

Book of Hosea

Hosea: Introduction

The first prophet on the scroll of The Twelve Prophets is Hosea, who was not necessarily the first chronologically. In most cases the prophet's name reflects the major theme or content of his book. Hosea is primarily a book about the salvation of Israel, and his name means salvation. Like Joel, Amos, Obadiah and Micah, Hosea paralleled part of the time of the prophet Isaiah. In fact, the quick-change-in-thought style of Isaiah can also be found in Hosea's work. Isaiah prophesied almost exclusively from Jerusalem, whereas Hosea was a native of the Northern Kingdom of Israel and it was there that Yahuwah first used him.

Hosea: Chapter 1

1:1 The word of Yahuwah that came to Hosea the son of Beeri, in the days [TNK: reigns] of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Yahuwdah, and in the days [TNK: reign] of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel.

The Word of Yahuwah

The first phrase indicates that all that follows was transmitted from Yahuwah through Hosea.

Northern and Southern Kingdoms

Although Jeroboam reigned over the Northern Kingdom for more than twenty-five years before Uzziah came to the throne of the Southern Kingdom, Hosea mentions the kings of Yahuwdah first; no doubt this was because he recognized that the true throne of Dawid existed in the Southern Kingdom. Since other kings followed Jeroboam and paralleled the kings of Yahuwdah, yet are not mentioned, it seems that Hosea began prophesying in the Northern Kingdom. Then, sometime during the reign of Jeroboam it became expedient for Hosea to relocate to the Southern Kingdom, where he concluded the work Yahuwah gave him to do, under the rule of the kings of Yahuwdah.

Jeroboam

This Jeroboam the son of Joash was actually known as Jeroboam II. The first Jeroboam was the man who revolted against Solomon's son, Rehoboam, and started the Northern Kingdom. Under the rulership of Jeroboam II, Israel prospered materially, but continued its moral decline.

Timeframe

The prophecies of Hosea began during that time of prosperity and ended around 710 B.C. after the Northern Kingdom had gone into Assyrian captivity.

1:2 When Yahuwah began to speak by Hosea, Yahuwah said to Hosea: —Go, take yourself a wife of harlotry [MOF: a harlot of a woman] and children of harlotry [REB: with this woman have children], for the land has committed great harlotry by departing from Yahuwah.

Wife of Harlotry

The Hebrew implies take a woman who will lapse into harlotry a woman who would be inclined to do this deed. Why would Yahuwah ask Hosea to marry a woman who was certain to create

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major family problems and bring horrible heartache? In order to provide an emphatic example for teaching a critical lesson! What Hosea was asked to do was to demonstrate by his personal experience what Yahuwah had experienced with His wife, Israel!

Interpretive Acts of the Prophet

Hosea was not unique in this respect; Yahuwah asked several prophets to do things that seem strange, and even shocking. For example, Yahuwah instructed Isaiah to walk openly naked and barefoot for three years as a sign to the children of Yahuwah of an impending problem that would surely come upon them if they did not take heed. They would be stripped naked and paraded around in front of their enemies if they did not heed the warning that Yahuwah was giving through Isaiah (ISA 20:2-4).

Jeremiah was commanded to wear a linen sash, then, take it off and hide it in a hole in a rock by the Euphrates. Much later, Yahuwah told him to retrieve the sash, which was ruined from exposure to water, then use it as an example of how Yahuwah would ruin the pride of Yahuwah (JER 13:1-10).

Yahuwah told Ezekiel to make a model of Jerusalem under siege and put an iron pan between it and himself, after which he was to lie on his left side for 390 days and then on his right side for 40 days as a sign for Israel and Yahuwah (EZE 4). Yahuwah next told Ezekiel to shave his head and beard, dividing it into three equal parts; he was then to burn one-third with fire, chop one-third with a knife, and throw the final one-third into the wind (EZE 5:1-5). These actions pictured the progression of end-time events related to the Trumpet Plagues.

1:3 So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son.

Gomer

Some believe the name Gomer means that which is completed, and Diblaim means a double cake of figs. If so, there may be some symbolic meaning to the names. Association with a double cake of figs reveals that Gomer represented a woman who would give Hosea great pleasure, since a cake of figs was considered a great delicacy. Her name, that which is completed, shows she would undergo a process of change. The relationship she had with Hosea represented not only the fickle Israel of history, but also the future Israel, which will be in a completed relationship with Yahuwah.

Bore Him a Son

It is clear that Hosea was the father of the first child she bore.

1:4 Then Yahuwah said to him: Call his name Jezreel, for in a little while I will abenge the bloodshed of Jezreel on the house of Jehu, and bring an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel.

Jezreel

Jezreel means sown of Yahuwah as well as the seed of Yahuwah. There are times it means Yahuwah has sown and other times when it means the seed of Yahuwah. Jezreel was a town in a

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valley called by the same name, located about ten miles east-southeast of Megiddo; the Plain of Megiddo turns into the Valley of Jezreel. This town was the primary residence of king Ahab. It was here that Jezebel had Naboth killed in order to take his property for her husband. It was also here that Jehu directed the killings of Jezebel (2KI 9:33) and the whole house of Ahab (2KI 10:11).

House of Jehu

By annihilating the house of Ahab, Jehu fulfilled Yahuwah's instruction. The prophet Elisha sent one of the sons of the prophets to anoint Jehu king of Israel and deliver to him a commission from Yahuwah.

2KI 9:7-9 You shall strike down the house of Ahab your master, that I may avenge the blood of My servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of Yahuwah, at the hand of Jezebel. For the whole house of Ahab shall perish; and I will cut off from Ahab all the males in Israel, both bond and free. So I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah.

Not only did Jehu destroy the house of Ahab, he also destroyed Baal from the Northern Kingdom. Because Jehu had faithfully carried out Yahuwah's directions, Yahuwah rewarded him by guaranteeing the continuation of his dynasty until the fourth generation of his descendants.

2KI 10:30 And Yahuwah said to Jehu, Because you have done well in doing what is right in My sight, and have done to the house of Ahab all that was in My heart, your sons shall sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation.

Abenge the Bloodshed of Jezreel

The Hebrew word translated avenge is better translated visit, call to account or call to remembrance. Yahuwah pronounced the curse of the demise of the Northern Kingdom the bloodshed of Jezreel through His prophet Ahijah during the reign of Jeroboam I. Yahuwah placed the blame on Jeroboam I and the idolatrous religion he instituted after he began ruling the northern ten tribes:

1KI 14:15-16 For Yahuwah will strike Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water. He will uproot Israel from this good land which He gave to their fathers, and will scatter them beyond the [Euphrates] River, because they have made their wooden images [Asherah], provoking Yahuwah to anger. And He will give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, who sinned and who made Israel sin.

About seventy years after the death of Jeroboam I, Jehu came to the throne. He and his dynasty ruled the Northern Kingdom for almost a century (842-749 B.C.). Since Jehu had been given such a blessing from Yahuwah, and the removal of Baal worship had been terminated at the outset of his reign (2KI 10:28), his dynasty was in a position to turn the nation back to Yahuwah. Yet, because they retained the idols erected by Jeroboam I at Bethel and Dan (2KI 10:29), he and his descendants failed to do so. Therefore, Yahuwah called the members of the Jehu dynasty to

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account for their failure, and called to remembrance the impending demise of the Northern Kingdom, which occurred less than thirty years after Jehu's dynasty ended.

In A Little While

This verse shows that Hosea's son, Jezreel, was born prior to the assassination of Zachariah, the son of Jeroboam II. This means this part of the book was written during the reign of Jeroboam II, while Hosea was still residing in the Northern Kingdom.

1:5 It shall come to pass in that day that I will break the bow of Israel in the Valley of Jezreel.

The military power of the Northern Kingdom was soundly defeated by the Assyrian army in the Valley of Jezreel.

1:6 And she conceived again and bore a daughter. Then Yahuwah said to him: Call her name Lo-Ruhamah, for I will no longer have mercy on the house of Israel, but I will utterly take them away.

She Bore a Daughter

Whereas verse 3 stated that Gomer bore Hosea a son, verse 6 simply says she bore a daughter, indicating that this child was illegitimate, the result of her unfaithfulness to Hosea. The child was to be named unpitied or receive no mercy and was symbolic of the destiny that awaited the northern ten tribes of Israel: to be removed from the Land of Promise, fulfilling the curse Yahuwah pronounced because of the sins of Jeroboam I and their impact on the house of Israel (1KI 14:15-16).

1:7 Yet I will have mercy on the house of Yahuwdah, and will save them by Yahuwah their Aluhym, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword or battle, by horses or horsemen.

Mercy on the House of Yahuwdah

The primary impact of this verse is that Yahuwah, for multiple reasons, would extend mercy to the Southern Kingdom although it was guilty of many of the same infractions as the Northern Kingdom. After the house of Israel was removed from the land into Assyrian exile, Yahuwah showed mercy on the house of Yahuwdah and prevented the Assyrians from taking it as well. He did this by destroying the army of Assyria that was sent by Sennacherib to lay siege on Jerusalem.

2KI 19:35 And it came to pass on a certain night that the angel of Yahuwah went out and killed in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand; and when people arose early in the morning, there were the corpses all dead.

Not only would Yahuwah have mercy upon the house of Yahuwdah by preventing their being taken into captivity by the Assyrians, but Yahuwah would also show mercy to the house of Yahuwdah later by allowing them to return to the land after being removed by the Babylonians. Yahuwah never allowed the house of Israel, the northern ten tribes, to return. They were taken into captivity, exiled from the land of Israel. Many prophecies refer to the return of the captivity,

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which actually means the return of the northern ten tribes from the state of exile they have experienced for over two and a half millennia.

1:8 Now when she had weaned Lo-Ruhamah, she conceived and bore a son.

She Bore a Son

As with the second child, this son is not described as Hosea's; this was a second illegitimate child.

1:9 Then Yahuwah said: —Call his name Lo-Ammi for you are not My people, and I will not be your Aluhym.

Lo-Ammi

Lo-Ammi means not My people and represented the house of Israel. Yahuwah rejected Israel because they persisted in their unfaithfulness to Him as their husband.

EZE 23:4-5, 8-9 Their names: Oholah the elder and Oholibah her sister; they were Mine, and they bore sons and daughters. As for their names, Samaria is Oholah, and Jerusalem is Oholibah. Oholah played the harlot although she was Mine; and she lusted for her lovers, the neighboring Assyrians...She has never given up her harlotry...Therefore I have delivered her into the hand of her lovers, into the hand of the Assyrians, for whom she lusted.

Yahuwah gave Israel a bill of divorcement; He put her away, severing His contact with her.

JER 3:8 Then I saw that for all the causes for which backsliding Israel had committed adultery, I had put her away and given her a certificate of divorce;

1:10 Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered. And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them, You are not My people, there it shall be said to them, You are the sons of the living Yahuwah.'

Yet ... as the Sand

Although Yahuwah rejected them and by refusing to allow them to return to the land of Israel showed them no mercy, they would still multiply during their time of exile. Yahuwah had made an unconditional promise to Abraham, which was transmitted to Jacob, regarding the population growth of physical Israel; Yahuwah would honor that promise despite the divorce He gave them and their refusal to repent of their ways.

You are Sons

In the future, Yahuwah will again claim the house of Israel as His children, in the same place He disowned them in the land of Israel. Sha'ul identified what must happen prior to this event.

ROM 11:25-27 ...hardening in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and

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He will turn away unrighteousness from Jacob; for this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.

Salvation

Yahuwah will one day open their minds to repentance and remove their sins; this will happen only after the return of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach. The major theme of Hosea (which means salvation) revolves around the fact that salvation will ultimately come to Israel.

1:11 Then the children of Yahuwdah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together, and appoint for themselves one head; and they shall come up out [NRS: take possession] of the land, for great will be the day of Jezreel!

It is also at the time of the coming of Ha'Mashyach that the division of the Northern and Southern Kingdoms will come to an end, healing the breach that started shortly after the death of Solomon.

EZE 37:21-25 Then say to them, Thus says Yahuwah Aluhym: Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all; they shall no longer be two nations, nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again. They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. Then they shall be My people, and I will be their Aluhym. Dawid My servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd; they shall also walk in My judgments and observe My statutes, and do them. Then they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob My servant, where your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell there, they, their children, and their children's children, forever; and My servant Dawid shall be their prince forever.

Great will be the Day!

The double meaning of Jezreel is clear when comparing verse 4 with this verse. In verse 4, it is to be understood as destruction being sown by Yahuwah. In verse 11, it clearly means that the Day of the seed of Yahuwah will be great.

Hosea: Chapter 2

2:1 Say to your brethren, My people,‘ [KJV: Ammi] and to your sisters, Mercy is shown [KJV: Ruhamah].‘

This verse actually belongs with the final verse of Chapter 1. Jezreel had one brother, Lo-Ammi, and one sister, Lo-Ruhamah. Once the time comes for all of Israel to be joined together, Yahuwah will sow (Jezreel) the land with people He will claim (Ammi) and to whom He will show mercy (Ruhamah).

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2:2 Call your mother to account [NKJ: Bring charges against your mother], for she is no longer my wife nor am I her husband. Let her put an end to her infidelity and banish the lovers from her bosom, (REB)

Charges

Yahuwah is making reference to Israel. The marriage contract which bound Israel to Yahuwah as His wife had been continually transgressed by Israel. Yahuwah was to be her husband, meaning her one man her only one, her only Aluhym yet by her actions, she revealed He was not her only one. Yahuwah called Israel to account for all of the idols to which she had joined herself and by so doing had broken her marriage vows to have no other gods before Yahuwah.

2:3 Lest I strip her naked and expose her, as in the day she was born, and make her like a wilderness, and set her like a dry land, and slay her with thirst.

Naked at Birth

Yahuwah spoke of the condition of Israel when He first began dealing with the nation, as described in:

EZE 16:4-5 As for your nativity, on the day you were born your navel cord was not cut, nor were you washed in water to cleanse you; you were not rubbed with salt nor wrapped in swaddling cloths. No eye pitied you, to do any of these things for you, to have compassion on you; but you were thrown out into the open field, when you yourself were loathed on the day you were born.

All that Israel possessed came from Yahuwah, who showed mercy to her and took her as His wife:

EZE 16:7-8 I made you thrive like a plant in the field; and you grew, matured, and became very beautiful. Your breasts were formed, your hair grew, but you were naked and bare. When I passed by you again and looked upon you, indeed your time was the time of love; so I spread My wing over you and covered your nakedness. Yes, I swore an oath to you and entered into a covenant with you, and you became Mine, says Yahuwah Aluhym.

Due to Israel's persistent idolatry and faithlessness toward Yahuwah, He was ready to take back all that He had given her, and would do so by using the Assyrians, leaving her as He had originally found her.

2:4 I will not have mercy on [TNK: I will also disown] her children, for they are the children of harlotry [TNK: now a harlot's brood].

Her Children

Jezreel was Hosea's only child; Lo-Ruhamah and Lo-Ammi were Gomer's children, not his! Their existence was the result of unfaithfulness. Due to the unfaithfulness of the initial generation of the tribes of the Northern Kingdom, the succeeding generations were not reckoned by Yahuwah as His children.

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Children of Harlotry

The Kingdom of Israel was giving birth to children who should have been directed toward Yahuwah, and should have been His children; instead, they were being indoctrinated into Baal worship, causing them to look to Baal as their father and not to Yahuwah.

2:5 For their mother has played the harlot; she who conceived them has done shamefully. For she said, I will go after my lovers, who give me my bread and my water, my wool and my linen, my oil and my drink.'

Rather than acknowledge Yahuwah as the one who showed them mercy and provided them their needs, Israel gave credit for their food, clothing and luxuries to the idols of false gods. One example of their misguided mindset can be found among the small group of Jews that escaped Babylonian exile and went into Egypt, forcing Jeremiah to go with them. When Jeremiah tried to convince them of their need to repent of their idolatry, they refused.

JER 44:16-17 As for the word that you have spoken to us in the name of Yahuwah, we will not listen to you! But we will certainly do whatever has gone out of our own mouth, to burn incense to the queen of heaven and pour out drink offerings to her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Yahuwdah and in the streets of Jerusalem. For then we had plenty of food, were well-off, and saw no trouble.

2:6 Therefore, behold, I will hedge up your way with thorns, and wall her in, so that she cannot find her paths [REB: a way through].

Since Israel refused to give up consorting with the idolatrous religions of the other nations, Yahuwah promised to erect obstacles to prevent interaction with the other nations; the hedge consisted primarily of wars with neighboring peoples, which curtailed further assimilation of their pagan religions.

2:7 She will chase her lovers, but not overtake them; yes, she will seek them, but not find them. Then she will say, I will go and return to my first husband, for then it was better for me than now.'

I Will Return

After centuries of pursuing what the nations of the world idolize, Israel, like the prodigal son (LUK 15:17-19), will finally understand the futility of their quest and turn back to Yahuwah.

2:8 She has not acknowledged that I was the one who gave her the grain, the new wine and oil, who lavished on her the silver and gold which they used for Baal. (NIV)

Squanderers

Israel has always had the problems of ingratitude, and abuse of Yahuwah's blessings.

EZE 16:17-19 You have also taken your beautiful jewelry from My gold and My silver, which I had given you, and made for yourself male images and played the harlot with them. You took your embroidered garments and covered them, and you set My oil and My incense before them.

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Also My food which I gave you the pastry of fine flour, oil, and honey which I fed you—you set it before them as sweet incense; and so it was, says Yahuwah Aluhym.

2:9 Therefore I will return and take away My grain in its time and My new wine in its season,

Crop Failures

Because of their abuse of Yahuwah's blessings, He promises to cut off those blessings. One of the fastest ways to get the attention of people is to take away their food, so Yahuwah lists crop failures first.

2:9 (cont.)-10 ...and will take back My wool and My linen, given to cover her nakedness. Now I will uncover her lewdness [TNK: shame] in the sight of her lovers, and no one shall deliver her from My hand.

Nakedness

Clothing follows food in the list of the three primary needs of every person. Clothing represents protection, and Yahuwah promises to remove the blessing of His protection.

2:11 I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her New Moons, her Sabbaths all her appointed feasts.

Her Appointed Feasts

These celebrations are prefaced with her, and since Yahuwah prefaced His feasts with My in LEV 23:2, it is clear that Yahuwah is referring to religious activities which do not have His approval. From its inception, the Northern Kingdom established religious worship condemned by Yahuwah (1KI 12:28-33). He will bring an end to the days of worship that the house of Israel has chosen to follow.

2:12 And I will destroy her vines and her fig trees, of which she has said, these are my rewards [REB: the fees] that my lovers have given me.' So I will make them a forest, and the beasts of the field shall eat them.

Food for the Beasts

Vines and fig trees represented the best of the delicacies produced by the land. Because Israel attributed the origin of these blessings to the idols of pagan religions, Yahuwah promised to take away their delicacies.

2:13 I will punish her for the days of the Baals to which she burned incense. She decked herself with her earrings and jewelry, and went after her lovers. Then she forgot Me, says Yahuwah.

Punishment

Yahuwah's punishment entails all that was mentioned in verses 9-12.

2:14 So I will allure her, put her alone and apart, and speak to her heart. (MOF)

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Speak to Her Heart

So, regardless of what Israel has done in the past, Yahuwah still intends to take her back and enter into a new covenant with her a covenant that focuses on internal change.

JER 31:31-33 Behold, the days are coming, says Yahuwah, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Yahuwdah not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says Yahuwah. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says Yahuwah: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their Mighty One, and they shall be My people.

2:15 I will give her her vineyards from there, and the Valley of Achor as a door [TNK: plowland] of hope; she shall sing [TNK: respond] there, as in the days of her youth, as in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt.

Valley of Achor

The Valley of Achor (trouble) was the place where Achan was stoned to death for bringing trouble on Israel by his greed, ending the fierceness of Yahuwah's anger with Israel (JOS 7:24-26). The end of Yahuwah's anger with Israel at the close of the age will result in a new covenant relationship.

2:16 And it shall be, in that day [the time when Yahuwah makes a new covenant with Israel, speaking to her heart—verse 14], **says Yahuwah, That you will call Me My Husband** [KJV: Ishi; a term of emotional endearment], **and no longer call Me My Master** [KJV: Baali; a term indicating a menial, servile position],

Israel will at last understand that it is Yahuwah's love that governs His relationship with them—not a burdensome regimen of physical servitude.

2:17 For I will take from her mouth the names of the Baals, and they shall be remembered [TNK: mentioned] **by their name no more** [NIV: no longer will their names be invoked].

Names Not Remembered

The removal of false gods will be so extensive and complete that even the names which men have assigned them will be eliminated from vocabulary. Yahuwah warned Israel not even to use the names of false gods in conversation, because by doing so the possibility of their reality is implied.

EXO 23:13 And in all that I have said to you, be circumspect and make no mention of the name of other gods, nor let it be heard from your mouth.

Yahuwah also promises to remove the memory of the names of all idols once the age comes to an end.

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ZEC 13:2 It shall be in that day, says Yahuwah of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they shall no longer be remembered.

2:18 In that day I will make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, with the birds of the air, and with the creeping things of the ground. Bow and sword of battle I will shatter from the earth, to make them lie down safely [MOF: let them lie down in security].

In that Day

This condition is unquestionably millennial.

EZE 34:25 I will make a covenant of peace with them, and cause wild beasts to cease from the land; and they will dwell safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.

ISA 11:6-9 The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Yahuwah as the waters cover the sea.

ISA 2:4 ...They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

2:19-20 I will betroth you to Me forever; yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and justice, in loving kindness and mercy; I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, and you shall know Yahuwah.

Yahuwah deals with Israel at the end of the age by establishing with them a covenant to which they will be faithful, never again seeking another relationship with idols.

2:21-22 It shall come to pass in that day that I will answer [KJV: hear; TNK: respond], says Yahuwah; —I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth. The earth shall answer [TNK: respond] with grain, with new wine, and with oil; they shall answer [TNK: respond to] Jezreel.

These verses point to the time of the outpouring of the blessings of unparalleled prosperity that will clearly come from Yahuwah.

AMO 9:13 Behold, the days are coming, says Yahuwah, When the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him who sows seed; the mountains shall drip with sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it.

Use of Names

Jezreel here is clearly a reference to the seed of Yahuwah, the descendants of Israel during the time of Amanuwal's millennial reign.

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2:23 Then I will sow her for Myself in the earth, and I will have mercy on her who had not obtained mercy; then I will say to those who were not My people, You are My people!‘ And they shall say, You are my Yahuwah!’

This verse contains elements of the names of the three children of Gomer. The phrase — I will sow is from a root of the name Jezreel; not obtained mercy and not My people are from the Hebrew names Lo-Ruhamah and Lo-Ammi.

You are My People!

Only when Israel finally recognizes Yahuwah will Yahuwah acknowledge them as His people. It will be at that time that salvation will at last come to all the house of Israel then living.

Hosea: Chapter 3

3:1 Then Yahuwah said to me, Go again, love a woman who is loved by a lover and is committing adultery, just like the love of Yahuwah for the children of Israel, who look to other gods and love the raisin cakes of the pagans.

Love an Adulterous Woman

This verse shows that Gomer left Hosea sometime after the birth of her third child Lo-Ammi. Since she was then living with another man and not fulfilling her marital vows, Yahuwah simply refers to her as a woman not Hosea’s wife. Yahuwah emphasized that Hosea was to exhibit the same kind of love toward Gomer that Yahuwah had shown to Israel — a love that extended a vast amount of patience and mercy.

Raisin Cakes

Raisin cakes were used in the worship of Baal and other pagan idols (JER 44:19). The people enjoyed all of the trappings of pagan worship things that appealed to and satisfied physical desires.

3:2 So I bought [TNK: hired] her for myself for fifteen shekels of silver, and one and one-half homers of barley.

Buying Gomer

After leaving her husband, Gomer had apparently sold herself to another man, which required Hosea to buy her back Although she was his wife. Since the normal price of a slave was twice the amount of money Hosea paid 30 shekels of silver (EXO 21:32) the worth of the barley must have made up the difference.

3:3 And I said to her, You shall stay with [JPS: sit solitary for] me many days; you shall not play the harlot, nor shall you have a man; thus I will also be toward you.

3:3 And I said to her, You will live in my house for a long time and you will not lead an immoral life. Your must have relations with no one else, indeed not even with me. (REB)

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Once Hosea had purchased his wife, he required her to remain in seclusion for a lengthy period of time, during which she was completely under his jurisdiction, yet not allowed marital rights.

3:4 For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, without ephod or teraphim.

Seclusion and Exile

Gomer's seclusion symbolized the time of the ten tribes' exile from the Land of Promise, during which they would not be the unified nation of Israel as they had been in the Northern Kingdom; there would be no central government or religious system to unite them as one people. They would seemingly disappear from the earth until Yahuwah determines the end of the exile.

3:5 Afterward the children of Israel shall return, seek Yahuwah their Aluhym and Dawid their king, and fear Yahuwah and [REB: and seek] His goodness in the latter days.

Seeking Yahuwah

This verse repeats the point of Hosea 1:11. The descendants of the Northern Kingdom will come back to the land of Israel and be joined with the descendants of the Southern Kingdom to form one nation that will recognize Yahuwah as their only one, and never pursue idolatry and spiritual adultery again.

Dawid Their King

Although many interpret Dawid their king to be Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach, who descended from Dawid, the indication both here and in EZE 37:24-25 is that the resurrected Dawid himself will assume the rulership over the physical nation under the world-ruling throne of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach, the King of kings (REV 17:14).

Cause and Effect

Centuries prior to the future realization of this verse, which is to occur in the latter days during the millennial reign of Ha'Mashyach, Yahuwah gave the Northern Kingdom of Israel a witness through His prophet.

Hosea: Chapter 4

Focus

Hosea now focuses on the results of Israel's refusal to make Yahuwah their only one.

4:1 Hear the word of Yahuwah, you children of Israel, for Yahuwah brings a charge against the inhabitants of the land: There is no truth or mercy or knowledge of Yahuwah in the land.

No Truth

The charge made against the nation centers on its rejection of Yahuwah. The people did not want to hear what Yahuwah told them. However, since Yahuwah's word is truth, to reject what Yahuwah says is to reject truth, which is the foundation of all knowledge. By rejecting truth, the people set themselves up to accept lies and deception.

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4:2 There is swearing, deception, murder, stealing and adultery. They employ violence, so that bloodshed follows bloodshed. (NAS)

Without Yahuwah and the acceptance of His Word, there is no perfect moral code to guide relationships between individuals. Yahuwah indicts Israel for blatantly breaking the commandments which composed His law given at Sinai to their ancestors.

No Mercy

The emphasis on the amount of violence evidenced among them reiterates a lack of mercy in the land. Bloodshed following bloodshed no doubt refers to the ever-increasing sin of murder among the populace as well as to the increasing frequency of assassinations of the kings of Israel that began occurring after the death of Jeroboam II.

4:3 Therefore the land mourns, and everyone who lives in it languishes along with the beasts of the field and the birds of the sky; and also the fish of the sea disappear [NKJ: will be taken away]. (NAS)

The Land Mourns

The repercussion of sin is suffering. Sha'ul referred to the whole creation presently groaning and suffering pain until the return of Ha'Mashyach(ROM 8:22). The physical world suffers because Yahuwah's spiritual law is being transgressed.

4:4 Now let no man contend, or reprove [NRS: accuse] another, for your people are like those who contend with the priest.

No Accusations

Those who held positions of religious instruction the priesthood had a role in initiating the downward spiral of the nation. However, Yahuwah placed the blame for the start of the immorality of the nation on its first king, Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who erected the two golden calves to be worshiped, and appointed men other than Levites to be the priests (1KI 12:28-31). Yet, regardless of how the downward spiral of national morality began, Yahuwah says there is no reason to search for someone to blame for the rampant sins afflicting the nation; the origin and continuation of these conditions falls on the nation as a whole.

4:5 Therefore you shall stumble in the day; the prophet also shall stumble with you in the night; and I will destroy your mother [the Northern Kingdom (2:2)].

Stumbling

Since all of the people including the king, priests, and prophets were walking contrary to Yahuwah's law, no one could stand upright and provide the guidance necessary to turn the nation around; their brazen wickedness was condemning it to destruction.

4:6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; because you have forgotten the law of your Yahuwah, I also will forget your children.

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Lack of Knowledge

The responsibility for the moral decay of the nation extended from its leaders to the people themselves. Yahuwah lumps them all together with the term —My people, implying individual accountability to His law. Each had failed to personally seek Yahuwah and help others do the same. Each had a covenantal obligation to do so, everyone from the king (DEU 17:14-20) down to the average man:

DEU 6:4-9 Hear, O Israel: Yahuwah our Aluhym, Yahuwah is one! You shall love Yahuwah your Aluhym with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Reject From Being Priest

At the time Yahuwah entered into a covenant with their ancestors at Mount Sinai, He informed them of His intention to use them as His priests (EXO 19:6). However, by rejecting Yahuwah and His law, which they were to reveal to all nations, the tribes of the Northern Kingdom disqualified themselves from that role.

Forget Your Children

Since the people had failed to fulfill their responsibility to diligently teach their children Yahuwah's law and His way of life, choosing instead to direct them toward idolatry, Yahuwah considered their children to be like the illegitimate children of Gomer: not His, and undeserving of mercy. He would therefore allow them to be removed out of His sight.

ISA 5:13 Therefore My people have gone into captivity [TNK: will suffer exile], because they have no knowledge...

4:7 The more they increased, the more they sinned against Me; I will change their glory into shame [TNK: dignity to dishonor].

4:7 The more they multiply, the more they sin, they change My glory for a shameful worship; (MOF)

Increase of Sin

The more their wealth and power grew, the more rebellious they became and the farther away from Yahuwah they drifted even to the point of totally rejecting Yahuwah and replacing the worship of Him with the worship of idols; this is the meaning better brought out in the Moffatt translation, which holds to the original Hebrew text.

Alteration of Text!

The last phrase of this verse is the first of five alterations made to the original scroll of the Twelve Prophets by the Jewish scribes who were responsible for preserving the Hebrew text. Each change was made to avoid creating what the scribes thought might be construed as a

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blasphemous statement. The NKJ reflects the change: Yahuwah changes their glory into shame. The MOF renders the original: they change the glory of Yahuwah that is, change from worshiping Yahuwah to the shame of worshiping idols.

4:8 They eat up the sin of My people [TNK: feed on My people's sin offerings]; they set their heart on their iniquity.

Eat Up the Sin

Since the people under a sacrificial system were required to bring offerings to atone for their evil deeds, the more the people sinned, the more material wealth was gained by the priests.

4:9 But people and priest will fare alike. I shall punish them for their conduct and repay them for their deeds. (REB)

I Shall Punish Them

Yahuwah has already placed blame on the religious leaders for failing to teach the people the truth, but now He clearly emphasizes that the people have personal accountability for their sins.

4:10-11 For they shall eat, but not have enough; they shall commit harlotry, but not increase; because they have ceased obeying Yahuwah. Harlotry, wine, and new wine enslave the heart [MOF: deprive them of their wits].

As a drunken man loses consciousness of reality, so those who disobey Yahuwah cease to comprehend the consequences of their sins: they will never be satisfied since the physical gratification from sin is only a temporary condition that ultimately leaves the persistent sinner engulfed in despair and emptiness.

4:12 My people ask counsel from their wooden idols, and their staff informs them [NIV: and are answered by a stick of wood]. For the spirit of harlotry has caused them to stray, and they have played the harlot against their Yahuwah.

Idolatry

Their loss of wits led them to attribute power to inanimate objects, and pray to them.

4:13 They sacrifice on the mountaintops and offer on the hills, under oaks, poplars, and terebinths whose shade is so pleasant. That is why their daughters fornicate and their daughters-in-law [REB: sons' brides] commit adultery! (TNK)

It was on the highest areas in the land that the pagans built their altars and worshipped Baal. Israel refused to obey Yahuwah's instruction to demolish those pagan places of worship (DEU 12:2) and instead copied the worship of the pagans; this included practicing fertility rites in which girls were required to surrender their virginity by serving as temple prostitutes for the pagan idols.

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4:14 I will not punish your daughters when they play the whore, nor your daughters-in-law when they commit adultery; for the men themselves go aside with whores, and sacrifice with temple prostitutes; thus a people without understanding comes to ruin. (NRS)

The young women would not be singled out for punishment, because the men were just as guilty; they would all be punished together. The need for punishment sprang from a lack of understanding, which resulted from a lack of the fear of Yahuwah; this lack of the fear of Yahuwah originated with their rejection of the knowledge of Yahuwah (verse 6).

PRO 9:10 The fear of Yahuwah is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Kadosh One is understanding.

PSA 111:10 The fear of Yahuwah is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all those who do His commandments...

4:15 Though you play the whore, O Israel, do not let Yahuwah become guilty. Do not enter into Gilgal, or go up [TNK: make pilgrimages] to Beth-aben, and do not swear, As Yahuwah lives.’ (NRS)

Do Not Enter

This was a warning to the Southern Kingdom during Hosea’s time. Those of Yahuwah were directed to stay clear of the corrupt religious practices of the Northern Kingdom. Although Gilgal had once been a place of true worship, it had become corrupted by the time Hosea lived. Bethel, which means the house of Aluhym was now referred to by Yahuwah as Beth-aben, meaning the house of wickedness.

As Yahuwah Lives

Since the profane priests of the Northern Kingdom had used the name of the true Aluhym in their worship of the idols of the pagans, Yahuwah warned those of the Southern Kingdom not to take any oaths using His name, so as not leave the impression they were making a vow sealed by one of Israel’s false gods.

4:16 For Israel is stubborn [TNK: has balked] like a stubborn calf; now Yahuwah will let them forage [TNK: graze] like a lamb in open country.

4:16 Like a stubborn heifer, Israel is stubborn; can Yahuwah now feed them like a lamb in a broad pasture? (NRS)

Stubborn Heifers

The NRS gives a better understanding of the Hebrew: if Israel, like a cow that resists being guided by its master, adamantly refused to yield to Yahuwah, how could they expect Yahuwah to treat them like sheep that willingly follow their master? In order to break the stubbornness of the calf, it is tied up and not allowed to roam the pasture. Israel would likewise be denied the ability to go its own way any longer.

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4:17-18 Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone. Their drink is rebellion, they commit harlotry continually. Her rulers dearly love dishonor [NIV: shameful ways].

Ephraim

Ephraim, the leading tribe of the Northern Kingdom, is used to refer to all of the northern ten tribes (EZE 37:15). This is Yahuwah's final warning in this prophetic section to avoid the uncleanness of the Northern Kingdom.

4:19 A whirlwind will sweep them away, and their sacrifices will bring them shame [REB: and they will find their sacrifices a delusion]. (NIV)

A Whirlwind

The whirlwind that eventually swept them out of the land of Israel was Assyria. When that day came, Israel found that all of the sacrifices they had made to their inanimate idols did not buy them any protection their worship was only a delusion.

Hosea: Chapter 5

5:1 Hear this, O priests! Give heed, O house of Israel! Listen, O house of the king! For the judgment applies to you [TNK: for right conduct is your responsibility], for you have been a snare at Mizpah, and a net spread out on Tabor. (NAS)

Mizpah & Tabor

Mizpah was in Gilead, in the east, and Tabor was located in the territory of Issachar and Zebulun, in the west. The entirety of the nation from east to west would be required to give account for its depraved condition.

5:2 And the revolvers have gone deep in depravity [NKJ: are deeply involved in slaughter], but I will chastise all of them. (NAS)

Revolters

The revolvers were all who rejected Yahuwah and walked contrary to His law.

5:3 I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hidden from Me; for now, O Ephraim, you commit harlotry; Israel is defiled.

Not Hidden

Yahuwah was not blind to the fact that the rest of the tribes were just as guilty of the same sins as the leading tribe. The main center of religion in the Northern Kingdom was Bethel, which was located in Ephraim's territory. Therefore, the harlotry of idolatry spread from Ephraim to the other tribes.

5:4 Their habits do not let them turn back to their Aluhym; because of the lecherous impulse [NKJ: spirit of harlotry] within them, they pay no heed to [NKJ: do not know] Yahuwah. (TNK)

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Habits

They had practiced their pagan worship for such a long time that it was ingrained in their culture. They would rather hold on to the pagan customs than listen to what Yahuwah told them through His prophets.

5:5 The pride of Israel testifies to his face; therefore Israel and Ephraim stumble in their iniquity; Yahuwah also stumbles with them.

Pride

Their pride refers to their choice to ignore Yahuwah in order to satisfy their desires. Their sins cause them to falter in their thinking so that they make wrong choices.

5:6 With their flocks and herds they shall go to seek Yahuwah, but they will not find Him; He has withdrawn Himself from them.

Seeking and Not Finding

When they at last recognize their plight, they will make overtures to try and obtain Yahuwah's help, but will fail to do so because they had refused to heed Him when He had sent His prophets to them.

ISA 55:6-8 Seek Yahuwah while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to Yahuwah, and He will have mercy on him; and to our Aluhym, for He will abundantly pardon. For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways, says Yahuwah.

5:7 They have dealt treacherously with Yahuwah, for they have begotten pagan children. Now a New Moon shall devour them and their heritage.

Treacherously

Like Hosea's wife, they proved unfaithful by abandoning Yahuwah in favor of the idols of the nations around them. That decision led to succeeding generations of Israelites being born into a nation that worshipped just as the pagans did.

New Moon

The last part of this verse refers to the time of the end. The New Moon that devours Israel and the heritage of its land and people is the same New Moon that brings devastation upon the whole world. That New Moon is the new moon of Tishri—the Feast of Trumpets. This kadosh day represents the blowing of seven trumpets, which are warnings of the unleashing of seven major events that will leave the world in a state of tohu ba bohu (JER 4:23-28).

5:8 Blow the ram's horn in Gibeah, the trumpet in Ramah! Cry aloud at Beth Aben, Look behind you, O Benjamin!

Sound the Alarm!

Gibeah and Ramah were both towns in Benjamin's territory that were situated on hills; they provided the first warnings along the northern border of the Southern Kingdom of Yahuwah, of

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trouble approaching from the north. Beth-aben (Bethel, 4:15) was only a few miles north of the border between Ephraim and Benjamin.

Look Behind You!

The warning for those in Benjamin to look behind them indicates trouble approaching from the north. At the time of the end, trouble does come to the Jews out of the north.

JER 6:1 O you children of Benjamin, gather yourselves to flee from the midst of Jerusalem! Blow the trumpet in Tekoa, and set up a signal-fire in Beth Haccerem; for disaster appears out of the north, and great destruction. This prophecy deals with the coming of the Beast to Jerusalem (DAN 11:41-45; LUK 21:20-24).

5:9 Ephraim shall become a desolation in the day of punishment [NKJ: rebuke]; among [TNK: against] the tribes of Israel I declare what is sure [TNK: proclaim certainties]. (NRS)

The Day of Punishment

At the time the Assyrians took the ten tribes of Israel into captivity, they did not leave the land a desolation. Instead they brought other peoples from other parts of their empire and planted them in the land (2KI 17:24). Therefore, the day of punishment or rebuke is yet future—at the end of the age.

Hosea was just one of many prophets Yahuwah used to reveal what would ultimately happen to the nation of Israel before Yahuwah would show them mercy and save them. This verse and the next two summarize what will happen to the descendants of the Northern and Southern Kingdoms at the end.

5:10 The princes of Yahuwdah [MOF: Yahuwdah's leaders] are like those who remove a landmark; I will pour out My wrath on them like water.

Removing Landmarks

Removing landmarks changes property boundaries. The leaders of the Southern Kingdom were guilty of changing the boundaries between right and wrong, between the worship of Yahuwah and the worship of idols. The Jewish leaders in Israel today are also guilty of changing those boundaries. They condone Sabbath breaking, eating unclean meats, homosexuality, having their own feasts, etc.

Pouring Out Wrath

Because they refuse to submit to Yahuwah's law, they will be required to give account. They will be the first group to experience the horrors of the end of the age. Their land will be invaded and subjugated by the Beast (LUK 21:20-24). Then, with the rest of the world, they will undergo the day of Yahuwah's wrath.

REV 6:17 For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?

JER 30:7 Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it; and it is the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it.

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Yahuwah's wrath will be finished once the seven last plagues have been released (REV 15:1).

REV 16:1 Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, Go and pour out the bowls of the wrath of Yahuwah on the earth.

5:11 Ephraim is oppressed and broken in judgment, because he willingly walked by human precept [NAS: was determined to follow man's command; NRS: was determined to go after vanity].

Man's Command

The NRS indicates that the cause of Ephraim's problems stems from their idolatry, whereas the NKJ and NAS put the blame on the willingness of the descendants of the Northern Kingdom to follow a command of a man. There is only one command associated with the time of the end:

ZEP 2:1-2 Gather yourselves together, yes, gather together, O undesirable nation, before the decree is issued, before the day passes like chaff, before Yahuwah's fierce anger comes upon you, before the day of Yahuwah's anger comes upon you!

REV 13:15-17 He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Worshipping the image of the beast will be blatant idolatry.

5:12 Therefore I will be to Ephraim like a moth, and to the house of Yahuwdah like rotteness.

A Moth, and Rotteness

A moth lays eggs in woolen garments where larvae hatch out and eat holes in the garments; this goes unnoticed until there is a need to use the garment. Rot is similar; decay usually penetrates into the core of a structural member and is generally hidden until its strength fails. Just as larval moths and rotteness surreptitiously remove the strength and soundness of whatever they invade, so Yahuwah will cause the end-time descendants of Jacob to discover their pride to be hollow and their desires to be empty and vain.

5:13 When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Yahuwdah saw his wound [TNK: sores], **then Ephraim went to Assyria and sent** [TNK: sent envoys] **to King Jareb** [TNK: a patron king; NRS: the great king; JPS: King Contentious];

A Prophecy

Since there is no historical record of this ever occurring, clearly this is the continuation of a prophecy for the end time.

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The descendants of the Northern Kingdom which include not only the territories associated with the British Commonwealth and the United States, but also much of Europe were responsible for the Industrial Revolution and became the financial powers of the world. However, their economic might has been eroding for decades their wealth being taken away by others. The descendants of the Southern Kingdom who have returned to the land of Israel have relied upon the descendants of the Northern Kingdom for military and economic support in order to survive. Without that help, the constantly irritated wound inflicted by the descendants of Esau would lead to their end as a nation.

The day of financial reckoning is swiftly approaching. In order to avert a worldwide economic catastrophe, a totally new financial system will be instituted; that system which controls all commerce will require inflexible loyalty to its creator. The descendants of the Northern Kingdom will willingly submit themselves to this system, as verse 11 showed.

Both Nahum and Isaiah reveal that Assyria and Babylon are interchangeable in end-time prophecy.

ISA 10:5-6, 20 Woe to Assyria, the rod of My anger and the staff in whose hand is My indignation. I will send him against an unrighteous nation, and against the people of My wrath I will give him charge, to seize the spoil, to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets...And it shall come to pass in that day that the remnant of Israel, and such as have escaped of the house of Jacob, will never again depend on him who defeated them, but will depend on Yahuwah, the Holy One of Israel, in truth.

The descendants of the Northern Kingdom will actually approach the head of the Babylonian system when they go to Assyria and send representatives to King Jareb. The JPS sticks closer to the root Hebrew from which Jareb is translated when it refers to the king as —Contentious. One who is contentious contends with another, and the Beast is prophesied to contend with Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach.

DAN 8:25 Through his cunning he shall cause deceit to prosper under his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart. He shall destroy many in their prosperity. He shall even rise against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without human hand.

It is important to note here that Yahuwah does not go to the leader of Babylon; prophecy shows that the leader of Babylon goes to the land of Israel, which is controlled by descendants of the Southern Kingdom (DAN 11:40-45). We are also told that at the time of the end the descendants of the Northern Kingdom will turn on the descendants of the Southern Kingdom (ISA 9:21).

5:13 (cont.) ...yet he cannot cure you, nor heal you of your wound.

The Beast will not be able to provide a permanent solution for the descendants of Israel because Yahuwah has determined what must befall them and no power can thwart Yahuwah's will. He rules in the kingdom of men and determines what must come to pass (ISA 46:9-10).

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5:14 For I will be like a lion to Ephraim, and like a young lion to the house of Yahuwdah. I, even I, will tear them and go away; I will take them away, and no one shall rescue.

Historical Fulfillment

This verse seems to revert back to the historical events. As a lion takes its prey to a place for safe-keeping, so Yahuwah used Assyria to take the Northern Kingdom out of the land of Israel and used Babylon to remove the Southern Kingdom.

5:15 I will return again to My place till they acknowledge their offense. Then they will seek My face; in their affliction they will diligently seek Me.

Acknowledging Their Offense

Although some of those of the Southern Kingdom came to acknowledge the offense that led to their deportation (DAN 9:1-19), none of the Northern Kingdom ever did so. This verse is for the time of the end. It will not be until they experience the affliction of the plagues during the Day of Yahuwah that all of the tribes of Israel will diligently seek Yahuwah.

Hosea: Chapter 6

Background

In the first three verses of Chapter 6, the combined Kingdoms of Israel and Yahuwdah figuratively speak out to give a synopsis of how and when their reconciliation with Yahuwah occurs. This is an inset, which helps to fill in some of the details omitted from Hosea 3:4-5, where it is prophesied that the Northern Kingdom of Israel would be vanquished from the land of Israel for many days.

6:1 Come, and let us return to Yahuwah; for He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but He will bind us up.

Let Us Return!

There is a call to repentance, which requires a new view of Yahuwah, and recognition of His great mercy. This change of attitude cannot occur until Ha'Mashyach returns and opens their minds by removing the veil of darkness (ISA 25:7) that presently prevents their ability to see (MAT 13:13-15).

6:2 After two days He will revive us [TNK: make us whole again]; on the third day He will raise us up, that we may live in His sight.

Two Days

The day for a year principle (NUM 14:34; EZE 4:6) cannot apply here, because not merely two years but 2½ years have come and gone more than a thousand times over since the Northern Kingdom was removed from the land of Israel by the Assyrians around 720 B.C. We must therefore apply the other day for principle—the one referred to by Moses in PSA 90:4 and used by Peter in 2PE 3:8—one day is as a thousand years.

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Over 2000 years will have elapsed since the removal of the Northern Kingdom until its descendants and the descendants of the Southern Kingdom will be revived and raised up as one nation again, with Dawid as king. Actually, more than 2720 years have already passed since Israel's exile began. This verse says after two days, but does not say immediately after; it says on the third day, so it would mean sometime during the third —day. Certainly, some time before the beginning of the fourth day (which would be around A.D. 2280), this will be accomplished.

6:3 Let us know, let us pursue the knowledge of Yahuwah [MOF: Let us know the Eternal, let us make haste to know Him; TNK: Let us pursue obedience to Yahuwah, and we shall become obedient]. **His going forth is established as the morning; He will come to us like the rain, like the latter and former rain to the earth.**

Pursue Yahuwah

The desire to know the true Aluhym comes only when Yahuwah grants that desire during a day of salvation. One day of salvation will occur on the third day (using the notation of verse 2, applicable to Israel as explained above), beginning from the outset of the reign of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach (JER 31:31-34). Another day of salvation will begin again at the start of the White Throne Judgment period, some time prior to A.D. 3230 or thereabouts (not setting times just speculating using the "signs of the times"). Ezekiel states that Israel will not know Yahuwah prior to the beginning of that day of salvation.

EZE 37:13-14 Then you shall know that I am Yahuwah, when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up from your graves. I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I, Yahuwah, have spoken it and performed it, says Yahuwah.

Established as the Morning

Israel will finally come to the point of recognizing that Yahuwah is as dependable as the breaking of the day, and that He provides the needs of His people as surely as the rains that come when needed.

Like the Rain

The former rains of the fall and early winter provided the water necessary for the grain crops to become established and survive the winter; the latter rains in the spring provided the moisture necessary for producing the heads of grain for harvest.

End of Inset

The inset ends and the focus now returns to Israel's condition prior to their expulsion from the land.

6:4 O Ephraim, what shall I do to you? O Yahuwah, what shall I do to you? For your faithfulness is like a morning cloud, and like the early dew it goes away.

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Disappearing Faithfulness

Unlike Yahuwah, neither of the two Kingdoms could be relied on to keep its word. A morning cloud and early dew are both very temporary and disappear quickly exactly like the faithfulness of Israel: the nation gave its word, but quickly failed to fulfill its promises.

6:5 Therefore I have hewn them [REB: cut them to pieces] by the prophets, I have slain them by the words of My mouth; and your [REB: My] judgments are like light that goes forth.

By the Prophets

Through His prophets, Yahuwah has spoken the judgment that is to come upon Israel; just as the light emanating from the sun cannot be stopped, so nothing can change or alter His word.

ISA 55:11 So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

6:6 For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of Yahuwah more than burnt offerings. Mercy, not Sacrifice

Yahuwah wants a yielded mind, not the shed blood of animals! What He wants is change on the inside.

ISAM 15:22 Then Samuel said: Has Yahuwah as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Yahuwah? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams.

PSA 51:16-17 For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. The sacrifices of Yahuwah are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart these, O Yahuwah, You will not despise.

6:7 But like men [NAS: Adam] they transgressed the covenant; there they dealt treacherously with Me.

6:7 But they, to a man, have transgressed the Covenant. This is where they have been false to Me: (TNK)

Who Transgressed?

The NAS has followed the RSV and transliterated the Hebrew as the name of the first man, rather than translating it into men. The emphasis then is: Israel transgressed the covenant it made with Yahuwah, just as Adam transgressed the agreement Yahuwah had made with him. However, the TNK better captures the contextual meaning.

6:8 Gilead is a city of evildoers, and is defiled with blood.

Gilead

Gilead was a large territory in the northeastern part of Israel. The most likely city that would be associated with that territory is Ramoth-Gilead (JOS 20:8), which was one of the cities of refuge

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on the east side of the Jordan. The cities of refuge were for people who accidentally killed another person; they could escape the avengers of blood by seeking refuge in those cities, where no blood was to be shed. Those who were living in this city during the time of Hosea were defiling the very purpose for the existence of the city through premeditated bloodshed.

6:9 As bands of robbers lie in wait for a man, so the company of priests murder on the way to Shechem; surely they commit lewdness. [CJB: Their conduct is an outrage!]

6:9 The gang of priests is like the ambushade of bandits who murder on the road to Shechem, for they have encouraged depravity. (TNK)

Lie in Wait

This is another indictment against the corrupt religious leaders referred to in Hosea 4:8, who benefitted by the people's sins. By perverting the truth and encouraging the commission of sin, for their own material gain, the priests were causing the death penalty to come upon the people they instructed.

6:10 I have seen a horrible thing in the house of Israel: there is the harlotry of Ephraim; Israel is defiled.

Harlotry

This verse repeats the point made in Hosea 5:3 the harlotry of idolatry began in the tribe of Ephraim. Due to the fact that Bethel, the main religious center of the Northern Kingdom, was located there; that decadent influence spread to all of the other tribes connected to Ephraim.

6:11 And for you, too, Yahuwdah, a harvest of reckoning will come... (REB)

Yahuwdah

The first part of this verse is parenthetical. Yahuwah rhetorically asked in verse 4 what He should do to the Northern and Southern Kingdoms, and answered by saying He had already cut them to pieces by the words delivered by His prophets. Then, He began to refer to the reasons for their punishments by listing the sins of specific areas located in the Northern Kingdom. Now, He reminds the Southern Kingdom that they too have earned punishment that will come at a later time.

6:11 (cont.)-7:1 ...When I would restore My people's fortunes, when I would heal [NKJ: have healed] Israel,... (TNK)

When

This desire of Yahuwah to heal the Northern Kingdom of Israel was conditional upon the willingness of the people to hear and act on the warnings of His prophets.

Hosea: Chapter 7

7:1 (cont.) ...then the iniquity of Ephraim was uncovered, and the wickedness of Samaria. For they have committed fraud [CJB: they keep practicing deceit]; the thief comes in; a band of robbers takes spoil outside.

Iniquity, Wickedness and Fraud

The messages of Yahuwah's prophets went unheeded; the obstinacy of the people verified the extent of Israel's sins and decadence. There was no place to escape wickedness it entered their homes and permeated every area outside. Since Samaria was the capital city of the Northern Kingdom, it is often used to represent the entire nation.

7:2 They do not consider in their hearts that I remember all their wickedness; now their own deeds have surrounded [NIV: sins engulf] them; they are before My face.

Engulfed by Sin

The people had become so calloused to their sins and the sinful state of the nation that they felt no remorse, nor fear of Yahuwah.

7:3 They make a [KJV: the] king glad with their wickedness, and princes with their lies.

Make a King Glad

The nation's leaders were delighted because the depth of the people's wickedness revealed such a low standard of public morality that no one would think of requiring a higher standard from those in leadership positions. When the people looked at their leaders, they saw such a low standard of morality among them that they felt no need to change their own actions.

7:4 They are all adulterers, burning like an oven whose fire the baker need not stir from the kneading of the dough till it rises. (NIV)

7:4 They commit adultery, all of them, like an oven fired by a baker, who desists from stoking only from the kneading of the dough to its leavening. (TNK)

The Baker's Oven

This is the first of two analogies using a baker's oven. It shows the similarity of the heat of the oven to that of unbridled lust. Their lust constantly smolders within them, and from time to time flames up, like the oven that the baker stirs or stokes when it needs more heat for cooking his raised bread. Then, when the bread is done or the passions of the wicked have been indulged the fire in the oven is allowed to die down to smoldering once again.

7:5 In the day of our king princes have made him sick, inflamed with wine; he stretched out his hand with scoffers [TNK: he gave his hand to traitors].

In the Day

This seems to be a specific event during Hosea's time very possibly a reference to a Coronation Day, possibly that of Zachariah, son of Jeroboam II. It seems that from the outset of his reign, he

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surrounded himself with those who scoffed at morality, the same ones who would soon betray him.

7:6 They prepare their heart like an oven, while they lie in wait; their baker sleeps all night; in the morning it burns like a flaming fire.

7:6 For they are kindled like an oven, their heart burns within them [RSV: with intrigue]; all night their anger smolders; in the morning it blazes like a flaming fire. (NRS)

The Baker's Oven Again

Here is the second analogy using a baker's oven. This one compares the passion of anger to the heat of the oven. As the traitors wait for the time to strike the king, their anger toward him smolders. At the time the wicked deed is to be done, their anger intensifies and the king is assassinated. The event alluded to may be the assassination of Zachariah, which was carried out by Shallum (2KI 15:10).

7:7 They are all hot, like an oven, and have devoured their judges [TNK: rulers]; all their kings have fallen [TNK: fallen by their hand]. There is none among them who calls upon Me.

The passion of anger that led to murder was responsible for ending the reigns of more than half of the kings of the Northern Kingdom—nine out of seventeen, none of whom ever sought Yahuwah.

7:8 Ephraim has mixed himself among the peoples [NAS: nations; MOF: foreigners]; Ephraim is a cake unturned.

Mixed and Unturned

The Northern Kingdom openly scorned Yahuwah's instruction not to adopt the ways of the other nations, which did not worship Yahuwah. They not only allowed the importation of pagan religious practices; they encouraged it.

A cake not turned will be become burned on one side and remain raw batter on the other—worthless for eating. Due to Israel's adoption of paganism, they were burned; due to their failure to live Yahuwah's way of life, they were uncooked. The nation was worthless as a model for other nations to emulate.

7:9 Aliens have devoured his strength, but he does not know it; yes, gray hairs are here and there on him, yet he does not know it.

Devoured His Strength

The Northern Kingdom was losing its financial strength by paying a tribute to Assyria (2KI 15:19-20) so that they would leave the nation alone. This loss of financial strength was analogous to a man growing old and losing his physical strength, all the while oblivious to his declining physical stamina.

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7:10 And the pride [REB: arrogance] of Israel testifies to his face [NAS: against him], but they do not return to Yahuwah their Aluhym, nor seek Him for all this.

Pride of Israel

Due to their willingness to trust the word of other nations, and their failure to admit to their declining national strength, Israel never saw the need to seek Yahuwah.

7:11 Ephraim also is like a silly [NIV: easily deceived] dove, without sense—they call to Egypt, they go to Assyria.

Silly Dove

A dove is one of the most easily deceived birds. As a dove is quickly lured into a trap, so Israel fell into the trap of turning to both Egypt and Assyria for help; Menahem sought an alliance with Assyria and Hoshea turned to Egypt (2KI 17:4)

7:12 Wherever they go, I will spread My net on them; I will bring them down like birds of the air; I will chastise them according to what their congregation has heard [CJB: was told].

Chastisement

No matter to which nation Israel turned for help to retain its sovereignty, it would not be allowed to continue; Yahuwah would ultimately decide when it would be captured. Yahuwah had warned Israel from its national beginnings that disobedience to Him would result in the eventual loss of the land of Israel to enemies and the removal of Israel from that land (DEU 28:63-64).

7:13 Woe to them, for they have fled from Me! Destruction to them, because they have transgressed against Me! Though I redeemed them, yet they have spoken lies against Me.

7:13 Woe to them for straying from Me; destruction to them for rebelling against Me! For I was their Redeemer; yet they have plotted treason against Me. (TNK)

Woe and destruction were exactly what Yahuwah prophesied would happen to them if they turned away from Him. Using Yahuwah's name in their worship of pagan idols was deceitful and hypocritical.

7:14 They did not cry out to Me with their heart [REB: There is no sincerity in their cry to Me] when they wailed upon their beds. They assemble together for grain and new wine, they rebel against Me;

No Sincerity

When they cried out using Yahuwah's name in prayer, it was only for relief from trouble or pain; they were not repentant of their sins, nor did they truly desire direct communication with Yahuwah whose name they used—the one who required obedience to His law.

7:15 Though I disciplined [NIV: trained them] and strengthened their arms, yet they devise evil against Me;

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Disciplined

Yahuwah gave them guidance that would bring them happiness, prosperity and protection if they followed it. But they chose to abandon Yahuwah and His guidance by turning to the idolatry of the pagans.

7:16 They turn to that which does not profit; they have become like a defective [CJB: unreliable] bow; their officials shall fall by the sword because of the rage of their tongue. So much for [TNK: Such shall be the results of] their babbling in the land of Egypt. (NRS)

Unreliable Bow

A defective bow will not shoot an arrow accurately and therefore cannot be trusted. Like arrows shot from a defective bow that turn away from the true course, so Israel veered away from trusting Yahuwah and relied on other nations to save them. The envoys of Israel who went to Egypt to discuss terms of an alliance on behalf of Hoshea died when Assyria invaded the Northern Kingdom.

Hosea: Chapter 8

8:1 Set the trumpet [TNK: a ram's horn] to your mouth! He shall come like an eagle against the house of Yahuwah, because they have transgressed My covenant and rebelled against My law.

Ram's Horn

The ram's horn was used to sound an alarm to warn of approaching danger. The Assyrians would descend swiftly on the Northern Kingdom like an eagle on its prey, fulfilling one of the curses Yahuwah pronounced on Israel if they persisted in disobeying the covenant made at Sinai.

DEU 28:49 Yahuwah will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flies, a nation whose language you will not understand.

8:2 Israel will cry to Me, My Aluhym, we know You!'

Crying Out

Their cry was out of desperation not because they had a close relationship with Him.

ISA 29:13 ...these people draw near to Me with their mouths and honor Me with their lips, but have removed their hearts far from Me...

Since their works of disobedience proved they did not really know Him, their profession of belief was a lie (TIT 1:16).

8:3 Israel has cast off [NAS: rejected] the good; the enemy will pursue him.

Rejection and Pursuit

They consistently rejected the good, which is Yahuwah's way; therefore, the curse of being pursued and conquered by their enemies could no longer be averted.

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DEU 28:36 Yahuwah will bring you and the king whom you set over you to a nation which neither you nor your fathers have known...

8:4 They have made kings, but not with My sanction; they have made officers, but not of My choice. Of their silver and gold they have made themselves images, to their own undoing [NRS: destruction]. (TNK)

Unsanctioned Kings

Since Yahuwah has ultimate control of all nations (DAN 2:21) He must either prevent or allow individuals to become rulers. He established Jeroboam as the first king of the Northern Kingdom (1KI 11:26-37) and then allowed others to ascend to that throne after his death. However, the manner in which his successors did so was not by appeal to Yahuwah, but by their own self-will, generally by assassinating the king then in power. Even those in lesser positions of power received their appointments based on selfish human agendas—not on their dedication to Yahuwah's way. The only appeals they made were to idols they created and directed the people to worship

8:5 Your calf is rejected, O Samaria [the capital city of the Northern Kingdom (ISA 7:9)]! My anger is aroused against them. How long will it be until they attain to innocence [TNK: Will they never be capable of purity]?

Your Calf

The calf referred to the primary object which Jeroboam had established for the subjects of his kingdom to worship; two golden calves were made, one placed at Dan in the north and the other at Bethel in the south (1KI 12:28-30).

8:6 The calf was made in Israel; a craftsman fashioned it and it is no god; it [NKJ: the calf of Samaria] will be reduced to splinters. (REB)

Hosea points out the stupidity of worshipping an idol made with human hands as if it had some inherent power (ISA 44:9-20); just as all other idols are eventually destroyed, so would be the calves of Jeroboam.

8:7 They sow the wind, and reap the whirlwind. The stalk has no bud; it shall never produce meal [NAS: standing grain has no heads; it yields no grain]. If it should produce, aliens would swallow it up.

Sowing and Reaping

This is an analogy of Israel's idolatry. Sowing represents the expenditure of effort with the hope of reaping; in order to reap a harvest, seed must be sown. Since idols are nothing, Israel sowed nothing but the wind by practicing idolatry. The only outcome of their sowing would be an Assyrian invasion coming with the destructive power of a whirlwind. Israel made idols with the idea that if those idols were worshipped, those inanimate objects would provide the fertility of soil and the water necessary for the production of crops. Yahuwah had cursed their harvests

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(DEU 28:17) to show them that their idols did not have the power to deliver their expectations. What little the land did produce would be taken by the Assyrians (DEU 28:33).

8:8 Israel is swallowed up; now they are among the Gentiles like a vessel in which there is no pleasure [JPS: value].

Swallowed Up

Just as the produce of Israel's land was taken by the Assyrians, so were the people removed from the land of Israel and taken elsewhere by the armies of Assyria.

DEU 28:37 You will become a thing of horror and an object of scorn and ridicule to all the nations where Yahuwah will drive you. (NIV)

8:9 For they have gone up to Assyria, like a wild donkey alone by itself; Ephraim has hired lovers.

Wild Donkey

Wild donkeys have two notable characteristics: stubbornness and constant wandering. Israel stubbornly wandered among the nations seeking alliances especially with Assyria.

8:10 Yes, though they have hired among the nations, now I will gather them; and they shall sorrow a little, because of the burden of the king of princes.

Hired

As mentioned above under Hosea 7:9, Israel had attempted to buy protection from other nations rather than turn back to Yahuwah. All their efforts backfired when Yahuwah used Assyria, the primary nation to which they had paid protection money, to gather them together and lead them out of the land of Israel. They would languish in Assyrian captivity for a while before migrating to the lands in the north and west.

8:11 Because Ephraim has made many altars for sin, they have become for him altars for sinning.

Altars

There was only one altar that Yahuwah recognized, and it was in Jerusalem (DEU 12:10-14). Therefore, every altar used in the Northern Kingdom was considered an abomination to Yahuwah and every offering made on those altars would have been sinful.

8:12 I have written for him the great things of My law, but they were considered a strange thing [TNK: have been treated as something alien].

A Strange Thing

Every sin of the Northern Kingdom, including the use of idolatrous altars, was inexcusable, since Yahuwah had had Moses meticulously record His instructions and the terms of the covenant, to which all Israel had agreed.

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8:13 For the sacrifices of My offerings they sacrifice flesh and eat it [TNK: When they present sacrifices to Me, it is but flesh for them to eat], but Yahuwah does not accept them. Now He will remember their iniquity and punish their sins. They shall return to Egypt.

Unacceptable Offerings

Since their altars were profane and there was no repentance or change in heart or deed, the only purpose their offerings served was to provide food for meals. Their choice to ignore Yahuwah's law would not go unpunished. They would go back to a house of bondage (JDG 6:8), but this time in Assyria.

8:14 For Israel has forgotten his Maker, and has built temples [NAS: palaces]; Yahuwah also has multiplied fortified cities; but I will send fire upon his cities, and it shall devour his palaces.

The Northern Kingdom had built temples to pagan idols at the high places (1KI 12:31; 13:32), although Yahuwah had instructed that such were to be torn down (DEU 12:2). The Southern Kingdom relied on its fortified cities for protection rather than on Yahuwah.

Hosea: Chapter 9

9:1 Do not rejoice, O Israel, with joy like other peoples, for you have played the harlot against your Yahuwah. You have loved for reward [NRS: a prostitute's pay] on every threshing floor.

Playing the Harlot

The pagan nations celebrated their harvests by worshipping their idols. Israel was not to be like them, yet they indulged in the same types of practices, attributing their harvests to pagan idols, as blessings from them. By doing so, they ceased treating Yahuwah as their husband their only one.

9:2 The threshing floor and the winepress shall not feed them, and the new wine shall fail in [CJB: disappoint] her.

Disappointment

Yahuwah cursed their harvests because they snubbed Him and participated in pagan idolatry.

9:3 They shall not dwell in Yahuwah's land, but Ephraim shall return to Egypt, and shall eat unclean things in Assyria.

Time of Bondage

Because they refused to turn back to Yahuwah when He began pouring out curses on them, His only recourse was to remove them from the land of Israel and put them in bondage such as their ancestors had experienced in Egypt. This time the bondage would be in Assyria (11:5), where the dietary laws established by Yahuwah would be impossible for them to observe.

9:4 They shall not offer wine offerings to Yahuwah, nor shall their sacrifices be pleasing to Him. It shall be like bread of mourners to them; all who eat it shall be defiled. For their

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bread shall be for their life [TNK: food will be only for their hunger]; **it shall not come into the house of Yahuwah.**

Since the only sacrifices acceptable to Yahuwah **at that time** had to be made at the temple in Jerusalem, once they were removed from the land and taken to Assyria they would be totally incapable of making any approved offerings or sacrifices. Any offering made would be considered unclean or defiled, just like the food of those who mourned for the dead (NUM 19:14, 22). Unlike the offerings made at the temple in Jerusalem, many of which were shared by Yahuwah, the priests and the one for whom the offering was made, any offering made in Assyria would be done without the presence of Yahuwah.

9:5 What will you do about feast days, about the festivals of Yahuwah? (TNK) Their being held captive by the Assyrians would make pilgrimages to Jerusalem to keep the feasts of Yahuwah impossible for them.

9:6 For indeed they are gone because of [NRS: For even if they escape] **destruction. Egypt shall gather them up; Memphis shall bury them. Nettles shall possess their valuables of silver; thorns shall be in their tents.**

Those who were not killed during the Assyrian attack were gathered together and transported out of the land to Assyria. Memphis was the primary residence of the majority of the Pharaohs, but here represents the primary city of the Assyrian kings. Once the Israelites of the Northern Kingdom were removed from the land, their towns were quickly taken over by the peoples brought there by king Shalmaneser III (2KI 17:24); they represented a curse Yahuwah brought against the land (1KI 14:15).

9:7 The days of punishment have come, the days of recompense have come; Israel cries, The prophet is a fool, the man of the spirit is mad! Because of your great iniquity, your hostility is great. (NRS)

Response to the Warnings

Hosea and other prophets were sent by Yahuwah to tell the people that their time was up—that the time of the prophesied punishment had arrived. Their response was to call Yahuwah’s prophets —fools and madmen rather than take them seriously. When Yahuwah’s messengers emphasized that the cause of the punishment was Israel’s own faults and their sinful ways, rather than change their ways they became indignant and tried to discredit the messengers.

9:8 The prophet is Yahuwah’s watchman, placed over Ephraim, and yet his paths are snared; within the temple [NKJ: house] **of his Yahuwah men are hostile to him!** (MOF)

House of his Yahuwah

There are two ways in which house of his Yahuwah can be understood:

1. the land Yahuwah gave Israel as a place to dwell (Hosea 8:1; 9:15), or
2. the temple in Jerusalem (DAN 5:3).

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If it refers to the land of Israel, then the hostility felt by Yahuwah's prophets came from the people living in the land who despised them for the messages they delivered. If house refers to the temple, this verse may be a personal note of Hosea's own experience. After the death of Jeroboam II, Hosea moved to the Southern Kingdom, where the temple was located. Although his primary role was to be a prophet to the Northern Kingdom, among the Levitical priests who served at the temple there were apparently some who became upset with Hosea and tried to undermine his ability to fulfill his commission from Yahuwah.

9:9 They are deeply corrupted, as in the days of Gibeah. He will remember their iniquity; He will punish their sins.

Deeply Corrupted

The depravity of Israel was as vile as the corruption associated with the town of Gibeah in Benjamin shortly before the time of the judges. Gibeah was filled with homosexuals who assaulted and killed a woman to satisfy their perverted lust; then, rather than punishing the guilty men for their crimes, the Benjamites arrogantly defended the perverts (JDG 19-20).

9:10 I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness; I saw your fathers as the firstfruits on the fig tree in its first season. But they went to Baal Peor, and separated themselves to that shame; they became an abomination like the thing they loved.

Grapes and Figs

Grapes in the wilderness are rare to find and the first figs are the most delicious. By using these as comparisons, Yahuwah personified how much He desired a relationship with Israel. But, from early in their relationship, Israel revealed that its heart was not focused on Yahuwah in the same way. To emphasize their unfaithfulness, Yahuwah gives an example: shortly before entering the Promised Land, after experiencing the daily miracle of manna and many other wonders at the hand of Yahuwah for almost forty years, thousands of Israelites engaged in the worship of Baal by consorting with temple prostitutes at Mount Peor (NUM 25).

9:11 As for Ephraim, their glory shall fly away like a bird no birth, no pregnancy, and no conception!

The meaning of the name Ephraim is fruitful, which is what Yahuwah promised Abraham, Isaac and Jacob their descendants would be. However, during the time of Assyrian invasion and forced exile from the land there would be a dramatic drop in the population.

9:12 Though they bring up their children, yet I will bereave them to the last man. Yes, woe to them when I depart from them!

Bereave Them

Every family would suffer the loss of some of its members during the warfare to come.

9:13 Ephraim, as I have seen, is planted in a pleasant meadow like Tyre; but Ephraim will bring out his children for slaughter. (NAS)

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Tyre

Tyre was situated in an ideal location for maritime trade and became one of the most wealthy cities in the Mediterranean. Israel was also in an ideal position for overland trade, since all caravans between Egypt and Mesopotamia came through that area. However, unlike Tyre, which achieved great commercial success, Israel never succeeded in reaching its potential because of its rejection of Yahuwah. The real potential of any nation resides in its children, and in the case of Israel, that potential would be greatly diminished by the Assyrian invasion and slaughter.

9:14 Give them, O Yahuwah what will You give? Give them a miscarrying womb and dry breasts.

Miscarrying Womb

Hosea seems to be asking Yahuwah to be merciful and spare children from the horrors of the coming war by preventing their births in the years leading up to the captivity of the nation.

9:15 All their wickedness is [TNK: misfortune began] **in Gilgal, for there I hated them. Because of the evil of their deeds I will drive them from My house; I will love them no more. All their princes** [NIV: leaders] **are rebellious.**

Gilgal

Gilgal was the location of the tabernacle after Israel crossed the Jordan (JOS 5:10), until it was moved to Shiloh (JOS 18:1). It was the place where Saul was crowned king of Israel (1SAM 11:14) and where Saul made an illegal sacrifice that caused Yahuwah to reject his descendants as the rulers of Israel (1SAM 13:12-14). It was also the place where Samuel confronted Saul for his failure to destroy the king of the Amalekites and all their livestock, and where Yahuwah rejected him from continuing as the king of Israel (1SAM 15:12-23).

Their Wickedness

The wickedness associated with profane offerings began with Saul's sin; the offering was made to Yahuwah, but being a Benjamite (1SAM 9:21), Saul was ineligible to perform such worship. By the time of Hosea, the Northern Kingdom had degenerated so much that their profane offerings were not even being made to Yahuwah, but to pagan idols.

9:16 Ephraim is stricken, their root is dried up; they shall bear no fruit. Yes, were they to bear children, I would kill the beloved fruit of their womb.

Dried Up

This verse repeats the point of Hosea 9:11-12: those called by the name which means fruitful will actually dwindle in population due to the punishment that Yahuwah would bring through the Assyrians.

9:17 My Yahuwah will cast them away, because they did not obey Him; and they shall be wanderers among the nations.

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Cast Away

Yahuwah exiled the ten tribes of the Northern Kingdom from the land of Israel to fulfill the potential curse He had warned would be suffered by them if they proved to be disobedient to Him.

DEU 28:63-64 ...you shall be plucked from off the land which you go to possess. Then Yahuwah will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other...

The potential curse became an actual and ironclad curse on the Northern Kingdom due to the sins of its first king.

IKI 14:15-16 For Yahuwah will strike Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water. He will uproot Israel from this good land which He gave to their fathers, and will scatter them beyond the River, because they have made their wooden images, provoking Yahuwah to anger. And He will give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, who sinned and who made Israel sin.

Hosea: Chapter 10

10:1 Israel empties his vine; he brings forth fruit for himself. According to the multitude of his fruit he has increased the altars; according to the bounty of his land they have embellished his sacred pillars.

Self-Consumed

Israel was completely consumed with going its way, giving no thought to Yahuwah's way. The more prosperous the nation became, the further it turned away from Yahuwah and the more guilty of idolatry it became!

10:2 Their heart is divided [NIV: deceitful]; now they are held guilty. He will break down their altars; He will ruin their sacred pillars.

Their Heart

Yahuwah looks on the heart—the will, established in the mind to determine His judgment (1SAM 16:7).

JER 17:9-10 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? I, Yahuwah, search the heart, I test the mind, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.

From its beginning, the Northern Kingdom was double-minded; the people claimed to serve Yahuwah, but incorporated the idolatry of the pagans in the way they worshipped Him. Elijah confronted the people about their hypocritical practice before slaying the priests of Baal.

IKI 18:21 And Elijah came to all the people, and said, —How long will you falter between two opinions? If Yahuwah is Yahuwah, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him....

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Guilty

Yahuwah judged the Northern Kingdom guilty of forsaking Him; therefore He would cut them off.

10:3 For now they say, We have no king, because we did not fear Yahuwah. And as for a king, what would he do for us?

Timeframe

This occurred just before the people were taken from the land after the final king of the Northern Kingdom, Hoshea, was removed from power by the Assyrians. Since Yahuwah had determined their judgment, there was no power strong enough to prevent the fulfillment of that judgment.

10:4 They have spoken words, swearing falsely in making a covenant. Thus judgment springs up like hemlock [NAS: poisonous weeds] in the furrows of the field.

Poisonous Weeds

Yahuwah's judgment against them for their faithless, deceitful ways was no more to be desired than noxious weeds that adversely affect a planted crop. However, due to their refusal to repent of their ways, the coming of Yahuwah's judgment was more certain than the appearance of those unwanted weeds.

10:5-6 The inhabitants of Samaria fear because of the calf of Beth Aben. For its people mourn for it, and its priests shriek for it because its glory has departed from it. The idol also shall be carried to Assyria as a present for King Jareb. Ephraim shall receive shame, and Israel shall be ashamed of his own counsel [NRS: his idol] .

Calf of Beth Aben

The calf of Beth Aben was one of the two idols Jeroboam erected after becoming king of the Northern Kingdom one in the south at Bethel and the other in the north in Dan (1KI 12:28-29). Since Bethel means house of Yahuwah and the location no longer represented that fact, Yahuwah renamed it Beth Aben for what it had become: the house of wickedness.

Israel Shall Be Ashamed

Samaria, the whole of the Northern Kingdom, came to realize that if their primary idol could not protect itself, it certainly could not protect them. It was treated as the rest of the spoils of war taken back to Assyria. Both translations of the final phrase are correct; Israel was ashamed for putting trust in the calf-idol of Jeroboam and ashamed for following the counsel of Jeroboam to set up the idols in Dan and Bethel at the beginning of the Northern Kingdom.

10:7 Samaria's monarchy is vanishing like foam upon water. (TNK)

Vanishing Monarchy

The monarchy of the Northern Kingdom vanished in two ways: Hoshea, the final king, was removed from power and the kingdom itself ceased forever once the people were deported out of the land.

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10:8 Also the high places of Aben [NIV: wickedness], the sin of Israel, shall be destroyed. The thorn and thistle shall grow on their altars; they shall say to the mountains, Cover us! And to the hills, Fall on us!

High Places Destroyed

When the Assyrians took the calf-idol at Bethel, they destroyed all that remained. The thorn and thistle represent a curse from Yahuwah (GEN 3:18). The pronoun they seems to refer to the idolatrous altars; if so, the stones of the land of Israel used in constructing the altars are so ashamed of the way they were used, they desire to have their shame completely concealed from view. Their appeal will also be the cry of those who face the wrath of Yahuwah at the end of the age (REV 6:16).

10:9 Since the days of Gibeah, you have sinned, O Israel, and there you have remained. Did not war overtake the evildoers in Gibeah? (NIV)

Days of Gibeah

The incident at Gibeah occurred shortly after the death of Joshua, when the tribes were still united as a nation. The town of Gibeah was a haven of homosexuals who assaulted and killed a woman in their perverted rage. Had Israel applied Yahuwah's law (LEV 20:13), the corruption of Gibeah would never have occurred; Israel sinned by ignoring the application of Yahuwah's law. An additional sin occurred when the people of Benjamin refused to heed the call to punish the sinners (JDG 20:13). Both of these practices continued unabated throughout the years of the nation and led Israel to the condition extant in Hosea's day. Yahuwah reminds them here that war was used to deal with Gibeah's sin (JDG 19-20) and would be the same solution for the sins of the Northern Kingdom.

10:10 When it is My desire, I will chasten them. Peoples shall be gathered against them when I bind them for their two transgressions [NIV: double sin].

When I Desire

Yahuwah sets the time when He will bring punishment. From the account in Judges 19 –20, alluded to in Hosea 9:9 and 10:9, the two transgressions are seen to be: failure to apply Yahuwah's law; and refusal to take action to punish those who sinned.

10:11 Ephraim is a trained heifer that loves to thresh grain; but I harnessed her fair neck, I will make Ephraim pull a plow. Yahuwah shall plow; Jacob shall break his clods.

Trained Heifer

Like a heifer at a threshing-floor that does light work and has freedom to eat while working, the Northern Kingdom had never experienced forced labor and rarely scarcity of food. However, that would change when the yoke of Assyrian captivity was placed upon it. The Southern Kingdom was also destined at a later time to be placed under the yoke of another empire the Babylonian. Together, Ephraim and Yahuwah represented the whole of Jacob.

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10:12 Sow for yourselves righteousness; reap in mercy [TNK: the fruits of goodness]; break up your fallow [NIV: unplowed] ground, for it is time to seek Yahuwah, till He comes and rains righteousness on you.

Seek Yahuwah

Israel is once again encouraged to repent, which for them would be as hard to do as breaking up unplowed ground. Just as plowing must precede sowing, so repentance must come before righteousness can be achieved.

10:13 You have plowed wickedness; you have reaped iniquity [MOF: disaster]. You have eaten the fruit of lies, because you trusted in your own way [NIV: strength], in the multitude of your mighty men.

Wickedness

The history of Israel's plowing had always been to leave furrows of wickedness rather than furrows of humility and repentance. Whereas the result of the former yielded severance from Yahuwah, the outcome of the latter would have found favor with Yahuwah. One reason for their wrong choice was their trusting in themselves rather than in Yahuwah.

10:14 Therefore the tumult of war shall arise against your people, and all your fortresses shall be destroyed, as Shalman plundered Beth-arbel in the day of battle when mothers were dashed in pieces with their children. (NRS)

War

This was the disaster they reaped for abandoning Yahuwah. The incident at Beth-arbel is not recorded, but probably refers to a vicious attack on the Galilean town by one of the Shalmanezers. The brutal massacre of innocent women and children by alien armies was commonplace (2KI 8:12).

10:15 Thus it shall be done to you, O Bethel, because of your great wickedness. In a morning the king of Israel shall be cut off utterly [TNK: at dawn shall Israel's monarchy utterly perish].

The most gruesome atrocities of war would come on Israel, due in large part to the idolatry that spread from Bethel throughout all of the northern tribes. Just before the Assyrians began the siege of Samaria, the final king of the Northern Kingdom, Hoshea, was taken and imprisoned (2KI 17:4-5), ending the monarchy forever.

Hosea: Chapter 11

11:1 When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called My son.

Analogy of a Child

Yahuwah told Moses at the burning bush to tell Pharaoh that Israel was His son (EXO 4:22). Matthew applied the last part of the verse to Joseph's taking of Amanuwal to Egypt during the time Herod was putting the young Jewish boys to death (MAT 2:15).

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11:2 Thus were they called, but they went their own way; they sacrifice to Baalim and offer to carved images. (TNK)

Regardless of the love Yahuwah showed them in bringing them out of the bondage of Egypt, once they were released, they forsook Him and, in order to be like other nations, became idolaters.

11:3 I taught Ephraim to walk, taking them by their arms; but they did not know that I healed them [TNK: but they have ignored My healing care].

Like a loving parent, Yahuwah taught His son how to walk by giving all of Israel His law. But they ignored His help and guidance by refusing to keep His law.

11:4 I drew them with gentle cords, with bands of love, and I was to them as those who take the yoke from their neck. I stooped and fed them.

The picture of Yahuwah's parental concern continues; stooping down to feed them exemplified the level of attention He showed them. Yahuwah was very patient and kind in dealing with Israel. He promised to be their Sovereign and provide great blessings for them if they obeyed. The blessings to be derived from obedience would lighten, for them, the burden that mankind as a whole would have to endure because of the curses imposed when Adam surrendered dominion of the earth to the devil (GEN 3:17-19).

11:5 He shall not return to the land of Egypt; but the Assyrian shall be his king, because they refused to repent.

Assyrian King

The land of their coming bondage would be Assyria.

11:6 And the sword shall slash in his cities, devour his districts [NIV: destroy the bars of their gates], and consume them, because of their own counsels.

The Sword

The destructive weapons of war would be felt throughout the Northern Kingdom.

11:7 My people are bent on backsliding from Me. Though they call to the Most High, none at all exalt Him.

Backsliding People

The people had proven their unwillingness to change their ways. Although they invoked the name of Yahuwah, they refused to exalt Him. The only way to exalt Yahuwah is by obeying Him and thereby showing we recognize His omniscience and supreme power.

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11:8 How can I give you up, O Ephraim? How surrender you, O Israel? How can I make you like Admah, render you like Zeboiim? I have had a change of heart, all My tenderness is stirred. (TNK)

Admah and Zeboiim

Admah and Zeboiim were two towns that were completely destroyed along with Sodom and Gomorrah (DEU 29:23). Regardless of the fact that, like them, Israel deserved annihilation due to its unwillingness to exalt Yahuwah and look to Him as its only aluhym, Yahuwah's love for Israel stirred compassion within Him.

11:9 I will not act on My wrath, will not turn to destroy Ephraim. For I am Yahuwah, not man, the Kadosh One in your midst: I will not come in fury. (TNK)

Not Acting on Wrath

Because of the trait of human nature that John calls the pride of life (1JOH 2:16), men who are wronged often become bitter and vindictive, and they lash out, enraged with fury. Yahuwah is not influenced by that fleshly trait; rather, all of His responses are based on His love, and His love was so great that He promised not to treat Israel in the way it deserved. Its sins had earned a death sentence, but Yahuwah would not require the death of all the people of the nation only their removal from His land.

11:10-11 They shall walk after Yahuwah. He will roar like a lion. When He roars, then His sons shall come trembling from the west; they shall come trembling like a bird from Egypt, like a dove from the land of Assyria. And I will let them dwell in their houses [TNK: settle them in their homes], says Yahuwah.

Walking After Yahuwah

As a result of Yahuwah's mercy, Israel will, at a future time, at last treat Yahuwah as its only god. At that time Yahuwah's call to them will be as distinct as a lion's roar; in fact, it will be the voice of the Lion of the tribe of Yahuwah, Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach (REV 5:5), who will draw them back to the land of Israel (ISA 11:10). Egypt and Assyria represent the areas where Israel was required to live outside the land of Israel. Both Isaiah and Jeremiah prophesy of the time when the descendants of all the tribes of Israel will be brought back to the land Yahuwah promised to the descendants of Abraham that would come out of Egypt.

ISA 11:11-12, 16 It shall come to pass in that day that Yahuwah shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people who are left, from Assyria and Egypt, from Pathros and Cush, from Elam and Shinar, from Hamath and the islands of the sea. He will set up a banner for the nations, and will assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Yahuwah from the four corners of the earth...There will be a highway for the remnant of His people who will be left from Assyria, as it was for Israel in the day that he came up from the land of Egypt.

JER 23:7-8 Therefore, behold, the days are coming, says Yahuwah, that they shall no longer say, As Yahuwah lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt, ' but, As Yahuwah lives who brought up and led the descendants of the house of Israel from the north

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country and from all the countries where I had driven them. ' And they shall dwell in their own land.

11:12 Ephraim surrounds Me with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit;... (NAS)

Change of Focus

After this brief aside concerning the positive future of Israel, Yahuwah comes back to their unfaithfulness.

Israel's Relation to Yahuwah

Throughout its entire duration, the Northern Kingdom had never been faithful to Yahuwah.

11:12 (cont.) Yahuwdah is also unruly against Yahuwah [NKJ: But Yahuwdah still walks with Yahuwah], even against [NKJ: with] the Holy One who is faithful. (NAS)

Yahuwdah's Relation to Yahuwah

This passage can have two meanings. The NAS accurately renders the general condition of Yahuwdah: although the Southern Kingdom had not yet become as reprobate as the northern tribes, it too roamed away from Yahuwah, seeking the idolatry of the pagans. The NKJ can be correct only if this was recorded early in the reign of Uzziah (2CH 26:4-5) or during the reign of Hezekiah (2KI 18:3-7).

Hosea: Chapter 12

12:1 Ephraim feeds on the wind, and pursues the east wind; he daily increases lies and desolation [NAS: violence]. Also they make a covenant with the Assyrians, and oil is carried to Egypt.

Rather than obeying and exalting Yahuwah, they pursued the course of trusting pagan nations for their well-being. Feeding on or pursuing wind refers to engaging in an activity that is very temporary and ends in emptiness, which was exactly the outcome of foreign alliances.

12:2 Yahuwah also brings a charge against Yahuwdah, and will punish Jacob according to his ways; according to his deeds He will recompense him.

Yahuwdah would also be held accountable for not learning from the Northern Kingdom's mistakes in pursuing idolatry and foreign alliances. The use of the name Jacob indicates this is a summary prophecy concerning all the tribes of Israel not the separate kingdoms.

Jacob's Example

What follows is a digression on the actions of the patriarch Jacob, showing that his descendants should have copied his example rather than pursue the course they had chosen to follow.

12:3 He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and in his strength [NAS: in his maturity, NIV: as a man] he struggled with Yahuwah.

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His name was based on his grabbing his brother's heel at the time of birth (GEN 25:26); the name means supplanter; one who takes the place of another|| (GEN 27:36). This act culminated the struggle in which the two brothers were engaged while in the womb, symbolizing the fact that Yahuwah had determined the second born would receive the birthright, the blessings and the land promised to Abraham (GEN 25:22-23). The birth event is mentioned here to indicate that Yahuwah had begun His relationship with Jacob from the womb.

That relationship became very personal after Jacob was a grown man. The Word came to Jacob and wrestled with him through the night until dawn; Jacob would not quit holding onto the Word until he was blessed by Him. Because he continued holding on to Yahuwah while suffering extreme pain, his name was changed to Israel meaning prevailer with Yahuwah (GEN 32:24-30).

12:4-5 Yes, he struggled with the Angel and prevailed; he wept, and sought favor from Him. He found Him in Bethel, and there He spoke to us—that is, Yahuwah Aluhym of hosts. Yahuwah is His memorial [NAS: name].

Although the account in GEN 32 does not state that Jacob wept, Yahuwah reveals here that he did no doubt from the pain he suffered from having his hip socket dislocated.

Jacob's first direct encounter with Yahuwah occurred at Bethel when he was fleeing from Esau. Yahuwah told him in a dream that he and his descendants would, at a later time, be given the land promised to Abraham and Isaac (GEN 28:12-15).

Hosea says that Yahuwah spoke to us [the tribes of Israel] at Bethel when Jacob was promised the land. This was prior to the conception of any of his children; therefore this description is analogous to that of Levi having paid tithes to Melchizedek through Abraham (HEB 7:9-10).

12:6 So you, by the help of your Aluhym, return; observe mercy and justice, and wait on your Aluhym continually [TNK: constantly trust in your Yahuwah].

Since Yahuwah spoke to the descendants of Jacob at the time He promised the land, the descendants in Hosea's day should have remembered that their land was the result of a promise, and that in order to retain the land they needed to struggle as tenaciously as their forefather Jacob did by holding on to Yahuwah, refusing to let go, rather than chasing after the wind; they needed to repent of idolatry and foreign alliances. They needed to trust Yahuwah to deliver His promises just as Jacob did; they needed to live up to their name and prevail with Yahuwah!

12:7 The merchant [NKJ: A cunning Canaanite] **uses dishonest scales; he loves to defraud.** (NIV)

Cunning Canaanite

The designation of Canaanite was used as a term of reproach for someone who was to be driven from the land.

12:8 Ephraim says, Surely I have become rich, I have made my fortune, but despite all my gains the guilt of sin will not be found in me. (REB)

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No Guilt

Despite the blatant injustices, which revealed no regard for law, the people had become so calloused that their consciences were clear.

12:9 But I am Yahuwah your Aluhym, ever since the land of Egypt; I will again make you dwell in tents [KJV: tabernacles], as in the days of the appointed feast.

Dwell in Tents

Although they had turned aside from Him, Yahuwah was still their god who began dealing with them as a nation in the land of Egypt. No matter how much prosperity they then enjoyed, it would all be taken away; they would lose their homes in the Promised Land and be forced to travel away from it.

12:10 I have also spoken by the prophets, and have multiplied visions; I have given symbols [TNK: parables; REB: declared My mind] through the witness of the prophets.

I Have Spoken

All of the disasters Yahuwah predicted through Hosea had already been revealed to the people through earlier prophets, so no one in the Northern Kingdom could plead ignorance and say Yahuwah was unfair for bringing about the prophesied disasters.

12:11 Though Gilead has idols surely they are vanity though they sacrifice bulls in Gilgal, indeed their altars shall be heaps in the furrows of the field.

Idolatrous Altars

Gilead was on the east side of the Jordan River and Gilgal on the west; idolatrous altars were in both areas of the tribes' allotted inheritances. Since the altars were for the worship of powerless, inanimate idols there was no power to protect them and they would eventually come to nothing.

12:12 Jacob fled to the country of Syria [TNK: land of Aram]; Israel served for a spouse, and for a wife he tended sheep.

Comparison with Jacob

Yahuwah inserts another comparison with their ancestor Jacob to the tribes of Israel; Jacob was forced to leave the land and experience hardships, just as his descendants would shortly do. When he fled from Esau, Jacob went to his uncle Laban's home, where he lived and worked to receive the wife he desired and flocks of sheep and goats (GEN 29-31).

12:13 By a prophet Yahuwah brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet he was preserved.

By a Prophet

Jacob and all his sons left the land and went into Egypt. Yahuwah used the prophet Moses (DEU 18:15; 34:10) to lead Israel out of the bondage of Egypt and to the Promised Land; and through Moses, Yahuwah preserved Israel through the forty years of testing in the wilderness (DEU 8:2).

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Just as Moses brought Israel out of Egypt back to the entrance to the Promised Land, so Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach, who is the Prophet like Moses (DEU 18:15), will lead the descendants of Israel out of all the world where they now reside back to the Land of Promise after He returns (11:10-11).

12:14 Ephraim gave bitter provocation; he will be left to suffer for the blood he has shed; his Lord will punish him for all his blasphemy. (REB)

Punished for Blasphemy

Both the history of its ancestors and the warnings brought by Yahuwah's prophets were indictments against the Northern Kingdom; it was without excuse for the course it had chosen.

Hosea: Chapter 13

13:1 Whenever Ephraim spoke, men were in awe; he was a prince in Israel. But then he worshipped Baal, and for his guilt he died. (MOF)

Ephraim

Ephraim had been one of the strongest and most powerful tribes from the time of Joshua. The Ephraimite Jeroboam established Baal worship when he became king of the ten northern tribes, which resulted in such decadence and decay that the life of the nation was doomed from the outset.

13:2 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!

Idols

The idolatry which started with the calf-idols in Dan and Bethel as directed by Jeroboam I continued to multiply throughout the Northern Kingdom. Kissing an idol was an expression of submission to the idol and whatever the idol represented. Jezebel required that homage during the reign of Ahab.

*IKI 19:18 Yet I have reserved seven thousand in Israel, all whose knees have **not bowed to Baal**, and every mouth that **has not kissed him**.*

13:3 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.

All who surrender their loyalty to pagan idols will vanish as quickly as these examples of fleeting existence.

13:4 Yet I am Yahuwah your Aluhym ever since the land of Egypt, and you shall know no Yahuwah but Me; for there is no savior besides Me.

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The first part of this verse is almost identical to HOS 12:9. The last part reflects on the many times Yahuwah saved Israel from adversities after leaving Egypt—something their idols had never done, nor ever would.

Yahuwah Your Aluhym Since Egypt

When the last part of this verse is connected to the statement of Peter about salvation only through Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach (ACT 4:12), it is made clear that the Yahuwah of Israel described in the Old Testament is the one who became Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach of the New Testament.

13:5 I knew [NAS: cared for] you in the wilderness, in the land of great drought.

Cared For You

Yahuwah saved them from hunger by providing manna, and saved them from thirst by providing water from the rock.

13:6 When they had pasture, they were filled; they were filled and their heart was exalted [TNK: they grew haughty]; therefore they forgot Me.

They Forgot Me

Once Yahuwah had blessed them in the Land of Promise, they turned away from Him, just as He warned them not to do.

DEU 8:11-14, 19 Beware that you do not forget Yahuwah your Aluhym by not keeping His commandments, His judgments, and His statutes which I command you today, lest--when you have eaten and are full, and have built beautiful houses and dwell in them; and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and your gold are multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied; when your heart is lifted up, and you forget Yahuwah your Aluhym who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage...Then it shall be, if you by any means forget Yahuwah your Aluhym, and follow other gods, and serve them and worship them, I testify against you this day that you shall surely perish.

13:7 So I will be to them like a lion; like a leopard by the road I will observe them [NAS: will I lie in wait];

13:8 I will encounter them like a bear robbed of her cubs, and I will tear open their chests; there I will also devour them like a lioness, as a wild beast would tear them. (NAS)

I Will Devour

Since they failed to take warning and repent, Yahuwah would no longer save them from adversity, but rather would bring adversity on them with the ferocity of wild, carnivorous animals.

13:9 It is thy destruction, O Israel, that thou art against Me, against thy help. (JPS)

When the nation chose to turn away from Yahuwah, who alone was their helper and savior, they cut themselves off from the only one who could prevent their destruction.

13:10 Where is your king that he may save you? Where are your rulers in all your towns, of whom you said, Give me a king and princes? (NIV)

It was during the judgeship of Samuel that the people rejected Yahuwah and demanded a human king to take care of the nation (1SAM 8:5-7). With the impending Assyrian invasion facing the nation, Yahuwah confronted them with the stark reality that no man could save them; their only hope of being saved was with Him the one they had rejected as their king.

13:11 I gave you a king in My anger, and took him away in My wrath.

Gave You A King

There was no indication that Yahuwah was angry with the twelve tribes of Israel when they first asked for a king. However, Yahuwah was angry with Solomon for becoming involved with idolatry, and He decided to split the kingdom after Solomon died (1KI 11:9-13), at which time Yahuwah gave Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, rulership of the Northern Kingdom. Yahuwah took away the final king of the Northern Kingdom, Hoshea, three years before the nation fell and was deported (2KI 17:4-6); Yahuwah's wrath at that time resulted from the refusal of the nation to repent of rejecting Him (2KI 17:7-18).

13:12 The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up; his sin is stored up [NIV: kept on record].

Kept on Record

No one can question the judgment of Yahuwah on the Northern Kingdom because the record of its sins and transgressions are fully preserved in history.

13:13 The pangs of childbirth come for him, but he is an unwise son; for at the proper time he does not present himself at the mouth of the womb. (NRS)

Not Ready for Birth

All of Israel had been selected to be Yahuwah's firstborn nation, but at the time when their fetal development should have been completed and they should have been ready for birth, their birth never came. It never came because their development was hampered by their foolishness in rejecting Yahuwah. The nation was like a stillborn.

13:14 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. [NIV: I will have no compassion]

Yahuwah is not through with Israel; He has only delayed their full fetal development and birth to a later time. The Northern Kingdom ceased to be, it died (verse 1); yet Yahuwah will bring the nation of Israel back, but as one nation, not as two kingdoms. Sha'ul compared this event to a resurrection:

ROM 11:15 For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?

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Sha'ul used the latter part of this verse to establish the fact that physical death cannot prevent the restoration to life when Yahuwah chooses to restore it (1CO 15:55). This restoration will apply to all of the descendants of Israel as well as those of other nations during the White Throne Judgment.

13:15 Although he thrives among his brothers. An east wind from Yahuwah will come, blowing in from the desert; his spring will fail and his well dry up. His storehouse will be plundered of all its treasures. (NIV)

An East Wind

No matter how permanent things seemed at the time this prophecy was given, it was all temporary; Assyria would come quickly and conditions would be altered drastically.

13:16 Samaria is held guilty [KJV: shall become desolate], for she has rebelled against her Yahuwah. They shall fall by the sword, their infants shall be dashed in pieces, and their women with child ripped open.

Women & Children Brutalized

This event that occurred at the Assyrian invasion and in most wars before and after will be repeated in the land of Israel at the close of the age.

LUK 21:23 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people.

Hosea: Chapter 14

14:1 O Israel, return to Yahuwah your Aluhym, for you have stumbled because of your iniquity;

Stumbled

Israel stumbled over their sins and were never able to regain their footing and walk Yahuwah's way, so they were cut off from Yahuwah. The return of Israel to Yahuwah occurs only after the return of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach.

ROM 11:25-27 For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that hardening in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so [REB: once that has happened] all Israel will be saved, as it is written: The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away unrighteousness from Jacob; for this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.

14:2 Take words with you, and return to Yahuwah. Say to Him, Take away all iniquity; receive us graciously, for we will offer the sacrifices of our lips.

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Take Words

Once they are made aware of who they are, the descendants of Israel will be required to bring words that relate their heartfelt repentance for their sins. Under the New Covenant that Yahuwah will make with them (JER 31:31-34), the sacrifices He will want from them will not be animals, but broken spirits and contrite hearts (PSA 51:17).

14:3 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.

Repenting

Their repentance will entail fully admitting and believing that Yahuwah is the only Savior not foreign powers, not military might, not idols made by human hands! Their confession will culminate in their appeal to Yahuwah to take them back and treat them with the same compassion as orphans (DEU 10:18).

14:4 I will heal their backsliding [NRS: disloyalty; TNK: affliction], I will love them freely [TNK: generously], for My anger has turned away from him.

Once Yahuwah opens their minds and they respond by repenting, Yahuwah will heal the breach caused by their sins of unfaithfulness.

14:5 I will be like the dew to Israel; he will blossom like the lily, and he will take root like the cedars of Lebanon. (NAS)

Like the Dew

In areas with low amounts of rainfall, such as the land of Israel, dew is critical for the growth of vegetation. Yahuwah promises to water Israel with His spirit (JOH 7:37-39). By using Yahuwah's spirit, Israel will become beautiful like the lily and majestic like the cedar of Lebanon. All nations will admire the beauty and majesty of Israel - the nation Yahuwah will use as the model for all nations to emulate.

14:6 His branches shall spread; his beauty shall be like an olive tree, and his fragrance like [NAS: the cedars of] Lebanon.

Branches

The influence of Israel will reach out to all the earth, exhibiting the beautiful fruit that Yahuwah's spirit will create in Yahuwah's chosen nation. Yahuwah referred to all the tribes of Israel as a lovely olive tree.

JER 11:16 Yahuwah called your name, green Olive Tree, Lovely and of Good Fruit... Jeremiah goes on to reveal that, due to Israel's unfaithfulness, Yahuwah broke the branches off the tree to separate them from the root.

JER 1:16-17 ...With the noise of a great tumult He has kindled fire on it, and its branches are broken. For Yahuwah of hosts, who planted you, has pronounced doom against you for the evil

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of the house of Israel and of the house of Yahuwdah, which they have done against themselves to provoke Me to anger in offering incense to Baal.

Sha'ul stressed that the branches which were broken off would be grafted back on.

ROM 11:17-19, 23-24 And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree, do not boast against the branches...You will say then, Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in. Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off... And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for Yahuwah is able to graft them in again. For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree, how much more will these, who are the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

14:7 Those who dwell under his shadow shall return [NRS: They shall again live beneath My shadow]; **they shall be revived like grain, and grow like the vine. Their scent shall be like the wine of Lebanon.**

Return and be Revived

The NRS places the emphasis on Yahuwah's shadow and refers to Israel always being under Yahuwah's care. Their fruitfulness will be evident to all.

14:8 Ephraim shall say: What have I to do any more with idols? As for Me, I respond and look on him; I am like a leafy cypress-tree; from Me is thy fruit [REB: prosperity] **found.** (TNK)

Dialogue

The verse contains a figurative dialogue between the descendants of Israel and Yahuwah after the breach between them is healed. Israel expresses shame and revulsion for its past unfaithfulness to Yahuwah, and Yahuwah responds by assuring Israel that He will remain as close to them as the branches of the cypress that bend down to touch the earth.

14:9 Mark this, you who are wise, note this, you thoughtful: the Eternal deals justly with all the upright fare well under Him, but sinners fall [NKJ: For the ways of Yahuwah are right; the righteous walk in them, but transgressors stumble in them]. (MOF)

Deals Justly

Yahuwah shows no favoritism not even to the nation He chose to be the model of His way to the world.

GAL 6:7-8 Do not be deceived, Yahuwah is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the spirit will of the spirit reap everlasting life.

Book of Hosea

The Upright Fare Well

Yahuwah concludes His prophecies through Hosea on a very positive note. He shows that there will be a reconciliation between Him and Israel at the close and that Israel will be granted salvation, which is exactly what the name Hosea implies.