

Hosea's Prophecy to Israel—Indictment, Punishment and Restoration – Part 2 (c. 743 BC)

Hosea 10–14

The End of Cult, King, and Capital

- 10:1 Israel was a fertile vine
that yielded fruit.
As his fruit multiplied,
he multiplied altars to Baal.
As his land prospered,
they adorned the fertility pillars.
- 2 Their heart is slipping;
soon they will be punished for their guilt.
The LORD will break their altars;
he will completely destroy their fertility pillars.
- 3 Very soon they will say, “We have no king
since we did not fear the LORD.
But what can a king do for us anyway?”
- 4 They utter empty words,
taking false oaths and making empty agreements.
Therefore legal disputes sprout up
like poisonous weeds in the furrows of a plowed field.
- 5 The inhabitants of Samaria will lament over the calf idol of Beth Aven.
Its people will mourn over it;
its idolatrous priests will wail over it,
because its splendor will be taken from them into exile.
- 6 Even the calf idol will be carried to Assyria,
as tribute for the great king.
Ephraim will be disgraced;
Israel will be put to shame because of its wooden idol.
- 7 Samaria and its king will be carried off
like a twig on the surface of the waters.
- 8 The high places of the “House of Wickedness” will be destroyed;
it is the place where Israel sins.
Thorns and thistles will grow up over its altars.
Then they will say to the mountains, “Cover us!”
and to the hills, “Fall on us!” [\[Luke 23:27–31\]](#)

Remember Gibeah and Beth Arbel—You Cannot Trust in Military Might

- 9 O Israel, you have sinned since the time of Gibeah,
and there you have remained.
Did not war overtake the evildoers in Gibeah?
- 10 When I please, I will discipline them;
I will gather nations together to attack them,
to bind them in chains for their two sins.
- 11 Ephraim was a well-trained heifer who loved to thresh grain;
I myself put a fine yoke on her neck.
I will harness Ephraim.
Let Judah plow!
Let Jacob break up the unplowed ground for himself!
- 12 Sow righteousness for yourselves,
reap unfailing love.
Break up the unplowed ground for yourselves,
for it is time to seek the LORD,
until he comes and showers deliverance on you.
- 13 But you have plowed wickedness;
you have reaped injustice;
you have eaten the fruit of deception.
Because you have depended on your chariots;
you have relied on your many warriors.

- 14 The roar of battle will rise against your people;
all your fortresses will be devastated,
just as Shalman devastated Beth Arbel on the day of battle,
when mothers were dashed to the ground with their children.
- 15 So will it happen to you, O Bethel,
because of your great wickedness!
When that day dawns,
the king of Israel will be destroyed.

Israel Will Be Slaves in the New Egypt: Assyria

- 11:1 When Israel was a young man, I loved him like a son,
and I summoned my son out of Egypt. [[Matt 2:15](#)]
- 2 But the more I summoned them,
the farther they departed from me.
They sacrificed to the Baal idols
and burned incense to images.
- 3 Yet it was I who led Ephraim,
I took them by the arm;
but they did not acknowledge that I had healed them.
- 4 I led them with leather cords,
with leather ropes;
I lifted the yoke from their neck,
and gently fed them.
- 5 They will return to Egypt!
Assyria will rule over them
because they refuse to repent!

Yahweh Cannot Totally Destroy Israel as He Did the Cities of the Plain (see Genesis 19)

- 6 A sword will flash in their cities,
it will destroy the bars of their city gates,
and will devour them in their fortresses.
- 7 My people are obsessed with turning away from me;
they call to Baal, but he will never exalt them!
- 8 How can I give you up, O Ephraim?
How can I surrender you, O Israel?
How can I treat you like Admah?
How can I make you like Zeboiim?
I have had a change of heart!
All my tender compassions are aroused!
- 9 I cannot carry out my fierce anger!
I cannot totally destroy Ephraim!
Because I am God, and not man—
the Holy One among you—
I will not come in wrath!

A New Exodus in the Future

- 10 He will roar like a lion,
and they will follow the LORD;
when he roars,
his children will come trembling from the west.
- 11 They will return in fear and trembling
like birds from Egypt,
like doves from Assyria,
and I will settle them in their homes," declares the LORD.

Israel a Deceiver

- 12 Ephraim has surrounded me with lies;
the house of Israel has surrounded me with deceit.

[And Judah is unruly against God,
even against the faithful Holy One.] (NIV)

- 12:1 Ephraim continually feeds on the wind;
he chases the east wind all day;
he multiplies lies and violence.
They make treaties with Assyria,
and send olive oil as tribute to Egypt.
- 2 The LORD also has a covenant lawsuit against Judah;
he will punish Jacob according to his ways
and repay him according to his deeds.
- 3 In the womb he attacked his brother;
in his manly vigor he struggled with God.
- 4 He struggled with an angel and prevailed;
he wept and begged for his favor.
He found God at Bethel,
and there he spoke with him!
- 5 As for the LORD God Almighty,
the LORD is the name by which he is remembered!
- 6 But you must return to your God,
by maintaining love and justice,
and by waiting for your God to return to you.
- 7 The businessmen love to cheat;
they use dishonest scales.
- 8 Ephraim boasts, "I am very rich!
I have become wealthy!
In all that I have done to gain my wealth,
no one can accuse me of any offense that is actually sinful."
- 9 "I am the LORD your God who brought you out of Egypt;
I will make you live in tents again as in the days of old.
- 10 I spoke to the prophets;
I myself revealed many visions;
I spoke in parables through the prophets."
- 11 Is there idolatry in Gilead?
Certainly its inhabitants will come to nothing!
Do they sacrifice bulls in Gilgal?
Surely their altars will be like stones heaped up on a plowed field!
- 12 Jacob fled to the country of Aram,
then Israel worked to acquire a wife;
he tended sheep to pay for her.
- 13 The LORD brought Israel out of Egypt by a prophet,
and due to a prophet Israel was preserved alive.
- 14 But Ephraim bitterly provoked him to anger;
so he will hold him accountable for the blood he has shed,
his Lord will repay him for the contempt he has shown.
- 13:1 When Ephraim spoke, there was terror;
he was exalted in Israel,
but he became guilty by worshiping Baal and died.

"I Will Destroy You, Israel"

- 2 Even now they persist in sin!
They make metal images for themselves,
idols that they skillfully fashion from their own silver;
all of them are nothing but the work of craftsmen!
There is a saying about them:
"Those who sacrifice to the calf idol are calf kissers!"
- 3 Therefore they will disappear like the morning mist,
like early morning dew that evaporates,
like chaff that is blown away from a threshing floor,

- like smoke that disappears through an open window.
- 4 But I am the LORD your God,
who brought you out of Egypt.
Therefore, you must not acknowledge any God but me;
except me there is no Savior.
- 5 I cared for you in the wilderness,
in the dry desert where no water was.
- 6 When they were fed, they became satisfied;
when they were satisfied, they became proud;
as a result, they forgot me!
- 7 So I will pounce on them like a lion;
like a leopard I will lurk by the path.
- 8 I will attack them like a bear robbed of her cubs—
I will rip open their chests.
I will devour them there like a lion—
like a wild animal would tear them apart.
- 9 I will destroy you, O Israel!
Who is there to help you?
- 10 Where then is your king,
that he may save you in all your cities?
Where are your rulers for whom you asked, saying,
“Give me a king and princes”?
- 11 I granted you a king in my anger,
and I will take him away in my wrath!
- 12 The punishment of Ephraim has been decreed;
his punishment is being stored up for the future.
- 13 The labor pains of a woman will overtake him,
but the baby will lack wisdom;
when the time arrives,
he will not come out of the womb!
- 14 Will I deliver them from the power of Sheol? No, I will not!
Will I redeem them from death? No, I will not!
O Death, bring on your plagues!
O Sheol, bring on your destruction! [cf. [1 Cor 15:55](#)]
My eyes will not show any compassion!
- 15 Even though he flourishes like a reed plant,
a scorching east wind will come,
a wind from the LORD rising up from the desert.
As a result, his spring will dry up;
his well will become dry.
That wind will spoil all his delightful foods
in the containers in his storehouse.
- 16 Samaria will be held guilty,
because she rebelled against her God.
They will fall by the sword,
their infants will be dashed to the ground—
their pregnant women will be ripped open.

A Promise for the Remnant That Will Return

- 14:1 Return, O Israel, to the LORD your God,
for your sin has been your downfall!
- 2 Return to the LORD and repent!
Say to him: “Completely forgive our iniquity;
accept our penitential prayer,
that we may offer the praise of our lips as sacrificial bulls. [[Heb 13:15](#)]
- 3 Assyria cannot save us;
we will not ride warhorses.
We will never again say, ‘Our gods’

- to what our own hands have made.
For only you will show compassion to Orphan Israel!”
- 4 “I will heal their waywardness
and love them freely,
for my anger will turn away from them.
- 5 I will be like the dew to Israel;
he will blossom like a lily,
he will send down his roots like a cedar of Lebanon.
- 6 His young shoots will grow;
his splendor will be like an olive tree,
his fragrance like a cedar of Lebanon.
- 7 People will reside again in his shade;
they will plant and harvest grain in abundance.
They will blossom like a vine,
and his fame will be like the wine from Lebanon.
- 8 O Ephraim, I do not want to have anything to do with idols anymore!
I will answer him and care for him.
I am like a luxuriant cypress tree;
your fruitfulness comes from me!
- 9 Who is wise?
Let him discern these things!
Who is discerning?
Let him understand them!
For the ways of the LORD are right;
the godly walk in them,
but in them the rebellious stumble.

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