***Studying the Northern Kingdom Prophets”—Hosea 13-14***

***Hosea 13 – I Will Be Your King***

Israel forgot the commandments of Sinai. In the past, there was a group of kings in the Northern Kingdom that started with Jehu in 842 BC. This group of kings ended with the death of Jeroboam 2nd (793 - 753 BC). But, after he died, there were six more kings in Israel. It was a difficult time. Other leaders in the country killed these kings. Also, there was a war between Assyria and Israel. In 734 BC, Israel became a much smaller country. This was the beginning of the end for Israel. Then, in 722 BC, Assyria destroyed Israel.**This chapter and the fourteenth chapter probably belong to the troubled times that followed Pekah's murder by Hoshea (compare** [**Hosea 13:11**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/hosea/13/11/s_875011)[**2Ki 15:30**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/2kings/15/30/s_328030) **). The subject is the idolatry of Ephraim, notwithstanding God's past benefits, destined to be his ruin.** [**Hosea 13:1-16**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/hosea/13/1/s_875001)**. EPHRAIM'S SINFUL INGRATITUDE TO GOD, AND ITS FATAL CONSEQUENCE; GOD'S PROMISE AT LAST.**

REVIEW: Outline Study of Hosea

**The Prophet**. He is called the "Prophet of Divine Love." His name, Hosea, means "Deliverance." He was a native and citizen of Israel and followed Amos whom he may have heard in Bethel. He was a contemporary with Isaiah and bore faithful testimony to corrupt Israel in the North while Isaiah prophesied at Jerusalem and was to Israel what Jeremiah became to Judah. He was prepared for his work through the lessons which he learned from the sins of his unfaithful wife. (1) Through the suffering which he endured because of her sins, he understood how God was grieved at the wickedness of Israel and how her sins were not only against God's law but an insult to divine love. (2) In love and at great cost he restored his wayward wife and in that act saw a hope of the restoration and forgiveness of Israel. His ministry extended over more than sixty years and was perhaps the longest of any on record. It continued 786-726 B. C., covering the last few years of the reign of Jereboam II, to which Chs. 1-3 belong and the period of anarchy following.

**The Style and Method.** His style is "abrupt, uneven, inelegant," but also poetical, figurative and abounding in metaphors. His writings must be interpreted with great care to get what is meant by his symbolic speech. He reminds one of modern reformers and revivalists. Through all the anger which the book reveals we see also the surpassing beauty of reconciling love. One sees everywhere that the supreme goal to which Hosea moves is the re-establishment of Israel's fellowship of life and love with Jehovah.

**Conditions of Israel.** *Outwardly* there was prosperity. Syria and Moab had been conquered; commerce had greatly increased; the borders of the land had been extended and the temple offerings were ample. *Inwardly* there was decay. Gross immoralities were being introduced; worship was being polluted and the masses of the people crushed, while the Assyrian Empire was advancing and ready to crush Israel, whom, because of her sins, God had abandoned to her fate. They countenanced oppression, murder, lying, stealing, swearing, etc. They had forgotten the law and their covenant to keep it and had substituted the worship of Baal for that of Jehovah, thereby becoming idolaters. They no longer looked to God in their distress but turned to Egypt and Assyria for help, and thereby put security and prosperity on a basis of human strength and wisdom instead of resting them upon a hope of divine favor.

**Analysis.**

**I. Israel's Sin. illustrated by the tragedy of Hosea's unfortunate marriage, Chs. 1-3.**

**1. His evil wife and their children, Ch. 1.**

**2. Israel's unfaithfulness and return to God seen in the evil women, Ch. 2.**

**3. God's love restores Israel as Hosea does his wife, Ch. 3.**

**II. The Prophetic Discourses, Chs. 4-14.**

**1. Israel's sin, Chs. 4-8.**

**2. Israel's coming punishment, Chs. 9-11.**

**3. Israel's repentance and restoration, Chs. 12-14.**

**1-3, “When Ephraim spoke, trembling, he exalted *himself* in Israel; but when he offended through Baal *worship,* he died. Now they sin more and more, and have made for themselves molded images, idols of their silver, according to their skill; all of it *is* the work of craftsmen. They say of them, Let the men who sacrifice kiss the calves! Therefore they shall be like the morning cloud and like the early dew that passes away, like chaff blown off from a threshing floor and like smoke from a chimney.”**

1. **Re-state God’s premise in this first verse. Review Job 29:8, “**The young men saw me, and hid themselves: and the aged arose, and stood up,” **9, “**The young men saw me, and hid themselves: and the aged arose, and stood up, “  **and 21, “**Unto me *men* gave ear, and waited, and kept silence at my counsel.”rather, "When Ephraim (the tribe most powerful among the twelve in Israel's early history) spake (authoritatively) there was trembling"; all reverentially feared him [JEROME], (compare [Job 29:8, 9, 21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/job/29/8/s_465008) ).**Now they sin more and more**. **The men who sacrifice** may instead have the idea of *engaging in human sacrifice*, and could be translated the sacrificers of men.
2. **Talk about human sacrifice that Israel was involved in. Use Hosea 9:13, “**Ephraim, as I saw Tyrus, *is* planted in a pleasant place: but Ephraim shall bring forth his children to the murderer,” **and 5:2, “**And the revolters are profound to make slaughter, though I *have been* a rebuker of them all.” In ancient Israel human sacrifice was almost always child-sacrifice. Hosea has already spoken of this horrible practice in [Hosea 9:13](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Hosea+9:13&t1=en_nas) and perhaps in [Hosea 5:2](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Hosea+5:2&t1=en_nas). Viewed together, the sin is a total perversion of values. A craftsman’s work is elevated to divine status; human beings sacrifice their offspring to a metal object from whose lifeless form they also beg help; persons embrace with adulation the images of the very animals that they use for ploughing, threshing and hauling.
	1. **Remind yourself of King Ahab’s sin in I Kings 16:31, “**And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him,” that is, *in respect to* Baal, by worshipping him ( [1Ki 16:31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/1kings/16/31/s_307031) ), under Ahab; a more heinous offense than even the calves.
3. **Explain “kiss the calves.” Use I Kings 19:18, “**Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.,” **Job 31:27, “**And my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand,” **and Psalm 2:12, “**Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.      **kiss the calves**--an act of adoration to the golden calves
4. **Note the last three symbolisms in verse 3: be like the morning cloud, like the early dew that passes away, like chaff blown off from a threshing floor and like smoke from a chimney. ALL VERY FLEETING! Review** [**Hosea 6:4**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/hosea/6/4/s_868004)**,** “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 early dew it goeth away.”
	1. **PRIDE IS EPHRIAM’S DOWNFALL…See Proverbs 16:18, “**Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall,” **and James 4:6**, “But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.”
5. **PEOPLE ARE LIKE THE IDOLS THEY WORSHIP! See Psalm 115:4-8, “**Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. 5They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: 6They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: 7They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. 8They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them.”

**4-8, “Yet I *am* the Lord your God ever since the land of Egypt, and you shall know no God but Me; for *there is* no Savior besides Me. I knew you in the wilderness, in the land of great drought. When they had pasture, they were filled; they were filled and their heart was exalted; therefore they forgot Me. So I will be to them like a lion; like a leopard by the road I will lurk; I will meet them like a bear deprived *of her cubs;* I will tear open their rib cage, and there I will devour them like a lion. The wild beast shall tear them.”**

1. **It seems as though that God is saying: Israel changed, but the LORD God never does. Elaborate. Yet I am the Lord your God ever since the land of Egypt**: Israel changed, but the Lord God did not. He is still the only God and the only Savior, and His people will be left desolate when they leave Him.
	1. **Review** [**Hosea 12:9**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/hosea/12/9/s_874009)**,** “And I that am the LORD thy God from the land of Egypt will yet make thee to dwell in tabernacles, as in the days of the solemn feast,” [**Isaiah 43:11**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/isaiah/43/11/s_722011)**,** “ I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no saviour,” [**Isaiah 45:21**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/isaiah/45/21/s_724021)**, “**Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the LORD? and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me,” **and Exodus 20:3,** “Thou shalt have no other gods before me.”
	2. **Talk about this disturbing concept….that when times are good, we often forget the God who blessed us. When times are bad we are often more likely to turn our hearts back to God. therefore have they forgotten me**--the very reason why men should remember God (namely, prosperity, which comes from Him) is the cause often of their forgetting Him. God had warned them of this danger ( [Deu 6:11, 12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/deuteronomy/6/11/s_159011) ).
2. **What is the great drought? Reference** [**Deuteronomy 8:15**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/deuteronomy/8/15/s_161015), “Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint.”
3. **Explain the “cattle image,” verse 6.**  Image from cattle, waxing wanton in abundant pasture
	1. Compare [**Hosea 2:5,** “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,” **8**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/hosea/2/5/s_864005), “For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, *which* they prepared for Baal,” [**Deuteronomy 32:13-15**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/deuteronomy/32/13/s_185013)**,** “He made him ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of the fields; and he made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock; Butter of kine, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs, and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, with the fat of kidneys of wheat; and thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape. 15But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.” In proportion as I fed them to the full, they were so satiated that "their heart was exalted"; a sad contrast to the time when, by God's blessing, Ephraim truly "exalted himself in Israel.
	2. [**Hosea 13:1**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/hosea/13/1/s_875001)**,** “When Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel; but when he offended in Baal, he died.”
4. **So I will be to them like a lion**, **leopard and bear. Why these three animals?** The three mentioned - lion, leopard, and bear - were all native to Palestine and known for their relentless manner of killing prey. **observe**--that is, *lie in wait* for them. Several manuscripts, the *Septuagint, Vulgate, Syriac,* and *Arabic* read, by a slight change of the *Hebrew* vowel pointing, "by the way *of Assyria,*" a region abounding in leopards and lions. *English Version* is better.
	1. **Lion—Parallel Hosea 5:14, “**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 take away, and none shall rescue him.”
	2. **Leopard**—**Compare Jeremiah 13:23,** “Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.” The *Hebrew* comes from a root meaning "spotted" (compare [Jer 13:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/jeremiah/13/23/s_758023) ). Leopards lurk in thickets and thence spring on their victims.
	3. **Bear**-- Writers on the natures of beasts say that none is more savage than a *she bear,* when *bereaved of her whelps*"
	4. **Is there similarity in these beasts to those in Daniel**? There are also four beasts in Daniel's dream: [The Lion](http://amazingdiscoveries.org/S-deception_end-time_Antichrist_lion_wings), [The Bear](http://amazingdiscoveries.org/S-deception_end-time_Antichrist_bear_Cyrus), [The Leopard](http://amazingdiscoveries.org/S-deception_end-time_Antichrist_leopard_Alexander), and [The Terrible Beast](http://amazingdiscoveries.org/S-deception_end-time_Antichrist_Rome_horns). In prophecy, these beasts represent four kingdoms.
5. **Who is the only hope of Israel?** **Deuteronomy 33:26,** “There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky.”

**9-11, “O Israel, you are destroyed, but your help *is* from Me. I will be your King; where *is any other*, that he may save you in all your cities? And your judges to whom you said, Give me a king and princes? I gave you a king in My anger, and took *him* away in My wrath**.”

1. **Could verse 9 be stated…thou hast destroyed thyself?--that is, thy destruction is of thyself. Reference** [**Proverbs 6:32**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/proverbs/6/32/s_634032)**, “But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul,” and** [**8:36**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/proverbs/8/36/s_636036)**, “But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death.”**
	1. **Where is the help?** **in me is thine help**--literally, "in thine help**.” See** [**Deuteronomy 33:26**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/deuteronomy/33/26/s_186026)**,** “There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky.” . Hadst thou rested thy hope *in Me,* I would have been always ready at hand *for thy help* [GROTIUS].
2. **Where is Israel’s king now? You are destroyed, but your help is from Me**: Even when Israel feels the sting of Gods chastening hand, they can still find **help** from the Lord, if they will only turn to Him. He gave them the kind of kings their hearts wanted and deserved, and then even took those kings as further judgment. Pekah was taken away through Hoshea, as he himself took away Pekahiah; and as Hoshea was soon to be taken away by the Assyrian king.
3. **Discuss: I gave. . . king in. . . anger. . . took. . . away in. . . wrath**--true both of Saul…[**1 Samuel 15:22, “**And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams,” **23**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/1samuel/15/22/s_251022), “For rebellion *is as* the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness *is as* iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from *being* king,” [**16:1**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/1samuel/16/1/s_252001), “And the LORD said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons,” and of Jeroboam's line. [**2 Kings 15:30**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/2kings/15/30/s_328030), “And Hoshea the son of Elah made a conspiracy against Pekah the son of Remaliah, and smote him, and slew him, and reigned in his stead, in the twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah.” ***Pekah was taken away through Hoshea, as he himself took away Pekahiah; and as Hoshea was soon to be taken away by the Assyrian king.***
4. **Parallel with I Samuel 8:5**, “And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations. Neither Saul, whom the whole nation begged for, not contented with Me their true king,” **7,** “And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them,” [**19,** “Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us,” **20**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/1samuel/8/5/s_244005), “That we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles,” [**10:19**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/1samuel/10/19/s_246019), “And ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saved you out of all your adversities and your tribulations; and ye have said unto him, Nay, but set a king over us. Now therefore present yourselves before the LORD by your tribes, and by your thousands**.” nor Jeroboam, whom subsequently the ten tribes chose instead of the line of David My anointed, can save thee now. They had expected from their kings what is the prerogative of God alone, namely, the power of saving them.**
	1. **Who are the** **judges? Compare with Amos 2:3, “**And I will cut off the judge from the midst thereof, and will slay all the princes thereof with him, saith the LORD.”--including all civil authorities under the king.

**12-16, “The iniquity of Ephraim *is* bound up; his sin *is* stored up. The sorrows of a woman in childbirth shall come upon him. He *is* an unwise son, for he should not stay long where children are born. I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O Death, I will be your plagues! O Grave, I will be your destruction! Pity is hidden from My eyes. Though he is fruitful among *his* brethren, an east wind shall come; the wind of the Lord shall come up from the wilderness. Then his spring shall become dry, and his fountain shall be dried up. He shall plunder the treasury of every desirable prize. Samaria is held guilty, for she has rebelled against her God. They shall fall by the sword, their infants shall be dashed in pieces, and their women with child ripped open.”**

1. **Why is Ephraim’s sin stored up/ bound up?   Refer to Hosea 9:9, “**They have deeply corrupted themselves, as in the days of Gibeah: therefore he will remember their iniquity, he will visit their sins.” **hid--Treasures, meant to be kept, are bound up and hidden; that is, do not flatter yourselves, because of the delay, that I have forgotten your sin. Nay.**
	1. **Elaborate on this: Ephraim's iniquity is kept as it were safely sealed up, until the due time comes for bringing it forth for punishment ( [Deuteronomy 32:34](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/deuteronomy/32/34/s_185034), “**Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures?”[**Job 14:17**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/job/14/17/s_450017)**, “**My transgression is sealed up in a bag, and thou sewest up mine iniquity,” [**21:19**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/job/21/19/s_457019)**, “**God layeth up his iniquity for his children: he rewardeth him, and he shall know it.**;” compare** [**Romans 2:5**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/romans/2/5/s_1048005)**, “**But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God**.” Opposed to "blotting out the handwriting against" the sinner,** [**Colossians 2:14**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/colossians/2/14/s_1109014)**, “**Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.”
2. **What are “The sorrows of a woman in childbirth?” See Jeremiah 30:6, “**Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness?” **shall come upon him**: Labor pains often come unexpectedly, are intense, and increase in their pain and duration. In the same way, judgment will come upon Israel. **sorrows of a travailing woman**--calamities sudden and agonizing.
3. **Paul quoted the Septuagint translation of** [**Hosea 13:14**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Hosea+13:14&t1=en_nas) **in describing our triumph over death in our sharing in the resurrection of Jesus: *O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?* (**[**1 Corinthians 15:55**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=1%20Corinthians+15:55&t1=en_nas)**). HERE IN HOSEA WE SEE HINTS OF THE RESURRECTION TO COME!!...DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY, “**So when this corruptible shall have put on **in**corruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that **is** written, **Death** **is** **swallowed** **up** **in** **victory,” *I Corinthians 15:54-55, “So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.55O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?”***
4. **Explain this: “he should not stay long in the place of the breaking forth of children”**--When Israel might deliver himself from calamity by the pangs of penitence, he brings ruin on himself by so long deferring a new birth unto repentance**, like a child whose mother has not strength to bring it forth,** and which therefore remains so long in the passage from the womb as to run the risk of death. [**2 Kings 19:3**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/2kings/19/3/s_332003)**,** “And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and blasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth,” [**Isaiah 37:3**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/isaiah/37/3/s_716003)**,** “And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth,” and [**66:9**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/isaiah/66/9/s_745009)**,** “Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the LORD: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God.”
5. **In verse 14, explain ransom. A paid price for a prisoner. Romans 6:23, “**For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”
6. **Verse 15 begins to hint that the Assyrian invader, Shalmaneser, will besiege Samaria. Discuss.**   **See 2 Kings 17:6,** ***“In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor* by *the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes,”*** **and 18:10,** ***“And at the end of three years they took it: even in the sixth year of Hezekiah, that is the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was taken.”*** **he**--the Assyrian invader. Shalmaneser began the siege of Samaria in 723 B.C. Its close was in 721 B.C., the first year of Sargon, who seems to have usurped the throne of Assyria while Shalmaneser was at the siege of Samaria. Hence, while [2Ki 17:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/2kings/17/6/s_330006) states, "the *king of Assyria* took Samaria," [2Ki 18:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/2kings/18/10/s_331010) says, "at the end of three years *they* took it." In Sargon's magnificent palace at Khorsabad, inscriptions mention the number--27,280--of Israelites carried captive from Samaria and other places of Israel by the founder of the palace. **from the wilderness**--that is, the desert part of Syria ( [1Ki 19:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/1kings/19/15/s_310015) ), the route from Assyria into Israel.      **16.** This verse and [Hosea 13:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/hosea/13/15/s_875015) foretell the calamities about to befall Israel before her restoration ( [Hosea 13:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/hosea/13/14/s_875014) ), owing to her impenitence.
7. **Explain “infants. . . dashed in pieces**.” [**2 Kings 8:12**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/2kings/8/12/s_321012)**,** “And Hazael said, Why weepeth my lord? And he answered, Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child,” [**15:16**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/2kings/15/16/s_328016)**,** “16 Then Menahem smote Tiphsah, and all that were therein, and the coasts thereof from Tirzah: because they opened not to him, therefore he smote it; and all the women therein that were with child he ripped up, “ [**Amos 1:13**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/amos/1/13/s_880013), “Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of the children of Ammon, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they have ripped up the women with child of Gilead, that they might enlarge their border.”

***Hosea 14 – Real Wisdom Turns Israel Back to the Lord***

***This is a wonderful chapter to be at the end of such a book. I had never expected from such a prickly shrub to gather so fair a flower, so sweet a fruit; but so it is: where sin abounded, grace doth much more abound. No chapter in the Bible can be more rich in mercy than this last of Hosea; and yet no chapter in the Bible might, in the natural order of things, have been more terrible in judgment. Where we looked for the blackness of darkness, behold a noontide of light!* (Charles Spurgeon) The theme of** [**Hosea 14:1-9**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/hosea/14/1/s_876001)**: GOD'S PROMISE OF BLESSING, ON THEIR REPENTANCE: THEIR ABANDONMENT OF IDOLATRY FORETOLD: THE CONCLUSION OF THE WHOLE, THE JUST SHALL WALK IN GOD'S WAYS, BUT THE TRANSGRESSOR SHALL FALL THEREIN.**
**1-3, “O Israel, return to the Lord your God, for you have stumbled because of your iniquity; take words with you, and return to the Lord. Say to Him, Take away all iniquity; receive *us* graciously, for we will offer the sacrifices of our lips. Assyria shall not save us, we will not ride on horses, nor will we say anymore to the work of our hands, *You are* our gods. for in You the fatherless finds mercy.”**

1. **Verse 1,** “stumbled because of your **iniquity,” compares with** [**Hosea 5:5**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/hosea/5/5/s_867005)**,** “And the pride of Israel doth testify to his face: therefore shall Israel and Ephraim fall in their iniquity; Judah also shall fall with them,” [**13:9**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/hosea/13/9/s_875009)**,** “O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help.”
2. **What does “offer sacrifices of our lips” mean? Instead, take words with you - *tell God that you love Him*. It isn’t enough to feel repentance before the Lord. Instead, take words with you and *tell God you repent before Him*. Literally,** [**Hosea 14:2**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Hosea+14:2&t1=en_nas) **says *for we will offer the calves of our lips*. Since bull calves were often brought for sacrifice, the translators felt justified in putting it for we will offer the sacrifices of our lips. However, the more literal rendering shows just how plainly our words of praise, worship, confession, petition, or intercession can be a sacrifice before God.**
	1. **Parallel with** [**Romans 10:8-10**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Romans+10:8-10&t1=en_nas)**: “*But what does it say? The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation*.” God commands us to communicate with Him in words, not only ideas or feelings.**
	2. **Instead of sacrifices, what does God require? See** [**Psalm 78:36**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/psalms/78/36/s_556036)**, “Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues,”** [**Isaiah 29:13**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/isaiah/29/13/s_708013)**, “Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men.” Namely, the words of penitence here put in your mouths by God. "Words," in *Hebrew,* mean "realities," there being the same term for "words" and "things"; so God implies, He will not accept empty professions He does not ask costly sacrifices, but *words* of heartfelt penitence.**
	3. **Note the KJV, Hebrews 14:2:** “Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: s**o will we render the calves of our lips**.” **calves of our lips**--that is, instead of sacrifices of *calves,* which we cannot offer to Thee in exile, we present the praises of our *lips.* Thus the exile, wherein the temple service ceased, prepared the way for the gospel time when the types of the animal sacrifices of the Old Testament being realized in Christ's perfect sacrifice once for all, "the sacrifice of praise to God continually that is *the fruit of our lips.*" **HERE’S THE FULL CIRCLE……THEY WORSHIPPED CALVES, BUT WERE SUPPOSED TO SACRIFICE THEM TO GOD……FINALLY, JESUS BECAME THEIR SACRIFICE!**
		1. [**Hebrews 13:14**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/hebrews/13/14/s_1146014)**,** “For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come,” takes their place in the New Testament.
	4. **When will Israel return to the Lord with the sacrificial offerings on their lips?**
3. **What sins are listed in verse 3?** Three besetting sins of Israel are here renounced, 1. trust in Assyria, 2. application to Egypt for its cavalry, and 3. idolatry.

**4-7, “I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely, for My anger has turned away from him. I will be like the dew to Israel; he shall grow like the lily, and lengthen his roots like Lebanon. His branches shall spread; his beauty shall be like an olive tree, and his fragrance like Lebanon. Those who dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall be revived *like* grain, and grow like a vine. Their scent *shall be* like the wine of Lebanon.”**

1. **Contrast verse 4 with Hosea 11:7, “**And my people are bent to backsliding from me: though they called them to the most High, none at all would exalt him,” **God saw that Israel was bent on backsliding from Him (**[**Hosea 11:7**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Hosea+11:7&t1=en_nas)**), but He promises to heal the backsliding of a repentant Israel. He does it not because Israel now deserves it, but because it is in His nature to love them freely.**
2. **Does God imply that “backsliding” is a disease? The word is *compassionate*: I will heal their backsliding. This shows God looks on our backsliding more like a *disease* than a *crime*. He does not say, I will pardon their backsliding. I will heal their backsliding. Not I might heal or I could heal or I can try to heal, but I will heal their backsliding. Come to God for healing of your backsliding, and He will do it! God is too great a physician to allow any patient to leave His office without being healed.**
	1. **Describe the agricultural symbols for Israel’s restoration.**  **the lily**--No plant is more productive than the lily, one root often producing fifty bulbs [PLINY, *Natural History,* 21.5]. The common lily is white, consisting of six leaves opening like bells. The royal lily grows to the height of three or four feet; [**Matthew 6:29**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/matthew/6/29/s_935029)**,** “And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these,” alludes to the beauty of its flowers. **roots as Lebanon**--that is, as the trees of Lebanon (especially the cedars), which cast down their roots as deeply as is their height upwards; so that they are immovable. [**Isaiah 10:34**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/isaiah/10/34/s_689034)**,** “And he shall cut down the thickets of the forest with iron, and Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one.” Spiritual growth consists most in the growth of the root which is out of sight. **Use Matthew 6:29 and Isaiah 10:34.**

**8, “Ephraim *shall say,* What have I to do anymore with idols? I have heard and observed him. I *am* like a green cypress tree; your fruit is found in Me.”**

1. **Re-state the statement of Israel’s repentance. See Deuteronomy 31:17, “**Then my anger shall be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide my face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall befall them; so that they will say in that day, Are not these evils come upon us, because our God is not among us?” **Your fruit is found in Me can have two ideas, equally true. First, we find the fruit to nourish our soul in God, and God alone. Second, we find the fruit that we are to bear unto the world in God, and God alone.**   **Ephraim *shall say***--being brought to penitence by God's goodness, and confessing and abhorring his past madness. **I have heard. . . and observed him**--I Jehovah have *answered* and *regarded* him *with favor;* the opposite of God's "hiding His face from" one ( [Deu 31:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/deuteronomy/31/17/s_184017) ). It is the experience of God's favor, in contrast to God's wrath heretofore, that leads Ephraim to abhor his past idolatry. Jehovah *heard* and answered: whereas the idols, as Ephraim now sees, could not *hear,* much less answer.
	1. **What is a green cypress tree**? **I am. . . a green fir**--or cypress; ever green, winter and summer alike; the leaves not falling off in winter.

**9, “Who *is* wise? Let him understand these things. *Who is* prudent? Let him know them. For the ways of the Lord *are* right; the righteous walk in them, but transgressors stumble in them.”**

1. **Sum up the “EPILOGUE,” summing up the whole previous teaching. Here alone Hosea uses the term "righteous," so rare were such characters in his day. There is enough of saving truth clear in God's Word to guide those humbly seeking salvation, and enough of difficulties to confound those who curiously seek them out, rather than practically seek salvation.**
2. **Who is wise? The wise man will see the message throughout the Book of Hosea. He will understand that in His mercy, God offers a wonderful opportunity for repentance and restoration, and it is dangerous and foolish to neglect that invitation.**
3. **Who stumbles? Use Proverbs 10:29, “**The way of the LORD is strength to the upright: but destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity.” **Also Micah 2:7,** “O thou that art named the house of Jacob, is the spirit of the LORD straitened? are these his doings? do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly? “
4. EPILOGUE, summing up the whole previous teaching. Here alone Hosea uses the term "righteous," so rare were such characters in his day. There is enough of saving truth clear in God's Word to guide those humbly seeking salvation, and enough of difficulties to confound those who curiously seek them out, rather than practically seek salvation. But ***their fall is the most fatal who fall in the ways of God, split on the Rock of ages, and suck poison out of the Balm of Gilead.***  **To him who sincerely seeks the *agenda,* God will make plain the *credenda.* Christ is the foundation-stone to some: a stone of stumbling and rock of offense to others. The same sun softens wax and hardens clay. But their fall is the most fatal who fall in the ways of God, split on the Rock of ages, and suck poison out of the Balm of Gilead.**  **The ways of the Lord are right: Even in the midst of promised judgment, the wise and understanding man sees that the ways of the Lord are right, and that ever announcement of judgment is an invitation to repentance.**  **“In beauty of expression these final words of Hosea rank with the memorable chapters of the OT. Like the rainbow after a storm, they promise Israels final restoration. Here is the full flowering of Gods unfailing love for his faithless people, the triumph of his grace, the assurance of his healing - all described in imagery that reveals the loving heart of God.” (Wood)**

***And, here are the promises:***

**Isaiah 45:21, “**Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the LORD? and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me.”

**Deuteronomy 33:26,** “There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky.”

**Romans 6:23, “**For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”