

Hosea

BEREAN STANDARD BIBLE

Chapter 1

HOSEA'S WIFE AND CHILDREN

¹This is the word of the LORD that came to Hosea son of Beeri in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and of Jeroboam son of Jehoash, king of Israel. ²When the LORD first spoke through Hosea, He told him, "Go, take a prostitute as your wife and have children of adultery, because this land is flagrantly prostituting itself by departing from the LORD." ³So Hosea went and married Gomer daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son. ⁴Then the LORD said to Hosea, "Name him Jezreel, for soon I will bring the bloodshed of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and I will put an end to the kingdom of Israel. ⁵And on that day I will break the bow of Israel in the Valley of Jezreel." ⁶Gomer again conceived and gave birth to a daughter, and the LORD said to Hosea, "Name her Lo-ruhamah, for I will no longer have compassion on the house of Israel, that I should ever forgive them. ⁷Yet I will have compassion on the house of Judah, and I will save them—not by bow or sword or war, not by horses and cavalry, but by the LORD their God." ⁸After she had weaned Lo-ruhamah, Gomer conceived and gave birth to a son. ⁹And the LORD said, "Name him Lo-ammi, for you are not My people, and I am not your God. ¹⁰Yet the number of the Israelites will be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or counted. And it will happen that in the very place where it was said to them, 'You are not My people,' they will be called 'sons of the living God.' ¹¹Then the people of Judah and of Israel will be gathered together, and they will appoint for themselves one leader, and will go up out of the land. For great will be the day of Jezreel.

Chapter 2

ISRAEL'S ADULTERY REBUKED

¹"Say of your brothers, 'My people,' and of your sisters, 'My loved one.' ²Rebuke your mother, rebuke her, for she is not My wife, and I am not her husband. Let her remove the adultery from her face and the unfaithfulness from between her breasts. ³Otherwise, I will strip her naked and expose her like the day of her birth. I will make her like a desert and turn her into a parched land, and I will let her die of thirst. ⁴I will have no compassion on her children,

because they are the children of adultery. ⁵For their mother has played the harlot and has conceived them in disgrace. For she thought, 'I will go after my lovers, who give me bread and water, wool and linen, oil and drink.' ⁶Therefore, behold, I will hedge up her path with thorns; I will enclose her with a wall, so she cannot find her way. ⁷She will pursue her lovers but not catch them; she will seek them but not find them. Then she will say, 'I will return to my first husband, for then I was better off than now.' ⁸For she does not acknowledge that it was I who gave her grain, new wine, and oil, who lavished on her silver and gold—which they crafted for Baal. ⁹Therefore I will take back My grain in its time and My new wine in its season; I will take away My wool and linen, which were given to cover her nakedness. ¹⁰And then I will expose her lewdness in the sight of her lovers, and no one will deliver her out of My hands. ¹¹I will put an end to all her exultation: her feasts, New Moons, and Sabbaths—all her appointed feasts. ¹²I will destroy her vines and fig trees, which she thinks are the wages paid by her lovers. So I will make them into a thicket, and the beasts of the field will devour them. ¹³I will punish her for the days of the Baals when she burned incense to them, when she adorned herself with rings and jewelry, and went after her lovers. But Me she forgot," declares the LORD.

GOD'S MERCY TO ISRAEL

¹⁴"Therefore, behold, I will allure her and lead her to the wilderness, and speak to her tenderly. ¹⁵There I will give back her vineyards and make the Valley of Achor into a gateway of hope. There she will respond as she did in the days of her youth, as in the day she came up out of Egypt. ¹⁶In that day," declares the LORD, "you will call Me 'my Husband,' and no longer call Me 'my Master.' ¹⁷For I will remove from her lips the names of the Baals; no longer will their names be invoked. ¹⁸On that day I will make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field and the birds of the air and the creatures that crawl on the ground. And I will abolish bow and sword and battle in the land, and will make them lie down in safety. ¹⁹So I will betroth you to Me forever; I will betroth you in righteousness and justice, in loving devotion and compassion. ²⁰And I will betroth you in faithfulness, and you will know the LORD." ²¹"On that day I will respond—" declares the LORD—"I will respond to

the heavens, and they will respond to the earth. ²²And the earth will respond to the grain, to the new wine and oil, and they will respond to Jezreel. ²³And I will sow her as My own in the land, and I will have compassion on ‘No Compassion.’ I will say to those called ‘Not My People,’ ‘You are My people,’ and they will say, ‘You are my God.’”

Chapter 3

HOSEA REDEEMS HIS WIFE

¹Then the LORD said to me, “Go show love to your wife again, though she is loved by another and is an adulteress. Love her as the LORD loves the Israelites, though they turn to other gods and love to offer raisin cakes to idols.” ²So I bought her for fifteen shekels of silver and a homer and a lethech of barley. ³Then I said to her, “You must live with me for many days; you must not be promiscuous or belong to another, and I will do the same for you.” ⁴For the Israelites must live many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, and without ephod or idol. ⁵Afterward, the people of Israel will return and seek the LORD their God and David their king. They will come trembling to the LORD and to His goodness in the last days.

Chapter 4

GOD’S CASE AGAINST HIS PEOPLE

¹Hear the word of the LORD, O children of Israel, for the LORD has a case against the people of the land: “There is no truth, no loving devotion, and no knowledge of God in the land! ²Cursing and lying, murder and stealing, and adultery are rampant; one act of bloodshed follows another. ³Therefore the land mourns, and all who dwell in it will waste away with the beasts of the field and the birds of the air; even the fish of the sea disappear. ⁴But let no man contend; let no man offer reproof; for your people are like those who contend with a priest. ⁵You will stumble by day, and the prophet will stumble with you by night; so I will destroy your mother— ⁶My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I will also reject you as My priests. Since you have forgotten the law of your God, I will also forget your children. ⁷The more they multiplied, the more they sinned against Me; they exchanged their Glory for a thing of disgrace. ⁸They feed on the sins of My people and set their hearts on iniquity. ⁹And it shall be like people, like priest. I will punish both of them for their ways and repay them for their deeds. ¹⁰They will eat but not be satisfied; they will be promiscuous but not multiply. For they have abandoned the LORD to give them-

selves ¹¹to promiscuity, wine, and new wine, which take away understanding. ¹²My people consult their wooden idols, and their divining rods inform them. For a spirit of prostitution leads them astray and they have played the harlot against their God. ¹³They sacrifice on the mountaintops and burn offerings on the hills, under oak, poplar, and terebinth, because their shade is pleasant. And so your daughters turn to prostitution and your daughters-in-law to adultery. ¹⁴I will not punish your daughters when they prostitute themselves, nor your daughters-in-law when they commit adultery. For the men themselves go off with prostitutes and offer sacrifices with shrine prostitutes. So a people without understanding will come to ruin. ¹⁵Though you prostitute yourself, O Israel, may Judah avoid such guilt! Do not journey to Gilgal, do not go up to Beth-aven, and do not swear on oath, ‘As surely as the LORD lives!’ ¹⁶For Israel is as obstinate as a stubborn heifer. Can the LORD now shepherd them like lambs in an open meadow? ¹⁷Ephraim is joined to idols; leave him alone! ¹⁸When their liquor is gone, they turn to prostitution; their rulers dearly love disgrace. ¹⁹The whirlwind has wrapped them in its wings, and their sacrifices will bring them shame.

Chapter 5

JUDGMENT ON ISRAEL AND JUDAH

¹“Hear this, O priests! Take heed, O house of Israel! Give ear, O royal house! For this judgment is against you because you have been a snare at Mizpah, a net spread out on Tabor. ²The rebels are deep in slaughter; but I will chastise them all. ³I know all about Ephraim, and Israel is not hidden from Me. For now, O Ephraim, you have turned to prostitution; Israel is defiled. ⁴Their deeds do not permit them to return to their God, for a spirit of prostitution is within them, and they do not know the LORD. ⁵Israel’s arrogance testifies against them; Israel and Ephraim stumble in their iniquity; even Judah stumbles with them. ⁶They go with their flocks and herds to seek the LORD, but they do not find Him; He has withdrawn Himself from them. ⁷They have been unfaithful to the LORD; for they have borne illegitimate children. Now the New Moon will devour them along with their land. ⁸Blow the ram’s horn in Gibeah, the trumpet in Ramah; raise the battle cry in Beth-aven: Lead on, O Benjamin! ⁹Ephraim will be laid waste on the day of rebuke. Among the tribes of Israel I proclaim what is certain. ¹⁰The princes of Judah are like those who move boundary stones; I will pour out My fury upon them like water. ¹¹Ephraim is oppressed, crushed in judgment, for he is determined to follow worthless idols. ¹²So I am like a moth to Ephraim, and like decay to the house of Judah.

¹³When Ephraim saw his sickness and Judah his wound, then Ephraim turned to Assyria and sent to the great king. But he cannot cure you or heal your wound. ¹⁴For I am like a lion to Ephraim and like a young lion to the house of Judah. I, even I, will tear them to pieces and then go away. I will carry them off where no one can rescue them. ¹⁵Then I will return to My place until they admit their guilt and seek My face; in their affliction they will earnestly seek Me.”

Chapter 6

THE UNREPENTANCE OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH

¹Come, let us return to the LORD. For He has torn us to pieces, but He will heal us; He has wounded us, but He will bind up our wounds. ²After two days He will revive us; on the third day He will raise us up, that we may live in His presence. ³So let us know—let us press on to know the LORD. As surely as the sun rises, He will appear; He will come to us like the rain, like the spring showers that water the earth. ⁴What shall I do with you, O Ephraim? What shall I do with you, O Judah? For your loyalty is like a morning mist, like the early dew that vanishes. ⁵Therefore I have hewn them by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of My mouth, and My judgments go forth like lightning. ⁶For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings. ⁷But they, like Adam, have transgressed the covenant; there they were unfaithful to Me. ⁸Gilead is a city of evildoers, tracked with footprints of blood. ⁹Like raiders who lie in ambush, so does a band of priests; they murder on the way to Shechem; surely they have committed atrocities. ¹⁰In the house of Israel I have seen a horrible thing: Ephraim practices prostitution there, and Israel is defiled. ¹¹Also for you, O Judah, a harvest is appointed, when I restore My people from captivity.

Chapter 7

EPHRAIM’S INIQUITY

¹When I heal Israel, the iniquity of Ephraim will be exposed, as well as the crimes of Samaria. For they practice deceit and thieves break in; bandits raid in the streets. ²But they fail to consider in their hearts that I remember all their evil. Now their deeds are all around them; they are before My face. ³They delight the king with their evil, and the princes with their lies. ⁴They are all adulterers, like an oven heated by a baker who needs not stoke the fire from the kneading to the rising of the dough. ⁵The princes are inflamed with wine on the day of our king; so he joins hands with those who mock him. ⁶For they prepare their

heart like an oven while they lie in wait; all night their anger smolders; in the morning it blazes like a flaming fire. ⁷All of them are hot as an oven, and they devour their rulers. All their kings fall; not one of them calls upon Me. ⁸Ephraim mixes with the nations; Ephraim is an unturned cake. ⁹Foreigners consume his strength, but he does not notice. Even his hair is streaked with gray, but he does not know. ¹⁰Israel’s arrogance testifies against them, yet they do not return to the LORD their God; despite all this, they do not seek Him. ¹¹So Ephraim has become like a silly, senseless dove—calling out to Egypt, then turning to Assyria. ¹²As they go, I will spread My net over them; I will bring them down like birds of the air. I will chastise them when I hear them flocking together. ¹³Woe to them, for they have strayed from Me! Destruction to them, for they have rebelled against Me! Though I would redeem them, they speak lies against Me. ¹⁴They do not cry out to Me from their hearts when they wail upon their beds. They slash themselves for grain and new wine, but turn away from Me. ¹⁵Although I trained and strengthened their arms, they plot evil against Me. ¹⁶They turn, but not to the Most High; they are like a faulty bow. Their leaders will fall by the sword for the cursing of their tongue; for this they will be ridiculed in the land of Egypt.

Chapter 8

ISRAEL WILL REAP THE WHIRLWIND

¹Put the ram’s horn to your lips! An eagle looms over the house of the LORD, because the people have transgressed My covenant and rebelled against My law. ²Israel cries out to Me, “O our God, we know You!” ³But Israel has rejected good; an enemy will pursue him. ⁴They set up kings, but not by Me. They make princes, but without My approval. With their silver and gold they make themselves idols, to their own destruction. ⁵He has rejected your calf, O Samaria. My anger burns against them. How long will they be incapable of innocence? ⁶For this thing is from Israel—a craftsman made it, and it is not God. It will be broken to pieces, that calf of Samaria. ⁷For they sow the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind. There is no standing grain; what sprouts fails to yield flour. Even if it should produce, the foreigners would swallow it up. ⁸Israel is swallowed up! Now they are among the nations like a worthless vessel. ⁹For they have gone up to Assyria like a wild donkey on its own. Ephraim has hired lovers. ¹⁰Though they hire allies among the nations, I will now round them up, and they will begin to diminish under the oppression of the king of princes. ¹¹Though Ephraim multiplied the altars for sin, they became his altars for sinning. ¹²Though I wrote for

them the great things of My law, they regarded them as something strange. ¹³Though they offer sacrifices as gifts to Me, and though they eat the meat, the LORD does not accept them. Now He will remember their iniquity and punish their sins: They will return to Egypt. ¹⁴Israel has forgotten his Maker and built palaces; Judah has multiplied its fortified cities. But I will send fire upon their cities, and it will consume their citadels.

Chapter 9

ISRAEL'S PUNISHMENT

¹Do not rejoice, O Israel, with exultation like the nations, for you have played the harlot against your God; you have made love for hire on every threshing floor. ²The threshing floor and winepress will not feed them, and the new wine will fail them. ³They will not remain in the land of the LORD; Ephraim will return to Egypt and eat unclean food in Assyria. ⁴They will not pour out wine offerings to the LORD, and their sacrifices will not please Him, but will be to them like the bread of mourners; all who eat will be defiled. For their bread will be for themselves; it will not enter the house of the LORD. ⁵What will you do on the appointed day, on the day of the LORD's feast? ⁶For even if they flee destruction, Egypt will gather them and Memphis will bury them. Their precious silver will be taken over by thistles, and thorns will overrun their tents. ⁷The days of punishment have come; the days of retribution have arrived—let Israel know it. The prophet is called a fool, and the inspired man insane, because of the greatness of your iniquity and hostility. ⁸The prophet is Ephraim's watchman, along with my God, yet the snare of the fowler lies on all his paths. Hostility is in the house of his God! ⁹They have deeply corrupted themselves as in the days of Gibeah; He will remember their guilt; He will punish their sins. ¹⁰I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness. I saw your fathers as the firstfruits of the fig tree in its first season. But they went to Baal-peor, and consecrated themselves to Shame; so they became as detestable as the thing they loved. ¹¹Ephraim's glory will fly away like a bird, with no birth, no pregnancy, and no conception. ¹²Even if they raise their children, I will bereave them of each one. Yes, woe be to them when I turn away from them! ¹³I have seen Ephraim, like Tyre, planted in a meadow. But Ephraim will bring out his children for slaughter. ¹⁴Give them, O LORD—what will You give? Give them wombs that miscarry and breasts that dry up! ¹⁵All their evil appears at Gilgal, for there I hated them. I will drive them from My house for the wickedness of their deeds. I will no longer love them; all their leaders are rebellious. ¹⁶Ephraim is struck down; their

root is withered; they cannot bear fruit. Even if they bear children, I will slay the darlings of their wombs. ¹⁷My God will reject them because they have not obeyed Him; and they shall be wanderers among the nations.

Chapter 10

RETRIBUTION FOR ISRAEL'S SIN

¹Israel was a luxuriant vine, yielding fruit for himself. The more his fruit increased, the more he increased the altars. The better his land produced, the better he made the sacred pillars. ²Their hearts are devious; now they must bear their guilt. The LORD will break down their altars and demolish their sacred pillars. ³Surely now they will say, "We have no king, for we do not revere the LORD. What can a king do for us?" ⁴They speak mere words; with false oaths they make covenants. So judgment springs up like poisonous weeds in the furrows of a field. ⁵The people of Samaria will fear for the calf of Beth-aven. Indeed, its people will mourn over it with its idolatrous priests—those who rejoiced in its glory—for it has been taken from them into exile. ⁶Yes, it will be carried to Assyria as tribute to the great king. Ephraim will be seized with shame; Israel will be ashamed of its wooden idols. ⁷Samaria will be carried off with her king like a twig on the surface of the water. ⁸The high places of Aven will be destroyed—it is the sin of Israel; thorns and thistles will overgrow their altars. Then they will say to the mountains, "Cover us!" and to the hills, "Fall on us!" ⁹Since the days of Gibeah you have sinned, O Israel, and there you have remained. Did not the battle in Gibeah overtake the sons of iniquity? ¹⁰I will chasten them when I please; nations will be gathered against them to put them in bondage for their double transgression. ¹¹Ephraim is a well-trained heifer that loves to thresh; but I will place a yoke on her fair neck. I will harness Ephraim, Judah will plow, and Jacob will break the hard ground. ¹²Sow for yourselves righteousness and reap the fruit of loving devotion; break up your unplowed ground. For it is time to seek the LORD until He comes and sends righteousness upon you like rain. ¹³You have plowed wickedness and reaped injustice; you have eaten the fruit of lies. Because you have trusted in your own way and in the multitude of your mighty men, ¹⁴the roar of battle will rise against your people, so that all your fortresses will be demolished as Shalman devastated Beth-arbel in the day of battle, when mothers were dashed to pieces along with their children. ¹⁵Thus it will be done to you, O Bethel, because of your great wickedness. When the day dawns, the king of Israel will be utterly cut off.

Chapter 11

OUT OF EGYPT I CALLED MY SON

¹When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called My son. ²But the more I called Israel, the farther they departed from Me. They sacrificed to the Baals and burned incense to carved images. ³It was I who taught Ephraim to walk, taking them by the arms, but they never realized that it was I who healed them. ⁴I led them with cords of kindness, with ropes of love; I lifted the yoke from their necks and bent down to feed them. ⁵Will they not return to the land of Egypt and be ruled by Assyria because they refused to repent? ⁶A sword will flash through their cities; it will destroy the bars of their gates and consume them in their own plans. ⁷My people are bent on turning from Me. Though they call to the Most High, He will by no means exalt them.

GOD'S LOVE FOR ISRAEL

⁸How could I give you up, O Ephraim? How could I surrender you, O Israel? How could I make you like Admah? How could I treat you like Zeboiim? My heart is turned within Me; My compassion is stirred! ⁹I will not execute the full fury of My anger; I will not destroy Ephraim again. For I am God and not man—the Holy One among you—and I will not come in wrath. ¹⁰They will walk after the LORD; He will roar like a lion. When He roars, His children will come trembling from the west. ¹¹They will come trembling like birds from Egypt and like doves from the land of Assyria. Then I will settle them in their homes, declares the LORD. ¹²Ephraim surrounds Me with lies, the house of Israel with deceit; but Judah still walks with God and is faithful to the Holy One.

Chapter 12

A REPROOF OF EPHRAIM, JUDAH, AND JACOB

¹Ephraim feeds on the wind and pursues the east wind all day long; he multiplies lies and violence; he makes a covenant with Assyria and sends olive oil to Egypt. ²The LORD has a charge to bring against Judah. He will punish Jacob according to his ways and repay him according to his deeds. ³In the womb he grasped his brother's heel, and in his vigor he wrestled with God. ⁴Yes, he struggled with the angel and prevailed; he wept and sought His favor; he found Him at Bethel and spoke with Him there— ⁵the LORD God of Hosts, the LORD is His name of renown. ⁶But you must return to your God; maintain love and justice, and always wait on your God. ⁷A merchant loves to defraud with dishonest scales in his hands. ⁸And Ephraim

boasts: "How rich I have become! I have found wealth for myself. In all my labors, they can find in me no iniquity that is sinful." ⁹But I am the LORD your God ever since the land of Egypt. I will again make you dwell in tents, as in the days of the appointed feast. ¹⁰I spoke through the prophets and multiplied their visions; I gave parables through the prophets. ¹¹Is there iniquity in Gilead? They will surely come to nothing. Do they sacrifice bulls in Gilgal? Indeed, their altars will be heaps of stones in the furrows of the field. ¹²Jacob fled to the land of Aram and Israel worked for a wife—for a wife he tended sheep. ¹³But by a prophet the LORD brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet he was preserved. ¹⁴Ephraim has provoked bitter anger, so his Lord will leave his bloodguilt upon him and repay him for his contempt.

Chapter 13

GOD'S ANGER AGAINST ISRAEL

¹When Ephraim spoke, there was trembling; he was exalted in Israel. But he incurred guilt through Baal, and he died. ²Now they sin more and more and make for themselves cast images, idols skillfully made from their silver, all of them the work of craftsmen. People say of them, "They offer human sacrifice and kiss the calves!" ³Therefore they will be like the morning mist, like the early dew that vanishes, like chaff blown from a threshing floor, like smoke through an open window. ⁴Yet I am the LORD your God ever since the land of Egypt; you know no God but Me, for there is no Savior besides Me. ⁵I knew you in the wilderness, in the land of drought. ⁶When they had pasture, they became satisfied; when they were satisfied, their hearts became proud, and as a result they forgot Me. ⁷So like a lion I will pounce on them; like a leopard I will lurk by the path. ⁸Like a bear robbed of her cubs I will attack them, and I will tear open their chests. There I will devour them like a lion, like a wild beast tearing them apart.

DEATH AND RESURRECTION

⁹You are destroyed, O Israel, because you are against Me—against your helper. ¹⁰Where is your king now to save you in all your cities, and the rulers to whom you said, "Give me a king and princes"? ¹¹So in My anger I gave you a king, and in My wrath I took him away. ¹²The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up; his sin is stored up. ¹³Labor pains come upon him, but he is an unwise son. When the time arrives, he fails to present himself at the opening of the womb. ¹⁴I will ransom them from the power of Sheol; I will redeem them from Death. Where, O Death, are your

plagues? Where, O Sheol, is your sting? Compassion is hidden from My eyes.

JUDGMENT ON SAMARIA

¹⁵Although he flourishes among his brothers, an east wind will come—a wind from the LORD rising up from the desert. His fountain will fail, and his spring will run dry. The wind will plunder his treasury of every precious article.

¹⁶Samaria will bear her guilt because 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.

Chapter 14

A CALL TO REPENTANCE

¹Return, O Israel, to the LORD your God, for you have stumbled by your iniquity. ²Bring your confessions and return to the LORD. Say to Him: “Take away all our iniquity

and receive us graciously, that we may present the fruit of our lips. ³Assyria will not save us, nor will we ride on horses. We will never again say, ‘Our gods!’ to the work of our own hands. For in You the fatherless find compassion.”

A PROMISE OF GOD’S BLESSING

⁴I will heal their apostasy; I will freely love them, for My anger has turned away from them. ⁵I will be like the dew to Israel; he will blossom like the lily and take root like the cedars of Lebanon. ⁶His shoots will sprout, and his splendor will be like the olive tree, his fragrance like the cedars of Lebanon. ⁷They will return and dwell in his shade; they will grow grain and blossom like the vine. His renown will be like the wine of Lebanon. ⁸O Ephraim, what have I to do anymore with idols? It is I who answer and watch over him. I am like a flourishing cypress; your fruit comes from Me. ⁹Whoever is wise, let him understand these things; whoever is discerning, let him know them. For the ways of the LORD are right, and the righteous walk in them but the rebellious stumble in them.