

## The Prophecies of Hosea ~ Part 12

This post is longer than usual, so  
you may want to download the PDF  
version at the end.

### The Wrath of God

Chapter 13 is the climax of **Hosea's** prophecies of judgment and doom, but not the book's climax. The Northern Kingdom will fall in 722 BCE, never to reappear, but readers of the **Brit Hadashah** know that greater things were to lie beyond this tragedy. In chapter 14, the book will conclude by appealing to the people to return to **God**.

***13<sup>4</sup> Still, I am Adonai your God, from the land of Egypt; and you don't know any God but me or, other than me, any Savior.***

The first thing to note is that **God** demands from **Isra'el** exclusive loyalty. This verse alludes to the **Exodus** and the first Commandment. **Hosea** references the **Exodus**, but this and the prophet's response in verses 15–16 contain the last reference to it in the prophecy. **Hosea** slightly changes the first Commandment from, **'you shall have no other gods'** (Exodus 20:3), to **'you know no God but Me'**. This is a deliberate modification. **Hosea** wants to focus on the word **'know'**.

***5 I knew you in the desert, in a land of terrible drought. 6 When they were fed, they were satisfied; when satisfied, they became proud. Therefore, they forgot me.***

The problem was that **Isra'el** thought they did not need **God** and that everything they had was down to them. They became smug and ungrateful (13:6). They focused on **God's** blessings and benefits instead of Him. When God fed them, they were satisfied; when they were satisfied, they became proud and forgot Him. It was a chain of events that began with **God** feeding them and ended with them forgetting **God**. Their mindset was, *'I have what I have because of me.'* But without **God**, they were nothing. Even when they were in the wilderness, God looked after them so well that, for them, it was as if they were living in their own pastureland.

***7 So now I have become like a lion to them; like a leopard I will lurk by the road; 8 I will meet them like a bear whose cubs have been taken away. I will tear their hearts from their bodies. I will devour them there like a lion, like a wild animal ripping them up. 9 It is your destruction, Isra'el, although your help is in me. 10 So now, where is your king, to save you in all your cities? Where are your judges, of whom you said, 'Give me a king and leaders'?***

As well as **Isra'el** going after idols, the other cause of death was that they put their faith in kings instead of **God**. In verse 10, **God** taunts them, ***Where is your king, to save you in all your cities? Where are your judges, of whom you said, 'Give me a king and leaders'?***

***11 I gave you a king in my anger, and in my fury I took him away.***

As well as a reference to the anointing of **King Saul**, **Isra'el's** first king, in mind here is the whole history of the **Israelite** monarchy. In addition, if they reject **God** as their king, the king He will give them to rule over them is the **Assyrian King**, and the one He **'took'** away is the Israelite monarchy.

***12 "Efrayim's guilt has been wrapped up, his sin is stored away.***

Once again, **Hosea's** use of imagery is powerful. To arouse a complacent, *'couldn't care less'* Isra'el, He pictures unforgiven sin as a well-kept store of trouble for the future. **God** had not failed to notice what was happening, nor was He indifferent towards their sin.

***13 The pain of being born will come to him, but he is an unwise son. The time has come, and he shouldn't delay, there at the mouth of the womb.***

***14 Should I ransom them from the power of Sh'ol? Should I redeem them from death? Where are your plagues, death; where is your destruction, Sh'ol? My eyes are closed to compassion.***

Furthermore, sin will eventually go wrong. To illustrate this, **Hosea** abruptly returns to the woman's metaphor. **Hosea's** analogy is of a birth that threatens to go fatally wrong. The great attraction of the **Ba'al** cult was more children, calves, and crops. In response, **God** declares that their cult would be shut down and that the 'pregnancy' of **Isra'el** would be fatal.

***15 For though he flourishes among the needs, an east wind will come, a wind from Adonai, blowing up from the desert. Then his water source will dry up, then his spring will fail - it will plunder his treasury, removing every precious thing." 14 <sup>1(13:16)</sup> Shomron will bear her guilt, for she has rebelled against her God. They will fall by the sword, their little ones will be dashed to pieces, and their pregnant women ripped open.***

The wages for sin will be horrific. This is pictured here as drought, stripped of all treasure and ripped apart by the sword. Hosea 13:15–16, concise and staccato in form, describes what the conquest will entail.

### **Promise of Forgiveness**

***2<sup>(1)</sup> Return, Isra'el, to Adonai your God, for your guilt has made you stumble.***

The root word, *'return'* or *'repent'*, occurs twenty-five times in **Hosea** (although not always with the connotation of repentance). **Hosea's** message is clear. **Isra'el** urgently needs to turn back to **God**.

***3<sup>(2)</sup> Take words with you, and return to Adonai; say to him, "Forgive all guilt, and accept what is good; we will pay instead of bulls [the offerings of] our lips.***

But how can they return? What do they need to do? This verse gives them the words to pray. They need to go to **God** with these words. They need to say something to Him. They need to pray to Him and ask Him for forgiveness; they need to say sorry to **God**.

***4<sup>(3)</sup> Ashur will not save us, we will not ride on horses, and we will no longer call what we made with our hands our gods. For it is only in you that the fatherless can find mercy."***

The people of **Isra'el** have become orphans. Their mother, who is the institution of **Isra'el**, will be dead very soon. **Ba'al**, the one they have treated like their father, will have given them no help. But **Hosea** encourages the people to return to **God** because He is kind, and the fatherless will find mercy in Him.

***5<sup>(4)</sup> "I will heal their disloyalty, I will love them freely; for my anger has turned from him.***

If **Isra'el** returned to **God**, as well as mercy, they would find love. **God's** anger would be turned away, and He would love them freely (v. 4). No ifs and buts. No caveats. He will love them forever. Sin will no longer come between them and **God** because **God** will remove the offense.

***6<sup>(5)</sup> I will be like dew to Isra'el; he will blossom like a lily and strike roots like the L'vanon. <sup>7(6)</sup> His branches will spread out, his beauty be like an olive tree and his fragrance like the L'vanon.***

When we return to **God**, not only are there things we will find, but there will also be things we will grow into and become. We will flourish and become healthy. To show this, Hosea 14:5-6 uses rich horticultural imagery.

***<sup>8(7)</sup> Again, they will live in his shade and raise grain; they will blossom like a vine, and its aroma will be like the wine of the L'vanon. <sup>9(8)</sup> Efrayim [will say], 'What have I to do any more with idols?' And I, I answer and affirm him; I am like a fresh, green cypress tree; your fruitfulness comes from me. " <sup>10(9)</sup> Let the wise understand these things, and let the discerning know them. For the ways of Adonai are straight, And the righteous walk in them, but in them sinners stumble.***

<sup>1</sup>

In keeping with **Hosea's** style, the last verse of the prophecy is difficult to understand. The first readers would have found this hard to interpret. They would need wisdom. As with the parables of **Yeshua**, we need to think about what it is actually saying. The prophecy is open-ended. We need to think about what we have read. We must contemplate our unfaithfulness, **God's** righteous judgment, and His love. The wise thing is to acknowledge the truth of **Hosea's** message; not just to know it but to walk in it—to put God's word into practice.

As an adult, you may be navigating the challenges of aging parents and the stress it brings to your home life. **Hosea's** message reminds us of **God's** faithfulness in difficult times. Schedule regular family gatherings or check-ins focused on support and sharing. Include open discussions about your parents' needs and how you can care for them together. Pray collectively for guidance and strength as you serve them, ensuring that your home remains a place of encouragement and love during this transition.

Next, we will explore the **Prophecies of Joel**.

---

<sup>1</sup> Hosea 13:4–14:10<sup>(9)</sup>.