

THE BOOK OF HOSEA
"Israel Becomes Canaan"
Hosea 12:1-14

Jan 16, 1983

INTRODUCTION

1. The O.T. intermingles punishment and blessing for the nation Israel (11:1-12). Judah does not escape God's concern (11:12).
2. God's love does not allow Israel to be forsaken (11:8). This compassion proves the validity of the dispensational approach to the Bible--the view which contends for literal fulfillment of O.T. promises to the Israelites.
3. The complaint of this chapter is that Israel has forsaken God, sadly expressed her mission to men, and has utterly become corrupt.

1. ISRAEL--Punished vv. 1, 2.

- a. North v. 1.

Israel strives (eats/grazes) after what is empty or vain. East wind is destructive and speaks of what the nation is bringing upon itself. It continually multiplies lying and violence. Moreover olive oil is used to secure an ally (cf. 5:13; 7:11; Deut. 8:8; Ezek. 27:17; 2 Kings 17:4; Isa. 30:6; 57:9). Power politics is nothing new.

- b. South v. 2.

Judah (South) is not exempt from the punishment meted out by God. Both North/South will be reprovved of its sins and transgressions.

2. ISRAEL--Compared vv. 3-6.

These verses employ Jacob as an example of one who sought God, but not so Israel.

- a. Stated vv. 3, 4.

Various experiences of Jacob are stated to show his longing for God; his birth (Gen. 25:22-26); his wrestling (Gen. 32:24-32); his weeping (Gen. 32:26). All of this shows Jacob prevailed with God, but Israel was mastered by idols.

- b. Supported vv. 4, 5.

God found Jacob at Bethel and there extended grace to him by using His unchangeable faith-keeping Name. As God revealed Himself to Jacob, so He would be to Jacob's believing posterity.

NOTE: In the light of this revelation, God appeals to Israel to repent and turn to God and perform externally what should be their internal attitude (cf. Micah 6:8). Works demonstrate true regeneration (Eph. 2:8-10).

3. ISRAEL Labelled vv. 7-11.

a. Recorded v. 7.

Israel is called "Canaan" (Hebrew for "merchant"). The ejaculation of this name is a terrible indictment. God had chosen Israel to reach others. As His instrument they needed to be true to His standards and purpose. In this enterprise of God, there is always conflict. Israel must change Canaan or Canaan will change Israel. God says Israel had been changed!

b. Rehearsed vv. 8-11.

Terrible is the list of sins committed by Israel: 1) Fraud (v. 7). 2) Oppression (v. 7). Note violation of law (Lev. 19:36; Deut. 25:11-16). 3) Prosperity, therefore no iniquity--a sad miscalculation (v. 8 cf. Zech. 11:5; Eccles. 8:11). 4) Idolatry (v. 11): Gilead (Mizpeh-Gilead, 6:8; Judges 11:29), Gilgal (4:15; 9:15) and altars as numerous as stones cleaned from a field all testify to this.

c. Reversed vv. 9, 10.

God sought in all of this milieu to reclaim the nation. He had brought them out of Egypt and sent the prophets to win back His people, but they were bent on backsliding (cf. 11:7).

4. ISRAEL--Preserved vv. 12-14.

Again, Jacob's life is used to rebuke the nation (cf. vv. 3-6).

a. Jacob v. 12.

The point to this verse is that Jacob's service for his wife was a time of hardship, despite this, his faith never wavered.

b. Israel vv. 13, 14.

God delivered Israel in a unique way from Egypt. Moreover He preserved them by His prophet (!) Moses (cf. Num. 12:6-8; Deut. 34:10). Despite all of this, Israel provoked God with bitterness itself (so Hebrew). God will not remove Israel's guilt until His penalty is carried out.

CONCLUSION Several lessons are sun-clear in this chapter: 1. Examples of faithfulness are in the Bible (Jacob). 2. Sin is the constant problem between God and His people. Therefore "turn to the Lord thy God" (v. 6). 3. Avoid at all costs being abruptly called "Canaan" by taking a stand against unholiness (2 Cor. 6:14-7:1).