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Hosea 5

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Hosea 5.

Topics.

- The LORD speaks to the priests and all those in the kings' house.
- The spirit of whoredom is within Israel, and they know not the LORD.
- Israel has dealt faithlessly with the LORD and borne alien children.
- Blow the horn, sound the alarm Ephraim shall become desolation.
- The LORD is like a moth to Israel and rot to Judah.
- The LORD will be like a lion to Israel and a young lion to Judah.

INTRODUCTION: Hosea has been called the “death-bed prophet of Israel” because he was the last to prophesy before the Northern Kingdom fell to Assyria (about 722 B.C.). His ministry followed a golden age in the Northern Kingdom, with a peace and prosperity not seen since the days of Solomon. Unfortunately, this prosperity led to moral decay, and Israel forsook God to worship idols. So God instructed Hosea to marry a prostitute, whose unfaithfulness to her husband would serve as an example of Israel’s unfaithfulness to God. Hosea then explained God’s complaint against Israel and warned of the punishment that would come unless the people returned to the LORD and remained faithful to him. The book shows the depth of God’s love for his people, a love that tolerates no rivals.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: “Map Locations and People of the Bible,” and the title: “Bible Dictionary” on Website Menu.

HOSEA 5:1

The LORD speaks to the Priests and all those in the Kings House.

- **Hosea 5:1:** Hear this, O priests! Pay attention, O house of Israel! Give ear, O house of the king! For the judgment is for you; for you have been a snare at Mizpah and a net spread upon Tabor.

Mizpah: was a village allotted to Judah about 7.5 miles from Jerusalem (men from here helped Nehemiah rebuild wall of Jerusalem).

Tabor: is a mountain in Galilee where the borders of Issachar, Zebulun and Naphtali met.

God is going to judge the priests, the kings house and the people of Israel (the ten tribes in the land of Samaria), because they have led the two towns of Judah, Mizpah and Tabor from the right path.

HOSEA 5:2-4

The Spirit of Whoredom is Within Israel, and they know Not the LORD.

- **Hosea 5:2-4:** And the revoltors (the people of Israel) have gone deep into slaughter, but I will discipline all of them. ³I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hidden from me; for now, O Ephraim, you have played the whore; Israel is defiled. ⁴Their deeds do not permit them to return to their God. For the spirit of whoredom is within them, and they know not the LORD.

Ephraim: became such a leader in the new Northern Kingdom (the ten tribes in the land of Samaria) that in addition to their more common name Israel, the kingdom also became called Ephraim.

Whoredom: Hosea pictures Israel as the wife of God and God as Israel’s husband.

- God says to Judah, "Plead with your mother (Israel) plead—for she is not my wife, and I am not her husband—that she put away her whoring from her face. (Hosea 2:2).
- In that day, declares the LORD, you (Israel) will call me 'My Husband,' and no longer will you call me 'My Baal.' (Hosea 2:16).

Whoredom in this context is not being likened to single people having sex, but to a wife betraying her husband. Israel the wife of God is committing spiritual adultery against God (their husband) by worshipping other gods (i.e., other lovers). Adultery is listed in the Ten Commandments because it is an act of betrayal, deceit and lies and brings hurt and harm to all the innocent people (the partner, family, friends, children, grandparents etc.,) who are involved with the married couple. Israel's deeds do not permit them to return to the LORD because the nation is so deeply entrenched in their faith and belief that the idols and Baal's are their God, that they have fallen completely away from knowing who their God really is, so even if they did want to return to Him they couldn't.

Many of these people have grown up under the teachings of Jeroboam's two golden calves and the worship centres he set up. In modern language it could be said that Jeroboam was the founder a new denomination that multitudes of children had been born into. This religious movement over many years has grown into a well-established religious institution and many of its followers had never known anything different and even worse did not realise that they were actually on the wrong path. There is a lesson for us all in what is happening to the nation of Israel, never assume that a religious organisation or religious institution is on the right path simply because it is well established, has magnificent buildings, is global, has been around for a long time and has multitudes of followers, Hosea is talking to an entire nation who believed they were on the right path, but in actual fact are about to be destroyed by God.

HOSEA 5:5-7

Israel has Dealt Faithlessly with the LORD and Borne Alien Children.

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- **Hosea 5:5-7:** The pride of Israel testifies to his face; Israel and Ephraim shall stumble in his guilt; Judah also shall stumble with them. ⁶With their flocks and herds they shall go to seek the LORD, but they will not find him; he has withdrawn from them. ⁷They have dealt faithlessly with the LORD; for they have borne alien children. Now the new moon shall devour them with their fields.

The pride of Israel testifies to his face: means Israel own pride testifies against them. Notice God already knows Judah is going to go the same way as Israel (v5).

They have borne alien children: means the men of Israel have taken pagan women for their wives and they have not only given birth to children who believe in idols, child sacrifice, and the Baals, everything that offends the LORD, but also given birth to children that are not Israelite children and it was God's desire that Israel would raise godly offspring who would from generation to generation inherit the Promised Land.

HOSEA 5:8-9

Blow the Horn, Sound the Alarm Ephraim shall Become a Desolation.

- **Hosea 5:8-9:** Blow the horn in Gibeah, the trumpet in Ramah. Sound the alarm at Beth-aven; we follow you, O Benjamin! ⁹Ephraim shall become a desolation in the day of punishment; among the tribes of Israel I (Hosea) make known what is sure.

Gibeah: a city of Benjamin in Judah a few miles north of Jerusalem.

Ramah: a town in Judah about 5 miles from Jerusalem.

Beth-aven: a town in Israel on the north boundary of Benjamin, the name Bethaven is used by Hosea to reveal the fallen condition of Bethel due to the idolatry, vanity and illicit worship introduced by king Jeroboam who had set up a golden calf and established a worship centre there.

Benjamin: was the youngest son of the patriarch Jacob whom his wife Rachel bore to him in her dying agony, of all the children of Jacob, Benjamin was the only one born in Palestine between Ephrathah and Bethel.

Benjamin (the tribe): (Judah) when Israel split into two nations called Judah (the two tribes) and Israel (the ten tribes) after the death of Solomon, the Benjamites remained with the tribe of Judah at Jerusalem, and followed the Davidic house as represented by Rehoboam.

Ephraim: (Israel) became such a leader in the new northern Hebrew kingdom (the ten tribes in the land of Samaria) that in addition to their more common name Israel, the kingdom is also called Ephraim. The Canaanites of Gezer lived in the midst of the ten tribes, because they did not drive them out of the land. Ephraim's territory included worship centres at Bethel and Shiloh.

Blow the horn sound the trumpet: (v8-9) with these words Hosea is basically saying Judah and Israel be warned.

HOSEA 5:10-12

The LORD is like a Moth to Israel and Rot to Judah.

- **Hosea 5:10-12:** The princes of Judah have become like those who move the landmark; upon them I will pour out my wrath like water. ¹¹Ephraim is oppressed, crushed in judgment, because he was determined to go after filth. ¹²But I (the LORD) am like a moth to Ephraim, and like dry rot to the house of Judah.

Like those who move the landmark: means those who have the authority and power twist the laws and pervert justice for their own selfish gain.

To go after filth: refers to the pagan gods and idols, the Baals and Moloch to who Israel gave their sons as child sacrifices and all other idols and gods they worshipped. God says He will pour out His wrath on Israel like a bucket of water, when a bucket of water is poured out it is fast and everything is drenched. With this picture in mind it is easy to see why biblical writers such as Deborah used such lofty language when depicting the horror and destruction of a battle.

- Deborah said, "LORD, when you went out from Seir, when you marched from the region of Edom, the earth trembled and the heavens dropped, yes, the clouds dropped water. ⁵The mountains quaked before the LORD, even Sinai before the LORD, the God of Israel." (Judges 5:4-5).

For further information see the title:

- Lofty Language and Figurative Language of the Bible, in Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

The LORD is like a moth to Ephraim and dry rot to Judah: means God brings to ruin everything they do.

HOSEA 5:13-15

The LORD will be like a Lion to Israel and a Young Lion to Judah.

- **Hosea 5:13-15:** When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah his wound, then Ephraim went to Assyria, and sent to the great king. But he is not able to cure you or heal your wound. ¹⁴For I will be like a lion to Ephraim, and like a young lion to the house of Judah. I, even I, will tear and go away; I will carry off, and no one shall rescue. ¹⁵I will return again to my place, until they acknowledge their guilt and seek my face, and in their distress earnestly seek me.

God will be like a lion to Israel and a young lion to Judah: Assyria totally destroyed Israel and those who were not taken captive were scattered throughout the surrounding nations, but though Babylon took the inhabitants of Judah into captivity the LORD watched over them and moulded them like a master potter moulds a beautiful clay jar.

History records the prophetic words of Hosea: Israel set their hearts diamond hard against the word of God's prophets they rebelled against the LORD they turned to other gods and entered into gross sin so the LORD used Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon (who He called His servant (Jer. 25:9) to bring the curses of the covenant upon them. The fierce armies of Babylon invaded the land of Judah, laid their farm land waste, attacked Jerusalem (the two tribes of Judah) and pillaged the temple. Zedekiah was blinded and carried to Babylon, and the great bulk of the population was taken in chains there with him (around 587 B.C.).

Later Babylon conquered Assyria who had previously taken Israel (the ten tribes in the land of Samaria) captive. They went into captivity to Babylon as two rebellious nations who had turned from God to idols and who were even sacrificing their own children to pagan gods and were under Babylonian rule for the next seventy years. Archaeologists have found that all of the cities of Judah were completely destroyed at this time, thus ended the glorious kingdom of David and Solomon. Observers would have said that the Hebrew nation was annihilated, and indeed, the other nations conquered by the Assyrians and Babylonians did cease to exist. But the prophets proclaimed a better hope for the chosen people. "A remnant shall return" Isaiah had said, and in time this remnant, purged and returned, became the basis on which a new Israel would be built.

Now here is the good news: while in captivity God moulded them like a master potter moulds a beautiful clay jar, Israel and Judah went into Babylon as two unfaithful nations that had turned away from the LORD to idols and other gods. Seventy years later, Cyrus (King of Persia) who the LORD called His anointed shepherd (Isaiah 44:28) and took by His right hand (Isaiah 45:1) to conquer the Empire of Babylon gave written permission for Israel to return to Jerusalem. Under Ezra and Nehemiah God brought Israel and Judah back to their beloved city Jerusalem as one united nation faithful to only one God, the LORD their God, the God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob (Israel never turned to idols or pagan gods again). Multitudes of Jewish families who had been scattered throughout the nations returned to Jerusalem and the land of Israel with triumphant joy and rejoicing. When the temple of God was completed their faith was once again established and a time of prosperity and peace followed. Sadly, Israel as a nation never recognised their Messiah the Christ when he came, but even this was in the LORD'S sovereign will. The prophet Zechariah tells us when, the Lord returns in glory:

- God will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn (Zech. 12:10-14).

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.