

Hosea 10 Commentary

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Hosea's Unconditional Love for Gomer



Source: [ESV Global Study Bible](#)

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Hosea 10:1 Israel is a luxuriant vine; He produces fruit for himself. The more his fruit, The more altars he made; The richer his land, The better he made the sacred pillars.

- Isa 5:1-7 Eze 15:1-5 Na 2:2 Joh 15:1-6
- an empty vine: or, a vine emptying the fruit which it giveth, unto. Zec 7:5,6 Ro 14:7,8 2Co 5:16 Php 2:21
- to the multitude: Ho 2:8 8:4,11 12:8,11 13:2,6 Jer 2:28
- images: Heb. statues, or standing images, Lev 26:1 1Ki 14:23 *marg:

Israel is a luxuriant vine; He produces fruit for himself. The more his fruit, The more altars he made; The richer his land, The better he made the sacred pillars

Ryrie - The richer the people became, the more idols they made (see 8:11).

Matthew Henry - Verses 1-8. A vine is only valuable for its fruit; but Israel now brought no fruit to perfection. Their hearts were divided. God is the Sovereign of the heart; he will have all, or none. Were the stream of the heart wholly after God, it would run strongly, and bear down all before it. Their pretences to covenant with God were false. Even the proceeding of justice was as poisonous hemlock. Alas, how empty a vine is the visible church even at this day! But all earthly prosperity is but a collection of bubbles, soon destroyed like foam upon the water. Sinners will in vain seek shelter from that Judge, whom they now despise as a Saviour.

Hosea 10:2 Their heart is faithless; Now they must bear their guilt. The LORD will break down their altars And destroy their sacred pillars.

- Their heart is divided: or, He hath divided their heart, Ho 7:8 1Ki 18:21 Isa 44:18 Zep 1:5 Mt 6:24 Lu 16:13 2Th 2:11,12 Jas 1:8 4:4 1Jn 2:15 Rev 3:15,16
- break down: Heb. behead, Ho 10:5-8 8:5,6 1Sa 5:4 Jer 43:13 Mic 5:13 Zec 13:2

Their heart is faithless; Now they must bear their guilt. The LORD will break down their altars And destroy their sacred pillars.

Hosea 10:3 Surely now they will say, "We have no king, For we do not revere the LORD. As for the king, what can he do for us?"

- We have: Ho 10:7,15 3:4 11:5 13:11 Ge 49:10 Mic 4:9 Joh 19:15

Surely now they will say, "We have no king, For we do not revere the LORD. As for the king, what can he do for us

Ryrie - 10:3 We have no king. I.e., none worthy of the name, because their kings made worthless covenants.

Hosea 10:4 They speak mere words, With worthless oaths they make covenants; And judgment sprouts like poisonous weeds in the furrows of the field.

- swearing: Ho 6:7 2Ki 17:3,4 Eze 17:13-19 Ro 1:31 2Ti 3:3
- thus: De 29:18 Isa 5:7 59:13-15 Am 5:7 6:12 Ac 8:23 Heb 12:15 Rev 8:10,11

They speak mere words, With worthless oaths they make covenants; And judgment sprouts like poisonous weeds in the furrows of the field

Hosea 10:5 The inhabitants of Samaria will fear For the calf of Beth-aven. Indeed, its people will mourn for it, And its idolatrous priests will cry out over it, Over its glory, since it has departed from it.

- the calves: Ho 8:5,6 13:2 1Ki 12:28-32 2Ki 10:29 17:16 2Ch 11:15 13:8
- Bethaven: Ho 4:15 5:8 Jos 7:2
- for the people: Jud 18:24 Rev 18:11-19
- the priests: or, Chemarim, 2Ki 23:5 *marg: Zep 1:4
- for the glory: Ho 9:11 1Sa 4:21,22 Ac 19:27

The inhabitants of Samaria will fear For the calf of Beth-aven. Indeed, its people will mourn for it, And its idolatrous priests will cry out over it, Over its glory, since it has departed from it

Ryrie - The calf was set up by Jeroboam at Beth-aven (Hosea's contemptuous name for Bethel). See notes on 4:15 and 1 Kings 12:29.

Hosea 10:6 The thing itself will be carried to Assyria As tribute to King Jareb; Ephraim will be seized with shame And Israel will be ashamed of its own counsel.

- carried: Ho 8:6 Isa 46:1,2 Jer 43:12,13 Da 11:8
- a present: Ho 5:13 2Ki 17:3
- receive: Ho 4:19 Isa 1:29 44:9-11 45:16 Jer 2:26,27,36,37 3:24,25 48:13 Eze 36:31
- ashamed: Ho 11:6 Job 18:7 Isa 30:3 Jer 7:24 Mic 6:16

The thing itself will be carried to Assyria As tribute to King Jareb; Ephraim will be seized with shame And Israel will be ashamed of its own counsel

"King Jareb" evidently refers to Tiglath-Pileser III (Pul) of Assyria (745-727 B.C., cf. 10:6).

Hosea 10:7 Samaria will be cut off with her king Like a stick on the surface of the water.

- Samaria: 1Ki 21:1 2Ki 1:3
- king: Ho 10:3,15 2Ki 15:30 17:4
- the water: Heb. the face of the waters, Jude 1:13

Samaria will be cut off with her king Like a stick on the surface of the water

Hosea 10:8 Also the high places of Aven, the sin of Israel, will be destroyed; Thorn and thistle will grow on their altars; Then they will say to the mountains, "Cover us!" And to the hills, "Fall on us!"

- high places: Ho 10:5 4:15 5:8
- the sin: De 9:21 1Ki 12:28-30 13:34 14:16 Am 8:14 Mic 1:5,13
- the thorn: Ho 9:6 Isa 32:13 34:13

- their altars: 1Ki 13:2 2Ki 23:15 2Ch 31:1 34:5-7
- they shall: Isa 2:19 Lu 23:30 Rev 6:16 9:6

Also the high places of Aven, the sin of Israel, will be destroyed; Thorn and thistle will grow on their altars; Then they will say to the mountains, "Cover us!" And to the hills, "Fall on us!"

Part of this verse is quoted in Luke 23:30 and alluded to in Rev. 6:16. Any attempt to escape the wrath of God is futile.

Ryrie - the high places. Canaanite in origin, these were used as local sanctuaries and settings for fertility rites. Aven. Short for Beth-aven. say to the mountains. See Rev. 6:16 for the ultimate fulfillment of these words during the Tribulation.

Hosea 10:9 From the days of Gibeah you have sinned, O Israel; There they stand! Will not the battle against the sons of iniquity overtake them in Gibeah?

- from: Ho 9:9 Judges 19:22-30 20:5,13,14
- the battle: Jud 20:17-48
- did: Ge 6:5 8:21 Zep 3:6,7 Mt 23:31,32

From the days of Gibeah you have sinned, O Israel; There they stand! Will not the battle against the sons of iniquity overtake them in Gibeah

The period during which the Gibeah even occurred was summed up succinctly in [Jdg21:25] as a time when "everyone did what was right in his own eyes" and was typified by the gross and cruel sensuality (Jdg19ff). "Gibeah" then refers to the heinous wickedness of the men of Gibeah and the overzealous response of the sons of Israel doing what was right in their own eyes which almost led to the annihilation of the tribe of Benjamin (cf. 10:9; Jdg19; 20).

The teaching that Hosea is conveying is that Israel, since that tragic occurrence at Gibeah has defiantly continued in the same basic rebellious spirit & so the appropriate punishment--such as was meted out to the original offenders--is now due. As war came on Gibeah, so war and captivity would come on Israel.

Henry Morris - battle in Gibeah. The reference is apparently to the gruesome events described in the 20th and 21st chapters of Judges, with the battle in Gibeah almost resulting in the extinction of the tribe of Benjamin.

Matthew Henry - Verses 9-15. Because God does not desire the death and ruin of sinners, therefore in mercy he desires their chastisement. The children of iniquity still remained in Israel. The enemies would be gathered against them. It is just with God to make those know what hardships mean, who indulge themselves in ease and pleasure. Let them cleanse their hearts from all corrupt affections and lusts, and be a broken and contrite spirit. Let them abound in works of piety towards God, and of justice and charity towards one another: herein let them sow to the Spirit. Seeking the Lord is to be every day's work, but there are special occasions when to seek him. Christ shall come as the Lord our righteousness, and grant us of it abundantly. If we sow in righteousness, we shall reap according to mercy; a reward not of debt, but of grace. Even the gains of sin yield the sinner no satisfaction. As our comforts, so our confidences in the service of sin will certainly fail us. Come and seek the Lord, and thy hope in him shall not deceive thee. See what cruel work war makes. Whatever mischief is done, it is sin that does it. What miseries men's sins bring on them, even in this world!

Hosea 10:10 When it is My desire, I will chastise them; And the peoples will be gathered against them When they are bound for their double guilt.

- in my: De 28:63 Isa 1:24 Jer 15:6 Eze 5:13 16:42
- and the: Ho 8:1,10 Jer 16:16 21:4 Eze 16:37 23:9,46 Mic 4:10-13 Zec 14:2,3 Mt 22:7
- they: etc. or, I shall bind them for their two transgressions, or, in their two habitations.

When it is My desire, I will chastise them; And the peoples will be gathered against them When they are bound for their double guilt

Hosea 10:11 Ephraim is a trained heifer that loves to thresh, But I will come over her fair neck with a yoke; I will harness Ephraim, Judah will plow, Jacob will harrow for himself.

- an heifer: Ho 4:16 Jer 50:11
- and loveth: Ho 2:5 3:1 9:1 De 25:4 Ro 16:18
- but: Ho 11:4
- her fair neck: Heb. the beauty of her neck
- Judah: 2Ch 28:5-8 Isa 28:24

Ephraim is a trained heifer that loves to thresh, But I will come over her fair neck with a yoke; I will harness Ephraim, Judah will plow, Jacob will harrow for himself.

Ryrie - God placed no heavy yoke over Ephraim's (Israel's) fair neck, but because she abused God's kindness, He would cause her to draw a heavy load.

Hosea 10:12 Sow with a view to righteousness, Reap in accordance with kindness; Break up your fallow ground, For it is time to seek the LORD Until He comes to rain righteousness on you.

- Sow: Ho 8:7 Ps 126:5,6 Pr 11:18 18:21 Ec 11:6 Isa 32:20 Jas 3:18
- break: Jer 4:3,4
- time: Ps 105:4 Isa 31:1 55:6 Jer 29:12-14 50:4 Am 5:4,6,8,15 Zep 2:1-3 Lu 13:24
- rain: Ho 6:3 Ps 72:6 Isa 5:6 30:23 44:3 45:8 Eze 34:26 Ac 2:18 1Co 3:6,7

Sow with a view to righteousness, Reap in accordance with kindness; Break up your fallow ground, For it is time to seek the LORD Until He comes to rain righteousness on you

This exhortation and encouragement was a charge in the midst of clear condemnation and soon coming judgment on the land of Ephraim/Israel bc of her idolatry (cf, "the sin of Israel" above = the HIGH PLACES). And the same charge applies to all today to separate from this corrupt, decaying world whose lusts are passing away (1Jn2:17)...

Henry Morris - Sowing the wind is about to reap a whirlwind of judgment, in Israel, whereas sowing in righteousness would have reaped mercy. This is apparently a last call to repent and seek the Lord before final judgment (Compare Hosea 8:7).

Hosea 10:13 You have plowed wickedness, you have reaped injustice, You have eaten the fruit of lies. Because you have trusted in your way, in your numerous warriors,

- plowed: Ho 8:7 Job 4:8 Pr 22:8 Ga 6:7,8
- eaten: Pr 1:31 12:19 18:20,21 19:5
- didst: Ps 52:7 62:10
- in the: Ps 33:16 Ec 9:11

You have plowed wickedness, you have reaped injustice, You have eaten the fruit of lies. Because you have trusted in your way, in your numerous warriors

Hosea 10:14 Therefore a tumult will arise among your people, And all your fortresses will be destroyed, As Shalman destroyed Beth-arbel on the day of battle, When mothers were dashed in pieces with their children.

- shall a: Ho 13:16 Isa 22:1-4 33:14 Am 3:8 9:5
- and all: 2Ki 17:16 18:9,10 Jer 48:41 Na 3:12 Hab 1:10
- as: 2Ki 18:33 19:11-13
- the mother: Ho 13:16 Ge 32:11 Isa 13:16-18 Jer 13:14 Na 3:10

Therefore a tumult will arise among your people, And all your fortresses will be destroyed, As Shalman destroyed Beth-arbel on the day of battle, When mothers were dashed in pieces with their children The "tumult" refers to the terror, confusion, and chaos accompanying an invading army. Israel's fortified cities, in which she had placed her confidence, would prove powerless against God's judgment. "**Shalman**" is generally understood to refer to Shalmaneser V (727–722 B.C.), the Assyrian king who completed the conquest of the Northern Kingdom (cf. 2 Ki. 17:3-6), though some identify him with an earlier Moabite king named Salman. The destruction of Beth-arbel, an otherwise unknown battle, was evidently well known to Hosea's original audience because of its extraordinary brutality. The horrifying description of mothers being dashed to pieces with their children vividly portrays the ruthless cruelty of ancient Near Eastern warfare and underscores the severity of the judgment that would soon befall Israel. Hosea cites this atrocity as a sobering preview of the devastation awaiting the nation because of its persistent rebellion against God.

Hosea 10:15 Thus it will be done to you at Bethel because of your great wickedness. At dawn the king of Israel will be completely cut off.

- shall Bethel: Ho 10:5 Am 7:9-17
- your great wickedness: Heb. the evil of your evil, Ro 7:13
- in: Ho 10:3,7 Isa 16:14

Thus it will be done to you at Bethel because of your great wickedness- This is clearly a reaping of rotten fruit of Israel's seed of wickedness.

At dawn the king of Israel will be completely cut off.