; and there will I devour them like a lioness; the wild beast shall tear them”* (13:7-8).
1. The greatest folly of all is to loose conscience of one’s sin and standing with Jehovah God. When we think all is well while living in sin let us beware of the all powerful God.
 2. Like a lion, leopard, and bereaved bear that has lost her cubs will the Lord tear to shreds the disobedient, unthankful, and deluded content peoples of all ages.

III. Destruction for the Foolish and hope for the Wise (13:9-14):

- A. *“It is thy destruction, O Israel, that thou art against me, against thy help. Where now is thy king, that he may save thee in all thy cities? And thy judges, of whom thou saidst, Give me a king and princes? I have given thee a king in mine anger, and have taken him away in my wrath”* (13:9-11).
1. Israel was so deluded that they did not see that they had set themselves against the one who was truly there to help.
 2. Turning to their riches (Hos. 12:8), mighty men (10:13), king (Hos. 10:3; 13:10), judges (Hos. 13:10), Assyria or Egypt (Hos. 7:11), their prophets (Hos. 9:7), princes (Hos. 9:15), priests (Hos. 10:5), and idols of worship (Hos. 8:6; 11:2; 13:2) would only lead to *“thy destruction.”*
- B. *“The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up; his sin is laid up in store. The sorrows of a travailing woman shall come upon him: he is an unwise son; for it is time he should not tarry in the place of the breaking forth of children”* (13:12-13).
1. God has taken a reckoning of the sins of Ephraim and has remembered them in their folly.
 2. There are grave consequences for the sinful people to meet out due to their iniquity. Israel’s death folly is likened unto a child that is unable to come out of the womb of the mother and thereby faces the danger of death.
- C. *“I will ransom them from the power of Sheol; I will redeem them from death: O death, where are thy plagues? O Sheol, where is thy destruction? Repentance shall be hid from mine eyes”* (13:14).
1. The apostle Paul latter quotes from this verse at I Corinthians 15:54-55 to indicate the Christian’s victory over sin and death through the blood of Jesus Christ. The Christian can be forgiven of sins and the Christian will be raised from the dead to die no more.

2. Hosea is looking to a day when the true Israel would awaken from their folly, acknowledge, and confess their sins to God. The power of Sheol (realm of the dead) shall not hold such a one. God will not repent from giving men this opportunity. It is His promise to mankind and sealed by the blood of His dear Son Jesus.

IV. Ephraim shall bear her guilt for her Rebellion (13:15-16):

- A. *“Though he be fruitful among his brethren, an east wind shall come, the breath of Jehovah coming up from the wilderness; and his spring shall become dry, and his fountain shall be dried up: he shall make spoil of the treasure of all goodly vessels”* (13:15).
 1. At one time Ephraim was fruitful yet now the harvest of grain, wine, and oil are scorched by an east wind because of their refusal to repent of their sin.
 2. Assyria will make spoil of their possessions and carry them off as captives to a foreign land.
- B. *“Samaria shall bear her guilt; for she hath rebelled against her God: they shall fall by the sword; their infants shall be dashed in pieces, and their women with child shall be ripped up”* (13:16).
 1. Samaria, the capital city of Israel, would bear the consequences of her rebellion against the Lord.
 2. Gruesome deaths await man, woman, child, and even the pregnant women.

Chapter 14

I. What God wants to hear Ephraim say (14 all):

- A. *“O Israel, return unto Jehovah thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words, and return unto Jehovah: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and accept that which is good: so will we render as bullocks the offering of our lips”* (14:1-2):
 1. The *“words”* that the Lord desires to hear from His people are words of repentance. The Lord desires that His people would *“acknowledge”* their sin with a spirit of humility (cf. Hos. 5:15). Furthermore the Lord desires to hear the *“offering of our lips.”* **Words** that not only acknowledge but words that indicate the worshippers’ desire to have his or her iniquity taken away. One may offer animals upon the altar of burnt offering yet do it out of mechanical motions of habit. God wants much more from His people (see study # 13).
 2. The Lord desires to hear the people say, from the honesty of their heart, that they have made a mistake and desire God to forgive them. Such words would indicate a desire toward spiritual matters as Jacob illustrated in his life. Words are not all the Lord wants. God wants to see our actions improve; i.e., *“accept that which is good.”*
- B. *“Assyria shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses; neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods; for in thee the fatherless finds mercy”* (14:3).
 1. All those things that Israel found comfort (i.e., Assyria, idols, mighty men, etc.) and sought help through are now to be cast away.
 2. Those who display such an attitude shall find mercy.
- C. *“I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely; for mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall blossom as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon”* (14:4-5).
 1. When Israel displays a spirit of humility acknowledging their sins and repenting the Lord will heal them of their sin through a spirit of love and mercy.
 2. Israel will once again experience the blessings of the Lord’s tender care. The faithful shall be as beautiful and aromatic as the lily and strong as the cedars whose roots grow deep within the earth.
- D. *“His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive-tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the grain, and blossom as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon”* (14:6-7).
 1. The world shall feel the influence of the humble and penitent. They shall be beautiful as the olive tree and fragrant as Lebanon.

2. Many others shall benefit from their beauty and fragrance. Forgiven sinners live with a spirit of love and mercy toward others. Said individuals are likened unto beautiful things.
- E. *“Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have answered, and will regard him: I am like a green fir-tree; from me is thy fruit found”* (14:8).
 1. Ephraim’s self delusion is over. God’s people have awakened to the evils of idols and are now rejecting them based upon God’s will.
 2. Those with such a spirit shall God have regard for and will cause to be fruitful in his doings.
- F. *“Who is wise, that he may understand these things? Prudent, that he may know them? For the ways of Jehovah are right, and the just shall walk in them; but transgressors shall fall therein”* (14:9).
 1. The *“wise and prudent”* understand these instructions. Said individuals will thereby cast off idolatry, acknowledge their sin, ask the Lord to forgive them and repent of their wicked deeds. Such actions would be *“right”* and those who desire right ways shall be considered *“just.”*
 2. The transgressor (i.e., one who refuses to acknowledge, seek forgiveness, and repent of sins) is everything the wise and prudent (one who exercises good judgment) is not. Sinners who continue in sin are foolish and exercise poor judgment.

Lessons Learned from chapters 12, 13, and 14

- Israel was filled with **liars** (Hos. 12:1). Israel would say that they were going to serve God with their whole hearts yet their actions proved otherwise (cf. Hos. 6:7:10:4). Israel spoke words of faith yet their disobedience exposed their lying heart (Hos. 4:2).
- Israel was **not spiritually interested**. Jacob stands as an eternal example of one who truly desired spiritual matters throughout his life (Hos. 12:3-6, 12). Jacob had intense interest in God’s promised blessings, he took the birthright away from his brother Esau who cared nothing (despised) for it. Jacob was a man of prayer too (cf. Gen. 32:7-10). Why could Israel not look to this patriarch as an example?
- Not only was Israel liars but they were also **cheaters** (Hos. 12:7-8). When they gained riches by cheating others they considered it a sign that they were not in sin (Hos. 12:8).
- Israel’s error (i.e.; **calf worship**) was not due to God’s instruction but rather occurred according to *“their own understanding”* (Hos. 13:2; cf. Deut. 4:9ff). Israel did not look for a thus saith the Lord but rather a thus thinketh me.
- Israel’s only hope (and ours) is God alone (cf. Hos. 13:4; Isa. 46:9; Acts 4:12).
- God’s great care for Israel in the wilderness (i.e., water, manna, and quail) filled the people’s bellies. While in a state of contentment the people forgot about God (Hos. 13:6).
- All that Israel hoped in (i.e., riches, judges, mighty men, king, Assyria and Egypt, prophets, priest, princes, and idols) would in no way save them from God’s wrath (Hos. 13:9-11).
- Israel is like an unwise son (Hos. 13:13) and has rebelled against God (13:16).
- God’s request for Israel:
 - To speak words of repentance and humbly acknowledge one’s sins and asks God to forgive (Hos. 14:1-2).
 - Acknowledge that neither Assyria nor idols will save them from the wrath of God (Hos. 14:3).
 - Such actions on the part of Israel will God deem wise and prudent (Hos. 14:9).