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a *Grace Notes* course

# **Hosea**

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Lesson 11

Hosea 8:1-14

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## Hosea

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## Instructions for Completing the Lessons

Begin each study session with prayer. It is the Holy Spirit who makes spiritual things discernable to Christians, so it is essential to be in fellowship with the Lord during Bible study.

Read the whole book of Hosea often. It is a short book, and reading it many times will help you understand the story much better.

### **Instructions**

1. Read the introduction to the study of Hosea
  2. Study the Hosea passage for this lesson, by reading the verses and studying the notes. Be sure to read any other Bible passages that are called out in the notes.
  3. **Review** all of the notes in the Hosea lesson.
  4. Go to the Quiz page and follow the instructions to complete all the questions on the quiz. The quiz is "open book". You may refer to all the notes and to the Bible when you take the test. But you should not get help from another person.
  5. When you have completed the Quiz, be sure to **SAVE** your file. If your quiz file is lost, and that can happen at Grace Notes as well, you will want to be able to reproduce your work.
  6. To send the Quiz back to Grace Notes, follow the instructions on the Quiz page.
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## Hosea Chapter Eight

### Hosea 8:1,2

**Put the trumpet to your lips! Like an eagle the enemy comes against the house of the Lord, because they have transgressed My covenant, and rebelled against My Law. They cry out to Me, 'My God, we of Israel know Thee!**

Here the trumpet is a symbol of warning - the enemy is on the way. But God warns Israel to alert itself about His imminent discipline.

The enemy comes like an eagle. The enemy swoops down from above, swift and silent, surprising the victim.

The house of the Lord means Israel - and it is an interesting appellation. They are the house of the Lord, and yet also the target of His wrath. How did one become the other?

The last part of the verse tells us. They transgressed the covenant and rebelled against the Divine Law.

The point of comparison is `ABHERU BHERITH "have transgressed a covenant.

The word for transgress is `ABHERU. It depicts a stream passing through a pasture, cutting a deep course, or an army cutting through a nation, leaving a well worn path behind (or even a passage of destruction, like Sherman's march through Georgia.

The covenant is one of the least understood of Biblical phenomena; too many theologians have failed to understand the grace aspect of all the covenants to man.

In any covenant, God agrees to apply His grace to a person or group of persons. The basis for the covenants to all but Adam is belief in Jesus Christ. Adam did not have this requirement because before the fall he did not require a savior.

- To illustrate one from our civilization, Abraham's covenant will suffice.
- Abraham believed in God, and thus could enjoy the covenants that God gave to him. His belief made him eligible.

- Abraham's circumcision was a post-covenant command, designed to remind him of the relationship that he had with God, and how it had brought him to the point of maturity.

The word BERITH itself comes from the word "to eat", BARATH. It harkened to the time when those who were making a covenant would eat a meal together to show outwardly that they were at peace over the matter, Psalm 23:5, "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies." Gen. 31:54-55. Indeed, today most weddings have a rehearsal dinner, which is a throwback to the wedding feast of Biblical times. That feast represented the covenant between the two families.

Furthermore it was customary to sacrifice an animal when making a covenant, so that it was considered an agreement in the sight of God. Thus the phrase came about, "to cut a covenant".

Any covenant with God had one requirement: relationship with Him, the maker of the covenant. But all covenants are gracious - they are offered freely and their blessings are truly free. The personal rejection of God results in the rejection of the person by God, Deut 29:10-28.

The covenants did not require obedience - see Hosea 6:6. The grace disposition always preceded anything that Israel had done. The blessings were not given as rewards for past obedience, nor as bribes for future. They were given in love and grace.

Israel has trampled the grace blessings which they had from God.

They had the land, and they were God's chosen nation on that land.

They were the recipients of the Davidic king.

They received the Law, God's statutes for their client nation.

And in spite of all of this grace, they rejected a personal relationship with God for one with idols.

Our verb 'ABHERU is in the perfect tense, showing a state of completed action. The trampling is finished - the dust has settled - it is almost too late. The Five Cycles of Discipline

## Hosea 8:3,4

**Israel has rejected good; the enemy will pursue him. They have set up kings, but not by Me; they have appointed princes, but I did not know. With their silver and gold they have made idols for themselves, for the sake of being sacrificed.**

Verse three is a brief and simple summary of divine discipline.

Israel has rejected good. The verb is ZANAH, which is very straightforward in meaning. It is in the qal perfect, which shows a completed state of action. What they have done is now complete.

The object of the rejection is TOBH, which is the Hebrew equivalent of the Greek AGATHOS. It is good of intrinsic value. It comes to summarize every good thing that comes from God.

**James 1:17 "Every good gift and every perfect present is from above, descending from the Father of lights [heavenly bodies] in whom there is no movement [as the sun in the sky] or revolutionary shadow [due to the seasons]."**

The astronomical language that James uses defines two types of painfully slow movement:

The movement of heavenly bodies in the sky, such as the sun or moon. Movement that is too slow to detect with the human eye, but can be detected by waiting.

The movement of shadows due to the revolution of the earth around the sun (James knew this in spite of the dispute between the pope and Galileo).

In other words, there is slow movement, even really slow movement, yet God does not change, even this slowly. In fact, He does not change at all. He is immutable. So what is good is always good, regardless of the time or season or century or even dispensation.

**Philippians 4:8: "Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovable, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things."**

Because of Israel's rejection of good, God has appointed an enemy to pursue them. The verb pursue is YIREDEPHO. It is the basic verb for pursuit, but it is significant in that it is in the imperfect tense, which reveals a relentless kind of pursuit. This pursuit will continue until Israel repents or is caught and destroyed.

Verse four divides into two halves: one about politics and one about idolatry.

The first half comments on the way in which their leadership gets their power. They ascend by illicit means.

There are really two factors involved here: the character of the potential ruler, and the way in which he ascends to the throne.

In order for a leader to be set up by God, he must be someone of good character.

In order for a leader to be set up by God, he must come to his post by good means.

God says two things: the king became king outside of His approved means; and when the princes were appointed, He did not know. The word 'it' does not occur in the original. What God is saying here is that He was not made aware - the people did not consult Him in the selection of the prince.

Regardless of the means of bringing a ruler to the throne, whether by election, appointment, or even genetics, the main point is that the individual is prayerfully chosen.

The second half indicts Israel for their idolatry.

Hosea here uses some interesting language. They make idols with their silver and gold, so that they might be cut off.

What God says through Isaiah is that He knows the outcome of their idolatry. They make idols, and though they do not know it, their purpose is so that they will be sacrificed.

The word BERITH means to cut something. In the frame of reference of idolatry, it meant to make a sacrifice by cutting the neck of the animal. In idolatry, you cut your own neck.

### Hosea 8:5-7

**He has rejected your calf, O Samaria, saying, "My anger burns against them!" How long will they be incapable of innocence? For from Israel is even this! A craftsman made it, so it is not God; surely the calf of Samaria will be broken to smithereens. For they sow the wind, and they reap the storm wind. The standing grain has no growth; it yields no grain. Should it yield, strangers would swallow it up.**

The calf is a recurrent theme in the history of Israel. Unfortunately it is mostly a theme of idolatry and evil.

The Bible prescribes the sacrifice of a young bull for the sin and guilt offerings, but this differs completely from a female or male calf. A bull is a sexually adult animal. Lev 4:1-5:13.

The people of the ancient world had a habit of worshipping calves. In fact, Israel developed her own system of calf worship, that had actually developed within the Israelite religion.

To the idolatrous Gentiles, calves represented fertility in the female and virility in the male. In other words their cult was sexual.

The golden calf - Exo. 32; 1 Kings 12:28; 2 Kings 10:29.

The Golden calf represents the failure of the children of Israel at the Holy Mountain of God.

It was there that they made an idol because of their impatience with Moses, who had been on the mountain with God for what they considered as too long.

**Ex 32:1-4, "Now when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people assembled about Aaron, and said to him, 'Come, make us a god who will go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.' And Aaron said to them, 'Tear off the gold rings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me.' Then all the people tore off the gold rings which were in their ears, and brought**

**them to Aaron. And he took this from their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, and made it into a molten calf; and they said, 'This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt.'**

Notice that the people have yet to receive the tablets, but they have already received the commandment against idolatry, and so they are sinning in cognizance against God, Ex 20:23.

Notice also Aaron's direct involvement in this caper. He fashioned it with his own hands.

The people recognize that without Moses they would have died in the desert, and they fear being without him.

It is their desire to replace Moses because they had made him into a god. Their idolatry was directed toward a man, and not the one true god at all.

It is ludicrous for them to think that a calf was the God who brought them up from Egypt. Their reversionism has taken them to irrationality.

In Ex 32, verses 7-14, Moses beseeches God to withhold from destroying the nation of Israel for their idolatry, and the Lord assents.

Moses then descended from the mountain with the tablets of the Law in his arms, he first hears and then sees the idolatrous feast. He is so angry that he dashes the tablets on the rocks at the foot of the mountain. They are utterly shattered. Next he melted down the golden calf, ground it into powder, and scattered the powder over the surface of the water. He made the people drink that water. All this from verses Ex 32:15-20.

Moses then turns to Aaron, whom he left in command before he went up on the mountain. Aaron's reply is one for the books.

**Exodus 32:21-24, "Then Moses said to Aaron, 'What did this people do to you, that you have brought such great sin upon them?' And Aaron said, 'Do not let the anger of my lord burn - you know the people yourself, that they are prone to evil. For they said to me, 'Make a god for us who will go before us; for this Moses, the man who brought us up from Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.' And I said to them, 'Whoever has any gold, let them tear it off.'**

**So they gave it to me, and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf.'**

- Aaron first attempts to blame the people for his failure in leadership.
- Second, he fabricates the story of the manufacture of the calf. He implies that the calf is from God Himself by telling of its miraculous production.
- As a memorial, the broken tablets of the law were placed inside of the ark of the covenant. In spite of this failure, the covenant would continue, covered by the mercy seat of God.

There was calf worship in the time of Jeroboam the first, 1 Kings 12.

1 Kings 12 chapter describes the split of Israel into two kingdoms, Judah in the South and the rest of the tribes in the North. The split came about because of the hard core attitude of Rehoboam, king over all the land. The North revolted because of him.

When the North split off, Jeroboam was faced with a very difficult problem: Jerusalem was the center of worship for all of Israel, and due to the rebellion of his tribes there was little chance for his people to go there.

His solution was to manufacture two golden calves - one to place at Dan and the other at Bethel. They were designed to be just like the one calf that the children of Israel worshipped in the wilderness. Obviously, this was an evil policy, and the result was horrible.

Between Jeroboam and Hosea's time, the worship of calves evolved more into the pagan paradigm. It had become a thoroughgoing pagan ritual, with no basis at all in relationship with Yahweh.

God has rejected the calf of Israel - it is an idol, and He never tolerates idolatry.

The calf of Israel was made by human hands - how could it now be an object of worship? The worship of created things is really quite ridiculous. "I made it, and now I will worship it." It would be the exact equivalent if God decided to bow down and worship any human being. Idolatry often seems neat, and even rational - but

it is not - not at all, not ever. The rationality is only a veneer, and this is true for all forms of idolatry.

The calf of Samaria will surely be broken to smithereens.

The Hebrew noun SHABAB is quite difficult to research. It has little to go on but the context of a couple of verses, Hosea 8:4 and Job 18:5. From what scholars can gather, it comes from an older word, which means to hew, or chop, as with an axe.

In our context, "smithereens" works because it denotes the utter destruction of something to the point where it is atomized.

In Job, the frame of reference is fire, and so 'spark' would be the working translation there.

This is identical to what happened with the golden calf in the wilderness. It was reduced to powder by the decree of Moses.

Sowing the wind and reaping the storm wind (it is not literally a whirlwind) are references to the law of volitional responsibility. It means that if you sow evil you will reap divine discipline.

People who choose for God are blessed; those who choose against Him suffer.

The Law of Volitional responsibility is well documented by Scripture.

Job 4:8-9, "As I have observed, those who plow evil and those who sow trouble reap it. At the breath of God they are destroyed; at the blast of his anger they perish.

Prov 11:18, "The wicked man earns deceptive wages, but he who sows righteousness reaps a sure reward.

The deceptive wages are the result of bad decisions.

The deceptive wages shortchange the work of sin, making sin never worth it.

**Prov 22:8, "He who sows wickedness reaps trouble, and the rod of his fury will be destroyed.**

**Hosea 8:7, "They sow the wind and reap the whirlwind. The stalk has no head; it will produce no flour. Were it to yield grain, foreigners would swallow it up.**

**Hosea 10:12, "Sow for yourselves righteousness, reap the fruit of unfailling love, and break up your unplowed ground; for it is time to seek the LORD, until he comes and showers righteousness on you.**

**2 Cor 9:6, "Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.**

**Gal 6:7-8, "Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.**

**James 3:18 "Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness.**

The law of volitional responsibility is a built in function of divine discipline (see below). It is a law as universal as gravity, and no less impressive in its effects.

The law of volitional responsibility can be summed up in the phrase, "You will reap what you sow." This means that the seeds that you plant in bad decisions will grow up to cause suffering in your life.

In the law of volitional responsibility, the suffering is always appropriate to the original bad decision.

- If the decision is in the realm of finance, then you will suffer financially.
- If the decision is in the realm of romance, then you will suffer romantically.
- If the decision is in the realm of social life, then you will suffer socially.
- If the decision is in the realm of your chosen profession, then you will suffer professionally.

In the law of volitional responsibility, bad decisions, like crime, never pay.

You never 'get away' with a bad decision.

You never slip a fast one by God, even on a small scale.

In the law of volitional responsibility, good decisions never go unnoticed by the omnipresence of God.

There will always be a difference between right and wrong. Always to eternity.

Choosing right over wrong will always be important.

"The standing grain has no growth; it yields no grain. Should it yield, strangers would swallow it up.

There is no growth to the standing grain. The grain stalks have stopped growing. This is a description of famine, and is described in the first cycle of discipline, Lev 26:19.

If the grain does yield, the enemy comes and wolfs it down. This is a description of the first cycle of discipline, Lev 26:16. These two cycles are inverted by God, and it shows that they are happening all at once.

The qal imperfect verb YIBHLA`UHU describes a swallowing that is a wolfing or gulping down. It is the ingestion equivalent to vomiting.

The imperfect tense of this verb describes something that happens repetitively over time. If the grain grows up, it is then always swallowed by the enemy. It makes planting a crop a really hopeless endeavor. C. Both of these cycles of discipline are signs of displeasure from God. If they happen, the nation should accept the warning.

### Hosea 8:8-10

**Israel is swallowed up; they are now among the nations like a vessel in which no one delights. For they have gone up to Assyria, like a wild donkey all alone; Ephraim has hired lovers. Even though they hire allies among the nations, now I will gather them up; and king princes will begin little from burden.**

Verse eight begins with the same verb as verse seven, this time in the niphal passive perfect NIBHELA`.

These two verbs occur back to back in the Hebrew text, and this for reasons of emphasis. The enemies



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of Israel swallow their grain; and they will swallow Israel.

The subject of the verb is Israel; they will receive the action of this niph'al passive.

This time the verb is in the perfect tense, showing the absolute certainty of their fate. It is set in the future, and in the divine decree; it is set in stone.

And again, it is a quick, wolf-like kind of swallow. This is like when we give special treats to our dogs. They are swallowed so fast there is no real appreciation of taste.

The swallowing of economic prosperity by the enemy precedes the swallowing of the nation by God. We now stand on the verge of a trade war with Japan, and one which we may not win. If so, then we are in a cycle of discipline, and stand in danger of being swallowed by God.

"They are now among the nations like a vessel in which no one delights." The best way to describe this is by analogy. Israel is the Christmas fruitcake among the nations. No one likes them, but they keep showing up anyway. This portrays the solicitous way in which Israel, from their position of weakness, kept on attempting to ally with all of the foreign powers. But what can the weak offer to the strong?

"For they have gone up to Assyria, a wild ass going alone.

The qal active participle of BADAD signifies here the lonesome nature of Israel. They are all alone, going up through the desert to Assyria in order to contract an alliance. Also an animal which was normally a beast of burden was going alone - without human guidance. In the same way, Israel was going without divine guidance.

It is significant that they go alone, for in reality they go without God.

The ass was a beast of burden since the earliest times. But a wild ass was totally useless. That is the picture here. A totally useless animal, going up to Assyria for a totally useless reason.

"For Ephraim has hired lovers for itself.

God says that Ephraim's alliances are the equivalent of prostitution.

In the analogy, God is the wife, and Ephraim the husband, while Assyria and Egypt are the prostitutes.

When they should be trusting in God for their might, they are instead buying might from their enemies. This is a foreign policy which cannot possibly work.

There is no true satisfaction in fornication or adultery. There is no true satisfaction in any form of illicit sex. But, you must be exceptionally stupid to pay for it. In essence you are paying for something that can never satisfy you.

"Even though they hire allies among the nations, now I will gather them up.

Gathering is another way of describing the fifth cycle of discipline. It comes from the piel imperfect verb 'AQABETSEM.

This is a harvest word. It means to grasp the heads of grain, and pull them off, and collect them in a basket.

It is quite ironic that in essence Israel is hiring human allies to protect themselves from divine discipline. Of course it will not work: God is going to gather them anyway.

The verb is in the piel stem, which describes an intensity of action. God is REALLY going to gather them.

Since it is the imperfect tense, the action is ongoing - the harvest open-ended.

" and king princes will begin little from burden .

The hiphil causative denotes the personal involvement of the king and princes of Israel in this beginning. The verb means that they will gain little from this alliance - that it will be more of a hindrance or burden than a help.

The burden must also be considered a result of the king and princes. In essence they are their own burden.

The burden itself is the disastrous policy of reliance on alliance instead of God.

### Hosea 8:11-13

**Since Ephraim has multiplied altars for sin, they have become altars of sinning for him.**

**Though I wrote from him ten thousand precepts of My law, they are regarded as a strange thing. As for My sacrificial gifts, they sacrifice the flesh and eat it, but the Lord has taken no delight in them. Now He will remember their iniquity, and punish them for their sins; they will return to Egypt.**

This is God speaking through Hosea; the Words are His.

"Since Ephraim has multiplied altars for sin, they have become altars of sinning for him

The altars for sin are of course altars for specific idolatry, the direct worship of demons.

Every one of those altars that they made resulted in even more sin.

What God says is that if you make something for the express purpose of sin, it multiplies sin. You make something that has potential for sin, and you know it, then you will sin.

Any number of things may be equivalent to this in our own nation.

Prostitution and pornography and drug trafficking are all examples of this.

"Though I wrote from him ten thousand precepts of My law, they are regarded as a strange thing.

God has communicated His Law clearly and accurately and thoroughly. He has inculcated them with it, so that there could be no mistake about it.

Yet, it is a foreign thing to the people of Israel. They consider it with disdain - they think it out of fashion and unpopular.

### **Hosea 8:14**

**For Israel has forgotten his maker and built palaces; and Judah has multiplied fortified**

**cities, but I will send a fire on its cities that it may consume its palatial dwellings.**

This is another prediction of final discipline for both Israel and Judah.

The rationale: they have forgotten their maker, who is the only one and true God. Do not forget your maker!

Israel builds palaces...

- It is interesting to note that Israel did this at a time of such royal turmoil.
- When the king is in charge, and he builds a greater palace for himself, it is self-glorification.
- This is the product of power lust, and utter selfishness. This is the product of one who has no interest in the discharge of public responsibility.

Judah has multiplied fortified cities...

Having no army, Israel could not do this.

But Judah still has her army intact, and her people prepare for the Assyrian invasion.

However, a principle: no amount of preparation can stave off divine discipline. Such discipline cannot be averted.

You can protect all of your investments and diversify them in a broad manner, but the Lord knows them.

You can build your home into a fortress against crime and criminals, but God knows how to penetrate it. 5. So the palaces are consumed, and the threat remains to the fortresses. The death of Israel is a warning to Judah.

## Hosea Lesson 11 Quiz

### Instructions

The following questions relate to your study of this lesson.

To answer a question, type your response in the space provided after the word "Answer:". A question may be True/False, multiple choice, fill in the blank, or short answer type.

The last question requires you to write one or two paragraphs in "essay" form. Use the space provided; it will expand to accommodate your response.

You have choices about sending the quiz back to Grace Notes.

- If you received an email file containing the quiz, you can use the REPLY feature of your e-mail application to open the quiz. Enter your answers in the reply message. Then SEND the message to Grace Notes.
- You can enter your answers on these pages, then send the whole file back to Grace Notes as a file attachment. This is handy, but these lessons will average 100K to 200K in size. As an alternative,
- After you answer the questions here, copy and paste the whole list of questions into a new MS Word document; then, send the new file to Grace Notes as an attachment. The new file will, of course, be much smaller than this main file.
- Finally, you can print the Quiz pages on your printer and send your response back to Grace Notes in the regular mail. If you do this, send the mail to:

**Grace Notes**

**% Warren Doud**

**1705 Aggie Lane**

**Austin, Texas 78757 USA**

Whichever transmission method you use, when Grace Notes receives your completed Quiz, the next lesson will be sent to you, by the same means you received this one. EXCEPT: when you have sent in the FINAL QUIZ, we will send your certificate to you, by regular mail.

### Questions on Hosea Lesson 11

1. What is the threat for which Hosea is issuing a warning in the first verses of this chapter?

Answer:

2. Why is God bringing the enemy against the house of the Lord?

Answer:

3. What made it possible for Abraham to be eligible for the covenant which God gave him?

Answer?

4. God appointed an enemy to pursue the disobedient nations of Israel. What enemy might be allowed to pursue a disobedient Christian?

Answer:

5. God will allow leaders to have power, even though He does not approve of them or put them in place himself. [True/False]

Answer:

6. What is the outcome of Israel's idolatry?

Answer:

7. In Moses' time, the people were so impatient for Moses to come back from his conference with God on Mt. Sinai, that they created a golden calf to worship. What sorts of things do Christians do in modern times, when they find they can't wait for God to do something?

Answer:

8. What was Jeroboam's (Solomon's son) "solution" to the problem of being separated from Jerusalem when the nation split into the Northern and Southern kingdoms?

Answer:

9. There is a great deal in the Bible about sowing and reaping, both positive and negative examples. What would you say to a new believer about how to please God, using "sowing and reaping" as an illustration for your comments?

Answer:

10. To what is Hosea referring when he states that God "will gather up" Ephraim?

Answer:

End of Quiz