

**HOSEA**

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Hosea chapter 4 as we continue our study through the Word of God. Keep in mind that Hosea ministered from around 755 B. C. to around 710 B. C. during a time of prosperity and relative peace in the Northern Kingdom of Israel. It is during the reign of King Jeroboam II, and as you may remember, he was a bad king. In fact, there really were no good Kings in the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

In our last study we saw that God used the life of Hosea as an object lesson to the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Hosea took a wife, Gomer, who bore him three children, although two of those children may not be from Hosea but born out of Gomer's sexual promiscuity.

Then Gomer left him for a life of prostitution, money, possessions, the good life or so she thought. And she continued on until her body was old, it was used and abused to the point where nobody wanted her.

And at that point God told Hosea to take her back and Hosea said, "Are you kidding me!" No, he did not say that but think about the situation that he was in. His wife was sleeping around with everyone and anyone and now, when nobody wanted her God told Hosea to take her back!

I think sometimes we read these events and we don't think much about what these people were going through. Hosea obeyed the Lord, he took back his wife and he loved her as God told him to. Not only that but he had to buy her out of the slave market at that cost of half the price of a slave. You see, her value decreased in the eyes of the world because she was battered, worn out but not in the eyes of Hosea!

And God is using this as an object lesson to show what the Northern Kingdom of Israel has done. That they departed from the Lord and committed spiritual adultery and yet God still loves her. And yes, there is the chastening from the Lord, they will go through some very difficult times but He will purchase her back.

Now, in Hosea chapter 4 we move away from the personal life of Hosea and God is going to speak directly to the nation. God is going to show them what they have done wrong. In fact, as chapter 4 opens up it is like a formal court proceeding in which charges are being brought up against the defendant.

The charges against Israel are as follows: they have been unfaithful to God, they have shown no devotion to God, and they have no knowledge of God or His Word. Those are some heavy charges against the Northern Kingdom of Israel and for a nation that was born by God, they had fallen so far away.

So with that as our background let's begin reading in Hosea chapter 4 beginning in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word.

## **HOSEA 4**

### **VERSES 1-3**

1. As you read this please understand that this is not some disease that they had no control over, it was *SIN!* And it was born out of their departure from God. Paul makes that point very clear in Romans chapter 1 as you see him repeat the fact that when people rejected God He will give them over to a debased mind and debased actions! And that is what we are seeing here.

As you read this notice the downward progression here. First of all there is no truth, they have been deceived, they are holding onto lies. We see that played out today. There is no absolute truth the world is telling us and they are absolutely sure about that! Which makes no sense if there is no absolute truth!

But Jesus said in John 17:17, **“Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.”** In other words, God’s Word applied to our lives helps us to live a life that is pleasing to God. David said in Psalm 119:11, **“Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.”**

So as you move away from God’s Word you will be doing things out of the imagination of your own heart, which is evil! And think about it. If you take away the truth, the truth of God’s Word, then what are you left with? You are left with lies! And this world is buying into these lies and because of that we see this downward spiral away from God and into immorality!

Now if there is no truth you do what you want and thus, there is no mercy! It is a “Looking out for number 1!” mentality. It is all of me and none of you.

And as you continue moving down this path you become consumed with self and there is no room for God. As God gets pushed out of the picture you begin to lose the knowledge of God, the true God. So to fill that void in your heart you go after false gods. And what happens to a people or a nation who has departed from the knowledge of God?

We see the results of that departure from God in the way people treat others, how they live out their lives and not only does it affect the people but it also affects the land.

There is swearing, lying, killing, stealing, committing adultery. In other words, there is no control, there is no restraint. Here alone we see 5 of the 10 commandments broken, (3, 9, 6, 8, 7).

2. As you look at America today you can see that we have not learned the lesson and we are follow the example set by the Northern Kingdom of Israel. You see, when you have removed the truths of God from a nation and a people then you lack mercy. And the farther you move away from God the more depraved a society and a people will get. Look at our nation and how far we have fallen and how fast we are moving downward now!

As the Lord told Israel, “**They break all restraint.**” In other words, there are no rules, there are no restraints! It is the message of advertising and it is a message being proclaimed in our nation and it is very simple, “You make your own rules!” “You answer to no one!” Or as Nike said, “Just do it!”

Thus, we have the sexual revolution or perversion where kids are having sex at the age of 12, that is their first sexual encounter! We have men and women sleeping with each other and are not married, we have men with men and women with women and we are promoting this behavior to our children.

We see drugs being legalized. We see violent crime growing, there is no mercy, there is no respect. The Lord said through Hosea, “**With bloodshed after bloodshed.**” In the ancient Hebrew this is literally “bloody deed touches bloody deed.” Wood comments on this by telling us, “Apparently violent crimes had become so common that one seemed immediately to follow another, as if touching it.”

Now we do try to fix the problem by taking guns away from people but Cain killed Abel and he did not have a gun. The problem is not the guns, it is the heart and thus, we are trying to deal with the symptom instead of the root of the problem.

Think about it like this. If you had a brain tumor and developed a headache from it you would not take pain medicine to take care of the headache. You would have the tumor removed because that is the root of the problem. Once the tumor is gone the headache is gone. This nation needs the Lord, and many of these symptomatic problems will be dealt with by the Lord in their lives! Don't go after the symptoms, go to the root of the problem – *SIN!* And Jesus is the only one who can take away a person's sins and change them from the inside out!

3. Because of their departure from the Lord and the wickedness that filled their lives, judgment will come upon the land, the people will be taken into captivity and the land will become desolate.

And as we look at the history of the Northern Kingdom of Israel that is exactly what we see as the Assyrians came in and took them captive! They did not heed the warnings of God and as I look at this nation, we too are not heeding those warnings and I wonder how long before the judgment of God falls upon this nation. And maybe we are seeing His judgment as wickedness permeates this land.

#### VERSES 4-5

1. When you refuse to submit to God you will not submit to your fellow man and we see that here with the people casting off the knowledge of God, they cast off restraint and the wickedness in their hearts was manifested in their actions. They would not even listen to the priests, the spiritual leaders.

And yet, in Deuteronomy 17:12 we are told, “**Now the man who acts presumptuously and will not heed the priest who stands to minister there before the LORD your God, or the judge, that man shall die. So you shall put away the evil person from Israel.**” To refuse to listen to the priests was punishable by death!

But again, they refused to listen and as we shall see, the priests were just as corrupt. I guess you can say that everyone did what was right in their own eyes because the Lord was not on the throne of their hearts!

And the result of all this is that they were stumbling in the day time. You can understand stumbling at night but in broad daylight you should be able to see where you are going. But they had become so dark that they could not see. And when Hosea says, “**And I will destroy your mother**” he is speaking of Samaria!

2. As we read on we will see that the problem is the priests and the prophets, they were corrupt! Understand this, anytime the spiritual leaders of a nation are corrupt, there is no teaching of the truths of God, the knowledge of God begins to depart, and it is the final stage of any nation before it crumbles! All the wickedness, the immorality are just the symptoms of the bigger problem, the departure from God! Listen to what Hosea has to say regarding the priests and why the people are destroyed.

VERSES 6-8

1. First of all what were they lacking? I see two things that they are lacking and we see that many times in the church today, I am sad to say. The first thing that was lacking was their knowledge of God – “**Because you have rejected knowledge**” and in verse 1, “**There is . . . no knowledge of God in the land.**” The second thing they were lacking was the knowledge of God’s Word – “**Because you have forgotten the law of your God.**”

And what we see here is that God is rejecting the priests and their children because of their actions of leading the children of Israel away from God instead of towards God. They moved away from the Law of God and God said He would then move away from them. They were to bring the people to God and God to the people and they were doing the exact opposite and God is holding them accountable!

In fact, when it says that the priests “**. . . eat up the sin of My people**” the idea here is that “They did this by enjoying the benefits of the people’s sins, such as taking bribes and eating the sin offerings. So the priests actually relished Israel’s wickedness.” (Wood)

2. As you look at verse 7 it seems strange, “**The more they increased, The more they sinned against Me.**” It is interesting that the more God blesses a nation or a people, the more they move away from Him, they don’t need Him anymore, thinking they have done these things.

How foolish and yet we do those things. England thought that way and look at where she is at today. There are more mosque’s being built while on the other side of the coin there is a large number of Christian churches that are closing! A nation that used to be a light to the world, is now living in darkness. A nation that sent out missionaries at one time has missionaries being sent to her. If you reject God, He will reject you. America needs to awaken to that fact!

It is as the Lord said in Jeremiah 2:11-13, **“Has a nation changed its gods, which are not gods? But My people have changed their Glory for what does not profit. Be astonished, O heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid; be very desolate,’ says the LORD. ‘For My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and hewn themselves cisterns - broken cisterns that can hold no water.’”**

Maybe our prayer should be more along these lines, along the lines of Agur’s prayer in Proverbs 30:7-9, **“Two things I request of You (Deprive me not before I die): Remove falsehood and lies far from me; Give me neither poverty nor riches - Feed me with the food allotted to me; Lest I be full and deny You, And say, “Who is the Lord?” Or lest I be poor and steal, And profane the name of my God.”**

Notice carefully this petition that Agur brings before the Lord. First of all he wants to live an honest life. Secondly he is asking God to give him just what he needs to live, not too little or not too much. Why? Because prosperity seems to ruin people spiritually, it drives them from God. They are too busy using the toys that they bought that they don’t have time for God! On the other hand we see that poverty causes people to curse God for their condition, to do things that are wrong.

As one person said, “Never bless me above my capacity to love You!” I like that and thus, we need to be content in what God has given to us. It is as Paul said in Philipians 4:11-13, **“Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”** May we learn to be content in the Lord!



3. Now I don't want to offend anyone tonight but it is what it is. You see, when you depart from the Word of God you open yourself up to all kinds of demonic doctrines and teachings. We have been warned about these things. Paul said in I Timothy 4:1-2, **“Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron.”**

Some of you have heard of IHOP or the International House of Prayer and I am sorry to say, but they have departed from the truths of God found in the Word of God and they are getting into all kinds of demonic activity. Let me show you what I mean. We are told,

My name is Emma and I want to share my experience at IHOP-KC with you and your blog readers. I've read many of the other stories you've shared and I've wept because it's all true and painfully real. I don't know whether IHOP is officially a cult but I know that there is witchcraft and demonic activity and things happening that shouldn't be happening. I don't want to speak badly of anyone, especially my brothers and sisters in Christ, but I've been exposed to the leaders of IHOP and I can tell you with all honesty that Mike Bickle is not speaking words from God.

I started going to the summer youth camps at IHOP and then I went to the Forerunner School of Ministry and then I worked in the office for a while. I have seen things that I should not have seen, things no one should see, things I pray for God to remove from my memory. Bickle conjures up demons to speak openly and he demonizes people to try to reveal prophetic words that aren't even true, and never come true. He sets his sight on the young women mainly, not in a sexual way but in a way that is different then how he treats the males. It's hard to describe but when you are there you can see the pattern.

The person who told you that Bickle has a sliding door in his office where he can spy on the prayer room isn't lying or exaggerating. He watches what goes on and sends messages to the worship team to do certain meditative techniques or call on a certain individual for a prophetic word. He lays his hands on a person's head, toward their forehead, and at the touch a demon enters them and they begin to act differently.

Two girls I knew well were called into meetings with Bickle separately and he laid his hands on them and they began acting totally different. One came out of his office twitching and convulsing and whooping like you see people who have Tourette Syndrome. The other one started fasting compulsively and didn't quit until she ended up being hospitalized for dehydration.

In 3 years of being involved in IHOP I walked away and not one of my friends or leaders encouraged me or helped me or even called to check on me. The minute I questioned what was happening, I was isolated from everyone. I was followed around by two people who were assigned to watch me and make sure I didn't spread my doubt to others.

Bickle called me into his office and he and the FSM leader who is a professed ex-witch, tried to persuade me to stay, telling me that God was "offending my mind to reveal my heart," just like one of your blogs says, and that he wanted to pray for me and lay his hands on me to penetrate the demonic forces attacking me. I knew right away that if I let him touch me, he would somehow increase the demons. I left and I never went back.

Everything you've posted is true. They teach the Latter Rain even though they deny it and the Manifest sons of God as elected seeds. They have their own lingo to describe anointing's and callings and they teach that prophesy doesn't have to be accurate, that it's a learned skill like anything else in life.

I know these things aren't Biblical, but when you question them they throw verses at you that makes you feel inferior, even though half the time the verses are twisted and taken out of context. They're powerful. Bickle is powerful and he has followers that will do anything he says. Lou Engle is another leader so powerful with demonic spirits that he used to scare me when I'd see him. They are dividing the body of Christ on purpose. They've threatened people emotionally, spiritually and even physically.

The scariest thing of all is that they're growing so fast that they don't care if a few people here and there leave, Bickle is after the masses of young people and he's demonizing them, all of them. In the 3 years I was there Bickle never once preached about Jesus being the savior. He'll breeze over it in Scripture, but he never once discussed it or taught on it. All his teachings are on going deeper into the spirit realm, prayer, meditation and fasting, calling forth the Holy Spirit to manifest revelations, asking for prophetic words, breathing techniques, chanting techniques, all focused inward toward the human spirit and not upward toward God. It's such a scary thing and I pray for everyone trapped.

- <https://stopihopcult.wordpress.com/2012/09/26/emmas-experience-with-ihop/>

And those that are involved in ministries like this say that we are in darkness and causing division within the body of Christ because we come against false teaching. But God's Word says, "**To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.**" Isaiah 8:20.

As people, as groups move away from the Word of God they are moving away from the light of God and they are moving into darkness. We see that here with the Northern Kingdom of Israel and we are seeing that in the church today. As you move away from the Word of God you are moving away from the God of the Word – Jesus Christ!

4. As we read on notice what God is going to do with them, with His people who have departed from Him and His Word!

#### VERSES 9-10

1. As the priests, the religious leaders go, so go the people. It is like Hosea 8:7 says, **“They sow the wind, and reap the whirlwind. The stalk has no bud; it shall never produce meal. If it should produce, aliens would swallow it up.”**

What they sow is empty, it does not produce fruit, but only the judgment of God. These priests were encouraging the people to sin and they were bringing the judgment of God upon them. You see, what you sow you will also reap!

2. What I find interesting here is that outside the Lord they could find no satisfaction and the same is true today! Outside of the Lord, I don't care how much you have, it will never be enough, you will never be satisfied! It is as David said in Psalm 17:15, **“As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness.”** May we also be satisfied in the Lord because you will never be satisfied outside of Him!

Now when Hosea speaks of having food but it is not enough, is he speaking about physical food? I think he is but this goes even deeper than that. I think there is a spiritual point that is being made. It is as Psalm 107:8-9 says, **“Oh, that men would give thanks to the Lord for His goodness, And for His wonderful works to the children of men! For He satisfies the longing soul, And fills the hungry soul with goodness.”**

How true that is. We find peace, joy, comfort, contentment and-so-on in the Lord. He satisfies the longing in our soul, He fills us with goodness! But apart from Him there is no satisfaction, there is no filling, just emptiness and longing! What a lesson for us to learn.

#### VERSES 11-14

1. First of all we see that alcohol clouds the mind and causes us to do things we would not normally do. It truly enslaves you. Not only that, but this new wine, this being drunk in the spirit is also not from God, and it too will bring you into bondage, it will not set you free.

In Isaiah 5:11 we are told from The Living Bible, **“Woe to you who get up early in the morning to go on long drinking bouts that last till late at night - woe to you drunken bums.”**

And, to drive home the point even more, Isaiah 28:7-8 gives us a picture of what this lifestyle is all about. He said, **“But they also have erred through wine, and through intoxicating drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through intoxicating drink, they are swallowed up by wine, they are out of the way through intoxicating drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment. For all tables are full of vomit and filth; no place is clean.”**

And because their minds are clouded they are seeking counsel from “**wooden idols.**” Instead of seeking the Lord they had their wooden idols, their Diviner’s rod, they sacrificed to their god’s in the high places, they were involved in all kinds of sexual immorality including orgies that were done in the worship of their god’s. All were involved in this spiritual adultery!

Now some may think that I am exaggerating but listen to what we are told in Psalm 106:34-39, “**They did not destroy the peoples, concerning whom the LORD had commanded them, But they mingled with the Gentiles and learned their works; They served their idols, which became a snare to them. They even sacrificed their sons and their daughters to demons, And shed innocent blood, the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan; and the land was polluted with blood. Thus they were defiled by their own works, and played the harlot by their own deeds.**”

Now don’t get the idea that they just forgot the Lord, that is not what is going on here. David Guzik wrote, “The picture is striking when we consider *how Israel wanted to add pagan gods to their worship of the LORD*. It isn’t as if Israel officially said, ‘We want to leave the LORD, and now serve only pagan gods.’ Instead, Israel wanted to *add* the worship of pagan gods to their worship of the LORD. God received this the same way a husband would if his wife said, ‘I want you to still be my husband, I just want to take on a few more lovers also.’”

And we see that today in the church as many are adding eastern mysticism and New Age teachings and they see no problem. They say they are worshiping the Lord and yet, like in Yoga, they are yoked to these false gods! Thus, the result of that kind of behavior is judgment. So, do you think it is important to teach the Word of God? You bet it is!

2. Listen again to what Hosea 4:14 says because some may come to the wrong conclusion. We are told, **“I will not punish your daughters when they commit harlotry, Nor your brides when they commit adultery; For the men themselves go apart with harlots, And offer sacrifices with a ritual harlot. Therefore people who do not understand will be trampled.”**

In other words, God does not have a double standard for sexual conduct between men and women. The men were just as bad as the women and both were going to be judged. Notice again what we have read, **“... Therefore people who do not understand will be trampled.”**

Without the understanding of God and His Word the people are destined for destruction and that is exactly what took place. That is why Paul was admonishing Timothy to **“Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.”** II Timothy 4:2-5.

God has given us His Word and thus, whether people want to hear it or not we are to speak it forth because God’s Word will cut to the heart of the matter. But again, without the understanding of God and His Word the people are destined for destruction and that is what is coming!

VERSE 15

1. This is a warning to the Southern Kingdom of Judah not to partake of the practices of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Beth Aven means “house of idols” and this is the place that was also called Bethel, which means “house of God.” Why the name change?

This was the area that Jeroboam, after the nation divided into the Northern and Southern Kingdoms, set-up the golden calf. The other one was located in the north, in Dan, to worship God by. The only problem was it was an idol and God forbid that. And from that point on the Northern Kingdom of Israel was on a downward spiral. And again, God warns Judah not to go up to her, not to follow in her footsteps!

2. I think that is an important lesson for us to learn. Paul put it like this in I Corinthians 15:33, **“Do not be deceived: ‘Evil company corrupts good habits.’”** I have talked with people who disagree with this, they don’t see it as a problem.

The only problem I have with what they are saying is that they are saying God is wrong and guess what, He is not wrong, they are! If you hang around people that are doing bad things you are going to travel down that path as well. You are not going to shine but you will put your light under a basket so no one will see it. God warned Judah and He is warning us, **“Evil company corrupts good habits”** whether you believe it or not! When you get close to sinful practices they will rub off on you!



VERSES 16-19

1. Israel is pictured here like a stubborn calf who refuses to pull the plow. They keep trying to remove the yoke, they are turning around, they are going backwards, they are rebelling against God.

And the consequence of their actions is they will be scattered alone, like a sheep in the wilderness. You see, without a shepherd it is very difficult for sheep to survive. They have no natural defenses and they are easy prey for the enemy, the wolves. Without the Lord as their shepherd they are in trouble!

2. When we see the name “**Ephraim**” used here in the book of Hosea, and it is used some 36 times in this book, it is referring to the Northern Kingdom of Israel, the biggest tribe in that Kingdom.

And the sad picture that is painted regarding them is that God says to leave them alone. Now hear me out on this. You really have to push God to the limit before He will leave you alone, before He writes you off. And the reality is, then He is only giving you what you want, and Israel had gone that far, they pushed God and they got what they desired, life without God!

3. As this chapter ends we see that their “**rulers**” or literally “**shields**” are no help, they are not able to protect the people. A shield was used for protection and the leaders were to protect the people. The leaders were to be a positive influence on the people. The leaders were to lead them in the things of God. But that was not what they were doing and the nation came into judgment because they had no knowledge of God, they had no knowledge of His Word. Not that they could not find God or His Word, they just chose not to!

## HOSEA 5

### VERSES 1-3

1. Notice how they snared the people. They did so with their wickedness. That is what trapped them. That is how they were able to catch them in their nets. And Satan continues to catch people with the sin he dangles in front of them. They are enticed by it until they are in bondage to it, until it destroys their life!

And the spiritual leaders were doing this and God is holding them responsible. He will punish them with the hope that they will return to Him and He can restore them. That is God's desire to restore, not destroy! Keep in mind that "**Mizpah**" was in the southwest section of the Kingdom, and "**Tabor**" is Mount Tabor which was way up in the northeast section of the Kingdom. And the idea here is that the people were worshiping idols under every green tree they could find - there were idols all over the land!

### VERSES 4-9

1. It is interesting that they lived in wickedness but they also lived religious lives. And yes, they may have fooled some of the people. They may have even fooled themselves, but God's says, "**I know**" back in verse 3.

You see, you can't pull the wool over His eyes, He knows all and He even knows what we are going to say, what we are going to do before we say them or do them! So the point being, don't cover your sins, confess them, because God is aware of them already.

2. And as you read verse 5 you see what brought down not only the Northern Kingdom of Israel but also the Southern Kingdom of Judah – ***PRIDE!*** They thought they were doing well, they felt that God did not really mean that or it was not for them and thus, they continued down this path until judgment came upon them for their sin! But it was pride that clouded their sight and pride does the same today in our own lives. Be careful is the warning. Humble yourself before God and He will lift you up!

3. It is always sad when a nation, when a people have gone too far and it was too late for them to turn back, judgment was coming upon them. It is as the Lord said through the prophet Jeremiah to the Southern Kingdom of Israel as they continued in their sin to the point of no return. They were not going to listen to the call of God and God instructs Jeremiah in the following actions, **“So do not pray for this people, or lift up a cry or prayer for them; for I will not hear them in the time that they cry out to Me because of their trouble.”** Jeremiah 11:14.

And look at how bad it had gotten. They have played the harlot with the Lord, raised their children that were born out of their sexual promiscuity in serving false gods. And God says He will judge them quickly, within one month or a new moon.

#### VERSES 10-14

1. In Deuteronomy 19:14 we are told, **“You shall not remove your neighbor’s landmark, which the men of old have set, in your inheritance which you will inherit in the land that the LORD your God is giving you to possess.”**

But they disregarded this and at night they would increase their borders by moving these stones, and God warned them in Deuteronomy 27:17, **“Cursed is the one who moves his neighbor’s landmark.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’”**

You see, there was no law, no order, people did as they pleased, interested in only one thing, themselves! And once a people or nation turn away from God, that is one of the results, social anarchy, lawlessness! Sound familiar?

2. And notice the wisdom they were following, the wisdom of man. That is always a mistake unless that man is following God. But why not just follow the Lord? In Proverbs 9:10 we are told, **“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”**

If you want to be wise then fear the Lord, respect Him and do as He says. If you want to be a fool, then don’t listen to the Lord, don’t fear Him! But if you listen to your own words, if you listen to the wisdom of man, you will only find destruction, you will be eaten up you might say by your folly!

Listen to what Proverbs 30:11-14 tells us, **“There is a generation that curses its father, and does not bless its mother. There is a generation that is pure in its own eyes, yet is not washed from its filthiness. There is a generation - oh, how lofty are their eyes! And their eyelids are lifted up. There is a generation whose teeth are like swords, and whose fangs are like knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men.”** In other words, they are blinded to their evil ways because their hearts are far from God and pride has clouded their vision!

Look at how they tried to follow the wisdom of man instead of the wisdom of God. They tried to pay the Assyrians off so they would not invade them. You can read of this in II Kings 17:3 as Hosea King of Israel tries to deal with Shalmaneser King of Assyria, but it didn't work. You can't make a deal with the world and win! Also, Jareb is a symbolic name for Assyria.

3. Not only did the Northern Kingdom of Israel try to go to the Assyrians for help but so did Judah when they were threatened by Syria and Israel back in II Kings 16. But the help of man will not bring healing to the land, in fact it would bring the judgment of God. The Northern Kingdom of Israel was taken into captivity by the Assyrians in 722 B. C. The Southern Kingdom of Judah was first invaded by the Babylonians in 606 B. C. with the final invasion and total captivity occurring in 586 B. C.

Again, you don't look to your enemies for help when you are in trouble but you turn to your heavenly Father who loves you, that is what God desires. As Christians, we need to look to the Lord to be the strength of our lives and not ourselves or our fellow man.

I love what David said in Psalm 61, **“HEAR my cry, O God; attend to my prayer. From the end of the earth I will cry to You, when my heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For You have been a shelter for me, a strong tower from the enemy. I will abide in Your tabernacle forever; I will trust in the shelter of Your wings.”**

May we not forget that!

4. We are going to read verse 15 with the first two verses in Hosea chapter 6 because they go together. Keep in mind that the chapter divisions and verses were added at a later date, they are not inspired and for the most part they do a good job and they help us to find things in the Bible but sometimes they are a little off as we see here.

### **HOSEA 6**

#### **VERSES 5:15-6:1-2**

1. In verse 15 of Hosea chapter 5 it speaks of the Lord returning to His place until Israel acknowledges their offense. When did God leave His place, Heaven? It is called the Incarnation when God became flesh and dwelt among us.

In the First Coming of Jesus Christ, when God became flesh and dwelt among us He was rejected by His people, the Jews. John 1:11 tells us, “**He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.**”

He then was crucified on the cross of Calvary, resurrected on the third day and returned to glory, to heaven. How long will He stay there? Till Israel acknowledges their sin of rejecting Him! Have they done that yet as a nation? No, individual Jews have come to saving faith but not the nation. So the prerequisite to the Lord’s return is Israel calling upon Him to return! And we see that played out for us in Hosea chapter 6.

I believe this is part of the prayer of the Jewish people as they call upon the Lord, as they recognize Jesus as their Messiah. “**Come, and let us return to the LORD . . .**”

But before they call upon Him they must recognize their sin and see that this judgment that has come upon them is because of their rebellion against God. We also see this spoken of in Matthew 23:39 where we are told, **“for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’”** I believe this is that call!

How long have the Jewish people been stricken? Almost 2,000 years, God has revived them physically, but not spiritually yet. During the Tribulation Period many Jews will get saved and it will climax at the end of the Tribulation Period as the nation of Israel will call upon Jesus and He will forgive them of their sins and revive them spiritually. And as the third day begins or the beginning of the 3,000<sup>th</sup> year, God will restore them as He returns to set-up His Kingdom. Thus, just as Hosea took back his unfaithful wife, so too will the Lord take back Israel!

### VERSE 3

1. Here we see the refreshing rain of the Lord not only coming upon the land but upon the lives of His people! When does this happen? When they return to Him and ultimately we see this in the Kingdom Age!

2. I am going to share these words from David Guzik because some have taken this later rain and made it into a movement and it is not Biblical as you will see. And this movement is growing in numbers very quickly as we have seen with IHOP. David tells us,

This passage along with others (Deuteronomy 11:14, Joel 2:23) were taken to give the name of the “Latter Rain Movement” starting in 1948.

In 1948, a Oneness Pentecostal minister named William Branham held meetings at an orphanage and school founded by a Foursquare Church in North Battleford, Saskatchewan. Those attending the meeting were so impressed by the supernatural works - healing, prophecy, word of knowledge, and strange phenomenon - that they considered it a beginning of a new work of God on earth. In their newsletter, this is how they described it:

“All the great outpourings of the past have had their outstanding truths. Luther’s truth was Justification by Faith. Wesley’s was Sanctification. The Baptists taught the premillennial coming of Christ. The Missionary Alliance taught Divine Healing. The Pentecostal outpouring has restored the Baptism of the Holy Ghost to its rightful place. But the next great outpouring is going to be marked by all these other truths plus such a demonstration of the nine gifts of the Spirit as the world, not even the Apostolic world, has ever witnessed before. This revival will be short and will be the last before the Rapture of the Church.”

They felt that the Pentecostal denominations of their day were “dead” and “dry,” and needed the blessing of the “Latter Rain,” which would especially be marked by miraculous signs and supernatural works. The Pentecostal denominations - notably the Assemblies of God and the Foursquare Church denounced the Branham and the Latter Rain movement for both their teaching and practices.

William Branham continued, drawing large crowds to his prophecy and healing crusades. He and a young evangelist named Oral Roberts led the Latter Rain Movement for several years. Branham’s doctrine became more and more aberrant. Branham believed that the word of God was given in three forms: the Zodiac, the Egyptian pyramids, and the written scriptures. He also taught the “serpent seed” doctrine, which was based on his interpretation of Genesis 3:13, saying that Eve had sexual relations with the serpent in the Garden of Eden.



The Latter Rain Movement, as led by William Branham and Oral Roberts eventually faded from prominence. Branham himself died in a traffic collision with a drunk driver in 1965. He died on Christmas Eve, and his faithful followers believed that he would rise from the dead, so they delayed his burial for several days. But the influence of the Latter Rain movement lived on. The Latter Rain popularized many attitudes and doctrines popular in revival movements today:

- The “five-fold ministry” and “restoration of apostle and prophets”
- The “foundational truths” of Hebrews 6:1-2
- An emphasis on signs and wonders as marks of true revival
- A strong emphasis on unity
- Replacement theology, replacing Israel with the church
- Dominion theology, saying the church will conquer and rule the world
- An elitist attitude, promoting the idea of a group of “superchristians”

Many researchers - and many within these modern groups today - believe that many modern “revival” movements are really just a continuation of the Latter Rain movement. Movements such as “Joel’s Army,” the Manifest Sons of God, the Dominion Movement, the Kansas City Prophets, the Toronto Blessing, the Pensacola Revival are connected in some way to the Latter Rain movement. For example, Paul Cain - later to re-emerge as head of the Kansas City Prophets in 1989 - traveled with William Branham and called him “the greatest prophet that ever lived.”

The modern Latter Rain movement believes: “The Latter Rain is God’s great end-time ministry. This concept as revealed in the Bible, comprises the restitution of the church to its rightful place, the enormous last day revival and the harvest of souls before the great and terrible Day of the Lord. It is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon all flesh promised to us in the last days and the restoration of apostolic and prophetic gifts.” (From latter-rain.com)

- David Guzik

This is what happens as people move away from the Word of God. Anything and everything goes because if a prophet spoke something then it must be of God! No it is not. It must be found in the Word of God and if it is not, if it contradicts God's Word, then it is not of God. Very simple but you would be surprised how many people are more interested in signs and wonders than the Word of God, than God Himself!

#### VERSES 4-6

1. They willfully broke the covenant that God made with them. And yet, in all their rebellion we see the heart of God towards them, His love.

It is as David said in Psalm 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 God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart-- these, O God, You will not despise.”**

God wants us to be merciful, to know Him more than He wants activity, because without the loyalty to Him, without the knowledge of Him, they are just empty rituals, they are meaningless to Him! Don't put the cart in front of the horse. Draw close to God and out of that relationship with Him will come good works. Not for salvation but identification with Him!

#### VERSES 7-11

1. We saw the heart of God, here is the heart of man, living in rebellion against God. And what happens then? We read what happens in verses 8-9 of Hosea chapter 6. The social structure is a mess, you have lawlessness filling the society, everyone does what is right in his own eyes, and it brings about anarchy!

And look at the picture that is being painted for us here. Ramoth Gilead was a city of refuge east of the Jordan River and Shechem was a city of refuge on the west side of the Jordan River, but not anymore! Violence has filled the land. The priests, the leaders and the common people were involved in these vile acts! Society was falling apart because they took God out of the picture.

And out of this rebellion, out of this wickedness, this lawlessness God will judge them but with the idea of restoring them one day. When the people of God came back into the land after the Babylonian exile they mainly settled in the area of Judah. The harvest of returned exiles was mainly for Judah, not for Israel. Not that the 10 tribes of the Northern Kingdom were not brought back, they just settled in the area of Judah mostly.

2. As I bring this study to a close, as you read through the things that happened to Israel, you can't help but seeing parallels to our own nation. It was founded by God, led by God, prospered by God, and now we have turned from God. May we learn the lessons and repent of our sins before judgment comes upon us as a nation!