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COMMENTARY

COMMENTARY ON  
HOSEA

*by Adam Clarke.*

*“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without  
which no man shall see the Lord” Heb 12:14*

Spreading Scriptural Holiness to the World

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# A COMMENTARY AND CRITICAL NOTES

ON THE

# HOLY BIBLE

## OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

DESIGNED AS A HELP TO A BETTER UNDERSTANDING  
OF THE SACRED WRITINGS

**BY ADAM CLARKE, LL.D., F.S.A., &c.**

A NEW EDITION, WITH THE  
AUTHOR'S FINAL CORRECTIONS

**For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.—Rom. 15:4.**

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET HOSEA

HOSEA, the son of *Beeri*, is the first of the minor prophets. *Epiphanius* says that he was of the town of *Belemoth*, in the tribe of *Issachar*; which is no other, in all probability, than *Beelmeon*, towards Esdraelon, in this tribe. The rabbins say that *Bura* was his father, who is mentioned in the *Chronicles*, and was prince of the tribe of *Reuben* at the time when *Tiglath-pileser* carried some of the tribes of *Israel* into captivity. But if it be so, *Hosea* must be said to be of the tribe of *Reuben*; and a native of *Beelmeon*, beyond *Jordan*. This prophet lived in the kingdom of *Samaria*; and his prophecies for the most part have a view to this state, though there are likewise some particular things which concern the kingdom of *Judah*.

We read, in the introduction to his prophecy, that he prophesied under the kings of *Judah*, *Uzziah*, *Jotham*, *Ahaz*, and *Hezekiah*, and under *Jeroboam* II., king of *Israel*. If he prophesied in the reign of all these princes, he must have lived a very long time; for there are a *hundred and twelve* years from the beginning of *Uzziah's* reign to the end of *Hezekiah's* reign. *Uzziah* began to reign A.M. 3194, and *Hezekiah's* reign ended in 3306. Add, if you please, *twenty* or *five and twenty* years, which might be the age of *Hosea* when he began to prophesy; and this will make *one hundred and thirty-two*, or *one hundred and thirty-seven* years. And if we were to take *ten* years from *Uzziah*, and as many from *Hezekiah*, during which *Hosea* might not have prophesied, there will still remain *one hundred and twelve*, or *one hundred and fifteen* years.

In the whole collection of *Hosea's* prophecies, we find nothing which proves that he prophesied so long. And, besides, why should his prophecies be dated in the title by the reigns of the kings of *Judah*, when he did not live under their dominion? It is therefore very probable that this title is not *Hosea's*, but some ancient transcriber's; and that the true beginning of this prophet's work is at these words: "The beginning of the word of the Lord by *Hosea*." It is our opinion that he began about the end of *Jeroboam's* reign, who was the second king of *Israel* of this name. See *Calmet*.

St. *Jerome* and many others believe *Hosea* to be the oldest prophet, whose writings are in our possession; and that he was witness to the *first* captivity

of the *four* tribes carried away by *Tiglath-pileser*, and the extinction of the kingdom of *Samaria* by *Shalmaneser*. St. *Jerome* will have it that he prophesied even afterwards. The *first* verses of chap. i., have a view to the death of *Zechariah*, king of *Israel*, and son of *Jeroboam* II. From the *sixth* verse of the *first* chapter { ~~2006~~ **Hosea 1:6** } to the *third* chapter, is a prediction of the captivity of *Israel*: but after he has foretold this captivity, he declares the return and end of it. He inveighs strongly against the disorders which prevailed in the kingdom of the *ten* tribes. It appears that in his time there were idols; not only at *Dan*, *Beth-el*, and *Samaria*, but likewise at *Gilgal*, upon *Tabor*, at *Sichem*, *Beer-sheba*, and upon the mountains of *Gilead*. He speaks of the *Israelites* as of a people entirely corrupted, and the measure of whose sins was filled up; he foretells that their golden calves should be pulled down, cast upon the ground, and carried into *Assyria*.

He reflects, with the same severity, upon the irregularities which reigned in *Judah*. He stands up against those who went to worship false gods at *Gilgal*. He speaks of *Sennacherib's* invading the territories of *Judah*. He foretells that the people of *Judah* should still continue some time in their country after the captivity of the *ten* tribes; but that after this they themselves should likewise be carried captives beyond the *Euphrates*, from whence the Lord would bring them back after a certain number of years. The style of *Hosea* is obscure, and his expressions often dubious and perplexed. The things whereof he speaks contribute farther to his obscurity, by reason of their distance, and our ignorance of the history of those times.

In the beginning of *Hosea's* prophecy, we read that the Lord directed him "to take unto him a wife of whoredoms, and children of whoredoms;" that is, to marry a woman who, before her marriage, had lived a debauched life, but who, after her marriage, should retire from all bad conversation, and whose children should be legitimate, notwithstanding that, by reason of the blemish which their mother had contracted by her former life, they were called *the children of whoredoms*. This prostitute woman, and the children who were to be born of her, were a figure and a kind of real prophecy which described the idolatry and infidelity of *Samaria* and the *ten* tribes, formerly the Lord's spouse, but who afterwards became idolatrous and corrupt.

The children of this faithless woman are children of prostitution, since they imitate the idolatry of their mother. God gives these children the names of *Jezreel*, *God will disperse*; *Lo-rechamah*, or *Without mercy*; and *Lo-ammi*, *Thou art no longer my people*; to show,-1. That God was going to revenge upon the house of *Jehu*, king of *Israel*, the sins which he had committed at *Jezreel*, when he usurped the kingdom of the *ten* tribes. 2. That the Lord would treat his idolatrous and sinful people without mercy. 3. That he would reject them, and no more look upon them as his people.

*Hosea* is concise, sententious, and abrupt. It is his manner to omit the connexive and adversative particles; an observation which we should recollect when we observe them occasionally supplied by versions or manuscripts. These are among the causes of that obscurity for which he is remarkable: but the greatest difficulties arise from the corrupt readings which deform the printed text. He chiefly addresses *Israel*; but introduces frequent mention of *Judah*. He not only inveighs against the vices of the people, but sharply arraigns the conduct of their kings, princes, and priests.

Like many of the Hebrew prophets, he tempers denunciations of God's vengeance against an idolatrous and vicious people, with promises of abundant mercies in store for them; and his transitions from one of these subjects to the other are rapid and unexpected. He abounds with short and lively comparisons; and, like the best Greek and Roman writers, often omits the particle of similitude. These comparisons he sometimes accumulates in the spirit of that poetry which is most admired. See

<801B> **Hosea 6:3, 4; 9:10; 11:11; 13:3; 14:5-7**. He has often a GREAT FORCE OF EXPRESSION. See <80107> **Hosea 1:7; 2:3, 18, 21, 22; 4:2; 6:5; 11:4; l. 1; <81201> Hosea 12:1; l. 1**. He is sometimes HIGHLY ANIMATED. See <8044> **Hosea 4:14; 5:8; 8:1; 9:5, 14; 13:10, 14**. Many BEAUTIFUL PASSAGES occur in this prophet, as in the SIMILES throughout; in the ALLEGORIES, <811D> **Hosea 2:2, 20; 7:11, 12; 8:7; l. 2-4; <81011> Hosea 10:11-13; 13:15**; in the PATHOS, <8110B> **Hosea 11:3; l. 1, 2, and <8110B> Hosea 11:8, 9**; in the FIGURES, <81312> **Hosea 13:12; 14:2; l. 5**. There are also some parts which are truly SUBLIME, as <80514> **Hosea 5:14, 15; 8:7; l. 1; <8100B> Hosea 10:8; l. 2, 3; <81307> Hosea 13:7, 8**.

I have already, at the beginning of *Isaiah*, given a table of the chronological succession of all the prophets: that of Archbishop *Newcome* on the *twelve* minor prophets I subjoin here, because it contains some differences from the preceding.

## ORDER AND TIME IN WHICH THE TWELVE MINOR PROPHETS FLOURISHED

1. JONAH Prophesied between 823 B.C. and 783 B.C. in the reign of Jeroboam II., king of Israel. See <sup><21425></sup>**2 Kings 14:25**.
2. AMOS prophesied from about 823 B.C. to about 785 B.C. in the reign of Uzziah, king of Judah, and in that of Jeroboam II., king of Israel. See <sup><30101></sup>**Amos 1:1**.
3. HOSEA flourished from about 809 B.C. to about 698 B.C., in the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in that of Jeroboam II., king of Israel. See <sup><30101></sup>**Hosea 1:1**. [But see the observations in the preceding page.]
4. MICAH flourished between 757 B.C. and 698 B.C., in the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. See <sup><30101></sup>**Micah 1:1**.
5. NAHUM is supposed to have prophesied between 720 B.C. and 698 B.C., in the reign of Hezekiah.
6. JOEL is supposed to have prophesied between 697 B.C. and 660 B.C., in the reign of Manasseh.
7. ZEPHANIAH prophesied between 640 B.C. and 609 B.C., in the reign of Josiah. See <sup><30101></sup>**Zephaniah 1:1**.
8. HABAKKUK is thought to have prophesied between 606 B.C. and 598 B.C., in the reign of Jehoiakim.
9. OBADIAH prophesied soon after 587 B.C., between the taking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, and the destruction of the Edomites by the same prince.
10. HAGGAI prophesied about 520 B.C. after the return from Babylon. See <sup><30101></sup>**Haggai 1:1**.
11. ZECHARIAH prophesied from 520 B.C. to about 518 B.C.; and was contemporary with Haggai. See <sup><30101></sup>**Zechariah 1:1**.
12. MALACHI is generally believed to have prophesied about 436 B.C.

## THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET HOSEA

*Chronological Notes relative to the commencement of Hosea's prophesying, upon the supposition that this event took place in the last year of the reign of Jeroboam II., king of Israel*

- Year of the world, according to the Usherian account, 3219.
- Year of the Julian period, 3929.
- Year since the Flood, 1563.
- Year from the vocation of Abram, 1136.
- Year from the foundation of Solomon's temple, 227.
- Year before the First Olympiad, 9.
- Year before the building of Rome, 32.
- Year before the vulgar era of Christ's nativity, 785.
- Cycle of the Sun, 9.
- Cycle of the Moon, 15.
- Second year of Coenus, the second king of Macedon; which was the thirtieth from the foundation of the monarchy.
- Thirteenth year of Agamestor, perpetual archon of the Athenians.
- Thirteenth year of Ardysus, king of Lydia.
- Twelfth year of Amulius Sylvius, king of the Albans.
- Twenty-fifth year of Charilaus, king of the Lacedæmonians.
- Forty-first year of Jeroboam II., king of Israel.
- Twenty-sixth year of Uzziah, king of Judah.

## CHAPTER 1

*Under the figure of a wife proving false to her marriage vows, and bearing children that would follow her example, the prophet represents the shameful idolatry of the ten tribes, which provoked God to cast them off. The whole passage is information by action instead of words. This names of the children are all emblematical. The first is intended to put Israel in mind of their unrepented guilt, and the acts of cruelty committed in their palace of Jezreel, (<sup><12100></sup>1 Kings 21:1.) The second and third, signifying not finding mercy, and not my people, denote that, in consequence of their guilt, they were to be rejected of God, 1-9. God promises, however, to repair the loss to his Church*

by calling in the Gentiles, 10; and by uniting all the children of God under one head, the Messiah, in the latter days, 11.

## NOTES ON CHAP. 1

**Verse 1. Hosea, the son of Beeri]** See the preceding account of this prophet.

**In the days of Uzziah, &c.]** If we suppose, says Bp. *Newcome*, that Hosea prophesied during the course of *sixty-six* years, and place him from the year 790 before Christ to the year 724, he will have exercised his office *eight* years in the reign of *Jeroboam* the second, *thirty-three* years in the reign of *Uzziah*, the whole reigns of *Jotham* and *Ahaz*, and *three* years in the reign of *Hezekiah*; but will not have survived the taking of Samaria. But see the preceding account of this prophet.

I think the *first* verse to be a *title* to this book added by the compiler of his prophecies, and that it relates more to facts which took place in *those* reigns, and had been *predicted* by Hosea, who would only be said to have prophesied under an those kings, *by his predictions*, which were consecutively fulfilled under them. By those, though dead, he continued to speak. The prophet's work properly begins at <sup><20102></sup>**Hosea 1:2**; hence called, "The beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea."

**Verse 2. A wife of whoredoms]** That is, says *Newcome*, a wife from among the *Israelites*, who were remarkable for spiritual fornication, or idolatry. God calls himself the *husband* of Israel; and this chosen nation owed him the fidelity of a wife. See <sup><12345></sup>**Exodus 34:15**; <sup><153116></sup>**Deuteronomy 31:16**; <sup><171217></sup>**Judges 2:17**; <sup><25415></sup>**Isaiah 54:5**; <sup><341314></sup>**Jeremiah 3:14**; **31:32**; <sup><51617></sup>**Ezekiel 16:17**; **23:5, 27**; <sup><281315></sup>**Hosea 2:5**; <sup><661701></sup>**Revelation 17:1, 2**. He therefore says, with indignation, Go join thyself in marriage to one of those who have committed fornication against me, and raise up children who, by the power of example, will themselves swerve to idolatry. See <sup><281317></sup>**Hosea 5:7**. And thus show them that they are *radically* depraved.

**Verse 3. He went and took Gomer]** All this appears to be a real transaction, though having a typical meaning. If he took an *Israelite*, he must necessarily have taken an *idolatress*; one who had worshipped the calves of Jeroboam at Dan or at Bethel.



**Verse 4. Call his name Jezreel]** I a[ rzy that is, *God will disperse*. This seems to intimate that a dispersion or sowing of Israel shall take place; which happened under Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, <sup><12776></sup>**2 Kings 17:5, 6**. But the word refers also to the name of a city, where Jehu slew Jezebel and all the children of Ahab. <sup><12910></sup>**2 Kings 9:10, 36; 10:6**.

This was one of those *prophetic* names which we so often meet with in the Scriptures; e.g. Japheth Abraham, Israel, Judah, Joshua, Zerubbabel, Solomon, Sheer-jashub, &c.

**The blood of Jezreel]** Not Jehu's vengeance on Ahab's family, but his acts of cruelty while he resided at Jezreel, a city in the tribe of Issachar, <sup><61918></sup>**Joshua 19:18**, where the kings of Israel had a palace, <sup><12101></sup>**1 Kings 21:1**.

**Will cause to cease the kingdom]** Either relating to the cutting off of the kingdom of Israel by the Assyrians, see <sup><28106></sup>**Hosea 1:6**, or to the ceasing of the kingdom of Israel from the house of Jehu, <sup><12103></sup>**2 Kings 10:30**, and which was fulfilled, <sup><121510></sup>**2 Kings 15:10**.—*Newcome*.

**Verse 5. In the valley of Jezreel]** This also is supposed to relate either to some signal defeat of the Israelites by the Assyrians, which took place in the valley of Jezreel; or to the death of Zechariah, the fourth lineal descendant of Jehu, which may have happened here. See <sup><121510></sup>**2 Kings 15:10**.—*Newcome*.

**Verse 6. Call her Lo-ruhamah]** hmhr al , “Not having obtained mercy.” This also was a *prophetic* or *typical* name; and the reason of its imposition is immediately given:

**For I will no more have mercy]** mj ra dy[ āycwa al yk ki lo osiph od arachem, “For I will no more add to have mercy upon the house of Israel.” This refers to the total destruction of that kingdom.

**Verse 7. But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah]** I will spare them as a kingdom after Israel has been carried away into captivity by the Assyrians.

**And will save them by the Lord their God]** Remarkably fulfilled in the supernatural defeat of the army of the Assyrians, see <sup><121935></sup>**2 Kings 19:35**; and so they were saved not by *bow*, nor by *sword*, nor by *battle*, nor by *horses*, nor by *horsemen*. The former expression may mean, not in *war* by

*horses*, i.e., yoked to war *chariots*, nor *by horsemen*—nor by cavalry, however efficient such troops might have then been deemed.

**Verse 9. Call his name Lo-ammi]** *ym[ al Lo-ammi*, “Not my people;” for which the reason is immediately given:

**Ye are not my people, and I will not be your God.]** The word GOD is not added here by any of the ancient versions or MSS.; and yet the construction absolutely requires it, as *Houbigant* properly observes, who thinks the present reading *µkl hyha al lo eheyeh lachem*, “I will not be to you,” a corruption of the word *µkyhl a eloheychem*, “your God.” It is strange that no various reading occurs on this verse in any MS. yet discovered. In *two* of the oldest of mine there is a *blank* of *half a line* left after the last word; and so it is in the Masoretic Bibles, though the sense is not complete; for it is evidently continued in the following verse. Probably God refers to the words, <sup><0014></sup>**Exodus 3:14:** *hyha rca hyha I am that I am. I am, hyha eheyeh,—I shall be*, hath sent me unto you. I will not be your *eheyeh*, i.e., I will not be your God.

**Verse 10. Yet the number of the children of Israel]** God had promised that the children of Israel should be as the sand of the sea. See <sup><0132></sup>**Genesis 32:12;** <sup><0025></sup>**Romans 9:25, 26.** And though for their iniquities he had thinned and scattered them, yet the spirit and design of his promise and covenant shall be fulfilled. An Israel there shall be. In the place of the reprobated people, who were now no longer his people, there shall be found an Israel that shall be the *children of the living God*. See the above scriptures, and <sup><0120></sup>**1 Peter 2:10.** This must mean either the Israelites after their conversion to Christianity, or even the Gentiles themselves converted to God, and now become the *true Israel*.

**Verse 11. The children of Judah and the children of Israel]** After the return from Babylon, the distinction between Israel and Judah was entirely destroyed; and those of them that did return were all included under one denomination, *Jews*; and the *one head* may refer to Zerubbabel their leader, and afterwards under Ezra and Nehemiah. In the more extensive view of the prophet the *one Head* may mean *Jesus Crist*, under whom the true Israel, Jews and Gentiles, shall be finally gathered together; so that there shall be one flock, and one Shepherd over that flock.

**They shall come up out of the land]** Assyria and Chaldea in particular; but also from the various places of their dispersions in general.

**Great shall be the day of Jezreel.]** He alludes to the meaning of the word, the *seed of God*. God who has dispersed—*sown*, them in different lands, shall gather them together; and that day of God's power shall be great and glorious. It was a wonderful *seed time* in the Divine justice; it shall then be a wonderful *harvest* in the Divine mercy. He sowed them among the nations in his wrath; he shall reap them and gather them in his bounty.

## HOSEA

## CHAPTER 2

*The prophet exhorts his people to speak and to act as became those who obtained mercy of God; and to remonstrate strongly against the conduct of their mother, (Samaria,) whose captivity is threatened on account of her forsaking God, and ascribing her prosperity to idols, 1-5. As an amplification of this threatening, the prophet enumerates a series of afflictions which were to befall her to bring her to a sense of her duty to God; and of her folly in seeking after idols, and falsely ascribing to them the blessings of Providence, 6-13. After these corrections, however, God promises to conduct Israel safely to their own land; perhaps alluding to their restoration from the Babylonish captivity, for this prophecy is supposed to have been delivered about two hundred and fifty years prior to this event, 14, 15. He farther engages to deal with them as a tender husband, and not as a severe master, as were the idols which they served, 16, 17. The rest of the chapter promises the people of God, the true Israel, security from every evil, with the possession of every blessing, under a new covenant; and that in terms full of beauty, energy, and consolation. Heaven and earth, and whatever they contain; all nature, and the God of nature, are represented as uniting to make the people of God happy; so that if they only breathe a wish, one part of nature, animate or inanimate, echoes it to another, and all join in sweet harmony to transmit it to the ear of the Almighty. "I will hear, saith the LORD, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth; and the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel."*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 2

**Verse 1. Say ye unto your brethren, Ammi]** I prefer the interpretation of these proper names. *Say ye unto your brethren, MY PEOPLE; and to your sisters, who have OBTAINED MERCY.*

**Verse 2. Plead with your mother]** People of Judah, accuse your mother, (Jerusalem,) who has abandoned my worship, and is become idolatrous; convince her of her folly and wickedness, and let her return to him from whom she has so deeply revolted.

**Verse 3. Lest I strip her naked]** Lest I expose her to infamy, want, and punishment. The punishment of an adulteress among the ancient Germans was this: "They shaved off her hair, stripped her naked in the presence of her relatives, and in this state drove her from the house of her husband."

See on <sup><2317></sup>Isaiah 3:17; and see also <sup><2516></sup>Ezekiel 16:39; 23:26. However reproachful this might be to such delinquents, it had no tendency to promote their moral reformation.

**And set her like a dry land]** The Israelites, if obedient, were promised a land flowing with milk and honey; but, should they be disobedient, the reverse. And this is what God here threatens against disobedient Israel.

**Verse 4. They be the children of whoredoms.]** They are all idolaters; and have been consecrated to idols, whose marks they bear.

**Verse 5. That give me my bread]** See the note on <sup><2447></sup>Jeremiah 44:17, 18, where nearly the same words are found and illustrated.

**Verse 6. I will hedge up thy way with thorns]** I will put it out of your power to escape the judgments I have threatened; and, in spite of all your attachment to your idols, you shall find that they can give you neither *bread*, nor *water*, nor *wool*, nor *flax*, nor *oil*, nor *drink*. And ye shall be brought into such circumstances, that the pursuit of your expensive idolatry shall be impossible. And she shall be led so deep into captivity, as never to find the road back to her own land. And this is the fact; for those who were carried away into Assyria have been lost among the nations, few of them having ever returned to Judea. And, if in being, where they are now is utterly unknown.

**Verse 8. For she did not know that I gave her corn]** How often are the gifts of God's *immediate bounty* attributed to fortuitous causes—to any cause but the right one!

Which **they prepared for Baal.]** And how often are the gifts of God's bounty perverted into means of dishonouring him! God gives us *wisdom*, *strength*, and *property*; and we use them to sin against him with the greater *skill*, *power*, and *effect*! Were the goods those of the *enemy*, in whose service they are employed, the crime would be the less. But the crime is deeply engrained, when God's property is made the instrument to dishonour himself.

**Verse 9. Therefore will I return, and take away]** In the course of my providence, I will withhold those benefits which she has prostituted to her idolatrous services. And I will neither give the land rain, nor fruitful seasons.

**Verse 10. In the sight of her lovers]** Her idols, and her faithful or faithless allies.

**Verse 11. Her feast days]** Jerusalem shall be pillaged and destroyed; and therefore all her joyous assemblies, and religious feasts, &c., shall cease.

**Verse 12. These are my rewards]** They attributed all the blessings of Providence as rewards received from the idols which they worshipped.

**Verse 13. Days of Baalim]** To *visit* signifies to *inflict punishment*; the *days* are taken for the *acts* of idolatrous worship committed on them; and *Baalim* means the *multitude* of false gods worshipped by them. *Baal* was a general name for a *male* idol, as *Astarte* was for a *female*. *Baalim* includes all the *male idols*, as *Ashtaroth* all those that were *female*. But the species of idol was often designated by some adjunct; as *Baal-Zebub*, *Baal-Peor*, *Baal-Zephon*, *Baal-Berith*, &c.

**Her earrings]** *hmzn nizmah*, signifies rather a *nose jewel*. These are worn by females in the East to the present day, in great abundance.

**And her jewels]** *htyl j w vechelyatah*, rings, armlets, bracelets, ankle-rings, and ornaments of this kind.

**Verse 14. I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her.]** After inflicting many judgments upon her, I will restore her again. I will deal with her as a very affectionate husband would do to an unfaithful wife. Instead of making her a *public example*, he takes her in private, talks to and reasons with her; puts her on her good behaviour; promises to pass by all, and forgive all, if she will now amend her ways. In the meantime he provides what is necessary for her wants and comfortable support, and thus opening a *door of hope* for her, she may be fully reconciled; *rejoice* as at the beginning, when he first took her by the hand, and she became his bride. This is most probably the simple meaning of the above *metaphorical* expressions. The *valley of Achor* was very fruitful; it lay to the north of Jericho, not far from Gilgal. See <sup>23610</sup> **Isaiah 65:10**.

**Verse 15. She shall sing there]** There she shall sing the *responsive song*, as on high festival occasions, and in marriage ceremonies. The Book of *Canticles* is of this sort.

**Verse 16. Thou shalt call me Ishi]** That is, *my man*, or *my husband*; a title of *love* and *affection*; and not BAALI, *my master*, a title exciting *fear* and *apprehension*; which, howsoever good in itself, was now rendered improper to be applied to Jehovah, having been prostituted to false gods. This intimated that they should scrupulously avoid idolatry; and they had such a full proof of the inefficacy of their idolatrous worship that, after their captivity, they never more served idols.

**Verse 18. Will I make a covenant for them]** I will make an *agreement* between them and the birds, beasts, and reptiles, so that they shall not be injured by those; their *flocks* shall not be destroyed, nor their *crops* spoiled. I will also prevent every species of *war*, that they may no more have the calamities that arise from that source. They shall also be safe from robbers and nightly alarms; for *I will make them to lie down in safety*.

**Verse 19. I will betroth thee unto me]** The people are always considered under the emblem of a *wife* unfaithful to her husband.

**In righteousness]** According to law, reason, and equity.

**In judgment]** According to what is fit and becoming.

**In lovingkindness]** Having the utmost affection and love for thee.

**In mercies.]** Forgiving and blotting out all past miscarriages. Or there may be an allusion here to the dowry given by the husband to his wife: "I will give righteousness," &c., as a dowry.

**Verse 20. In faithfulness]** Thou shalt no more prostitute thyself to idols, but be *faithful* to him who calls himself *thy husband*.

**Thou shalt know the Lord.]** There shall be no more *infidelity* on *thy part* nor *divorce* on *mine*; and thou shalt experience me to be the sole, present, and eternal good of thy immortal spirit: and when this conviction is fully rooted, then there can be no more idolatry, for it shall be seen that an idol is nothing in the world.

**Verse 21. I will hear, saith the Lord]** The sentence is repeated, to show how fully the thing was determined by the Almighty, and how implicitly they might depend on the Divine promise.

**I will hear the heavens]** The visible heavens, the atmosphere, where vapours are collected. The *clouds*, when they wish to deposit their fertilizing showers upon the earth.

**They shall hear the earth]** When it seems to supplicate for rain.

**Verse 22. Shall hear the corn, and the wine]** When they seem to express a desire to supply the wants of man.

**And they shall hear Jezreel.]** The destitute people who are in want of the necessaries of life.

This most elegant gradation in the exertion of the influences of nature, for the supply of the wants of man, may be considered thus:—

1. There is a concord, harmony, and mutual influence, which God has established in the parts of created nature, in reference to the support and preservation of the human race.
2. God alone is the author of all this; and unless he give his command, communicate his *energetic influence* to the different parts of nature, these effects will not, cannot be produced.
3. *Jezreel*, the people who have been *dispersed* for their iniquities, and now about to be *sown* or *planted* in their own land, will require the most *fostering* care. See on ~~2:23~~ **Hosea 2:23**.
4. They are heard in desiring *oil*, *wine*, and *corn*. These are necessary to the support and comfort of life; and to those the desire of animal life naturally aspires.
5. These products are looked for from the EARTH. *On* it, and *by* it, grass grows for the cattle, and corn for the service of man.
6. The seeds or germs, whence proceed corn, wine, and oil, live and grow in the earth; but cannot come to perfection, unless the earth be impregnated with the dews and rains from the clouds. They are therefore represented as imploring the heavens to collect their clouds, to pour down their fructifying moisture upon it.
7. The clouds, or materials of which they are composed, not being able to arrange themselves, nor aggregate themselves so as to meet those demands, prevent drought, and maintain an effective vegetation, are



represented as calling upon the heavens to form, arrange, and supply them with the requisite quantity of moisture.

8. God, who is the author of all being and all bounty, dependent on nothing, comes forward and says, *I will hear the heavens*, the clouds which are gathered in the atmosphere; he will arrange the particles, saturate those that are *light*, till they become sufficiently *impregnated* with the necessary fluid; and then direct them In his providence *where* to deposit their contents. And,

9. When brought to the proper place, he will *shake* them with his *winds*, or *strike* them with his *thunder*, so as to cause them to fall down in drops to fertilize the earth with their showers.

Thus then—

1. God works upon the *heavens*.

2. In them the *clouds* are collected.

3. The *clouds* drop their moisture upon the earth.

4. The *earth* exerts its vegetative influence upon the *germs* which it contains.

5. *They* expand, increase, and become matured, under the genial influences of the *heavens, sun, air, water*, from the clouds, &c.

6. *Man* receives and applies those bounties of Providence, and *variously prepares* them for the support and comfort of life.

Take all this in still fewer words:—

As *Jezreel* or the *Israelites* are here considered as perishing for want of food, all inanimate nature is represented as invoking God in their behalf.

1. The heavens have prayed that they be stored with *clouds*, that they may drop down fatness upon the *earth*.

2. The Lord answers the heavens, and *clouds* are formed.

3. The *earth* invokes the *clouds*, that they may drop down their fatness into its bosom.

4. The *bottles of heaven* are, consequently, unstopped for this purpose.

5. Then the *corn, wine, and olive*, implore the *earth* to put forth its vegetative energy.

6. The *earth* answers; and *corn, wine, and oil* are produced.

7. *Jezreel* cries for the necessaries of life, and the abundance of the above supplies all his wants.

All these are dependent on each other, as the links are which constitute a chain; and God has the government of the whole; and he manages all for the benefit of man. How wondrous is this *providence*! How gracious is this GOD!

Here is a series of *prosopopæias* together. Corn, wine, oil, the earth, the clouds and their contents, the *heavens*, sun, moon, &c., are all represented as intelligent beings, speaking to and influencing each other. GOD is at *one end* of the *chain*, and MAN at the *other*; and by means of the *intermediate links* the *latter* is kept in a state of continued dependence upon the *former* for life, breath, and all things.

**Verse 23. I will sow her]** Alluding to the import of the name *Jezreel*, the seed of God. Then shall it appear that God *has shown mercy to them that had not obtained mercy*. Then the *covenant* of God will be renewed; for he will call them *his people* who were *not his people*; and they shall call Jehovah *their God*, who before had *him* not for the object of their worship. It does not appear that these promises have had their fulfilment among the Jews. They must either be understood of the blessings experienced by the *Gentiles* on their conversion to God by the preaching of the Gospel, or are yet to be fulfilled to the Jews on their embracing the Gospel, and being brought back to their own land.

The sentences in the latter part of this verse are very abrupt, but exceedingly expressive; leaving out those words *supplied* by the translators, and which unnerve the passage, it stands thus: *I will say to NOT MY PEOPLE, THOU MY PEOPLE; and they shall say, MY GOD.*

## HOSEA

## CHAPTER 3

*By the prophet's taking back his wife, for whom he (her friend or husband) still retained has affection, though she had proved unfaithful; by his entering into a new contract with her; and by his giving her hopes of reconciliation, after she should for some time prove, as in a state of widowhood, the sincerity of her repentance; is represented the gracious manner in which God will restore the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, 1-4. It is also very strongly intimated that the whole house of Israel will be added to the Church of Christ in the latter days, 5.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 3

**Verse 1. Go yet, love a woman]** This is a different command from that mentioned in the *first* chapter. *That* denoted the infidelity of the kingdom of Israel, and God's divorce of *them*. He gave them up to their *enemies*, and caused them to be *carried into captivity*. The *woman* mentioned *here* represents one who was a *lawful wife* joining herself to a *paramour*; then divorced by her *husband*; afterwards repenting, and desirous to be joined to her spouse; ceasing from her adulterous commerce, but not yet *reconciled* to him. This was the state and disposition of the Jews under the Babylonish captivity. Though separated from their own *idols*, they continued *separated from their God*. He is still represented as having affectionate feelings towards them; awaiting their *full repentance* and *contrition*, in order to renew the marriage covenant. These things are pointed out by the symbolical actions of the prophet.

**Beloved of her friend]** Or, *a lover of evil*; or, *loving another*: for the Hebrew words [r tbha mean one who *loves evil* or a *friend*: because [r signifies a *friend*, or *evil*, according as it is *pointed*. The former seems to be its best sense here; [r rea is a *friend*; [r ra is *evil*.

**According to the love of the Lord]** This woman, who had proved false to her husband, was still beloved by him, though he could not acknowledge her; as the Israelites were beloved by the Lord, while they were *looking after other gods*. The *flagons of wine* were probably such as were used for *libations*, or drunk in idol feasts. Others think that the words should be translated *cakes of dried grapes, sweet cakes, consecrated wafers*.

**Verse 2. Fifteen pieces of silver]** If they were *shekels*, the price of this woman was about *two pounds five shillings*.

**A homer of barley]** As the homer was about *eight bushels*, or something more, the *homer and half* was about *twelve or thirteen bushels*.

**Verse 3. Thou shalt abide for me many days]** He did not take her home, but made a contract with her that, if she would abstain from her evil ways, he would take her to himself after a sufficient trial. In the meantime he gave her the *money* and the *barley* to subsist upon, that she might not be under the temptation of becoming again unfaithful.

**So will I also be for thee.]** That is, if *thou*, Israel, wilt keep thyself separate from thy idolatry, and give me proof, by thy total abstinence from idols, that thou wilt be my faithful worshipper, I will receive thee again, and in the meantime support thee with the *necessaries of life* while thou art in the land of thy captivity. This is farther illustrated in the following verses.

**Verse 4. Many days without a king]** Hitherto this prophecy has been literally fulfilled. Since the destruction of the temple by the Romans they have neither had *king* nor *prince*, nor any *civil government* of their own, but have lived in different nations of the earth as *mere exiles*. They have neither *priests* nor *sacrifices*, nor *urim* nor *thummim*; no *prophet*, no *oracle*, no *communication* of any kind from *God*.

**Without an image ephod—teraphim]** The *Septuagint* read, Ουδε ουσης θυσιας, ουδε οντος θυσιαστηριου, ουδε ιερατειας, ουδε δηλων: “Without a sacrifice, without an altar, without a priesthood, and without oracles;” that is, the *urim* and *thummim*. The *Vulgate*, *Arabic*, and *Syriac* read nearly the same. Instead of **hbxm** *matstsebah*, an *image*, they have evidently read **j bzm** *mizbeach*, an *altar*; the letters of these words being very similar, and easily mistaken for each other. But instead of either, one, if not two, of *Kennicott’s MSS.* has **hj nm** *minchah*, an *oblation*.

What is called *image* may signify any kind of *pillar*, such as God forbade them to erect, <sup><1801></sup>**Leviticus 26:1**, lest it should be an incitement to idolatry.

The *ephod* was the high priest's garment of ceremony; the *teraphim* were some kind of *amulets*, *telesms*, or *idolatrous images*; the *urim* and *thummim* belonged to the *breastplate*, which was attached to the *ephod*.

Instead of *teraphim* some would read *seraphim*, changing the **t** *tau* into **c** *sin*; these are an order of the celestial hierarchy. In short, all the time that the Israelites were in captivity in Babylon, they seem to have been as wholly without *forms of idolatrous worship* as they were without the *worship of God*; and this may be what the prophet designs: they were totally without any kind of public worship, whether *true* or *false*. As well without *images* and *teraphim*, as they were without *sacrifice* and *ephod*, though still idolaters in their hearts. They were in a state of the most miserable darkness, which was to *continue many days*; and it has continued now nearly *eighteen hundred years*, and must continue yet longer, till they acknowledge him as their *Saviour* whom they crucified as a *blasphemer*.

**Verse 5. Afterward shall the children of Israel return]** Shall *repent* of their iniquities, *and seek the Lord*; lay aside their *mock worship*, and serve the true God *in spirit and in truth*.

**And David their king]** Or as the *Targum*, "They shall obey the Messiah, the Son of David, their King;" and thus look believingly upon him whom they have pierced, and mourn. And then shall their long *spiritual darkness* and *dismal captivity* have an end; but not before. The *Messiah*, as *David*, is promised in <sup><2411></sup>**Jeremiah 30:9**; <sup><2423></sup>**Ezekiel 24:23; 37:22, 24, 25**, (where see the notes,) and in this place of *Hosea*. Some think that the *family* of David is intended; but if we go to the rigour of the letter, the *house of Israel* was scarcely ever perfectly submissive to David. And we know that after the death of Solomon they never acknowledged the house of David till they were all carried away captive; and certainly never *since*. And to say that *Zerubbabel* is here meant, is not supportable, as the very *short* and *imperfect obedience* of the Jews to Zerubbabel can never comport with the *high terms* of this and similar prophecies. We are obliged, therefore, from the evidence of these *prophecies*, from the evidence of the above *facts*, from the evidence of the *rabbins* themselves, and from the evidence of the *New Testament*, to consider these texts as applying solely to JESUS CHRIST, the promised MESSIAH, who has been a *light to lighten the Gentiles*, and will yet be the *glory of his people Israel*. There is a strange propensity in some men to deny these evidences of Christianity, while they profess to believe its doctrines.

## HOSEA

## CHAPTER 4

*The prophet charges his people with their enormous sins, 1, 2; in consequence of which they are threatened with heavy judgments, 3-5. God himself is then introduced complaining of the ignorance and obstinacy of Israel; and as their priests had a large share in the common guilt, it is declared that they shall be visited with a proportionable share of the common ruin, 6-11. The sins of idolatry and divination are then particularly reprov'd, 12-14; and Judah admonish'd to beware of these sins, which would leave her rebellious sister Israel helpless and desolate as a lamb in a desert, 15, 16. In the remaining verses the style is varied, but the subject is the same. Ephraim is given up to idolatry, and the necessary consequence declared to be a bitter draught! Immediately we see him bound in the wings of a mighty tempest, and driven as chaff before the wind, either to destruction or captivity, 17-19.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 4

**Verse 1. The Lord hath a controversy]** *byr rib*, what we should call a *lawsuit*, in which God is *plaintiff*, and the Israelites *defendants*. It is *Jehovah versus Israel and Judah*.

But *when* has God a controversy with any land?—*Answer*. When there is *no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land*. These refer to the *minds* of the people. But wherever these righteous *principles* are wanting, there will soon be a vicious *practice*; hence it is added,

**Verse 2. By swearing, and lying]** Where there is no *truth* there will be *lies and perjury*; for false swearing is brought in to confirm lying statements. And when there is no *mercy, killing, slaying, and murders*, will be frequent. And where there is *no knowledge of God*, no conviction of his *omnipresence and omniscience*, private offenses, such as stealing, adulteries, &c., will prevail. These, sooner or later, *break out*, become a *flood*, and carry all before them. *Private stealing* will assume the form of a *public robbery*, and *adulteries* become *fashionable*, especially among the higher orders; and suits of *crim. con.* render them more public, scandalous, and corrupting. By the examination of *witnesses*, and reading of *infamous letters* in a court of justice, people are taught the *wiles* and *stratagems* to be used to accomplish these ends, and prevent detection; and also how to *avoid* those circumstances which have led to the detection of others. Every

report of such matters is an *experimental lecture on successful debauchery*.

**Blood toucheth blood.]** Murders are not only frequent, but assassinations are mutual. Men go out to *kill each other*; as in our duels, the frenzy of cowards; and as there is no law regarded, and no justice in the land, the nearest akin slays the murderer. Even in our land, where *duels* are so frequent, if a man kill his antagonist, it is *murder*; and so generally brought in by an honest *coroner* and his jury. It is then brought into court; but who is *hanged* for it? The very murder is considered as an *affair of honour*, though it began in a dispute about a *prostitute*; and it is directed to be brought in manslaughter; and the murderer is slightly fined for having hurried his neighbour, perhaps once his *friend*, into the eternal world, *with all his imperfections on his head!* No wonder that a land *mourns* where these prevail; and that God should have a *controversy* with it. Such crimes as these are sufficient to bring God's curse upon any land. And how does God show his displeasure? See the following verse.

**Verse 3. Therefore shall the land mourn]** Fruitful seasons shall be denied.

**That dwelleth therein shall languish]** *Endemic and epidemic disorders* shall prevail, and multitudes shall die; so that *mourning* shall be found in all quarters.

**The beasts of the field, and with the fowls]** There is a death of cattle and domestic animals, in consequence of the badness of the season.

**The fishes of the sea also shall be taken away.]** Those immense shoals which at certain seasons frequent the coasts, which are caught in millions, and become a very useful home supply, and a branch of most profitable traffic, they shall be directed by the unseen influence of God to avoid our coasts, as has frequently been the case with herrings, mackerel, pilchards, &c.; and so this source of supply and wealth has been shut up, because of the iniquities of the land.

**Verse 4. Yet let no man strive]** Or, *no man contendeth*. All these evils stalk abroad unreprieved, for all are guilty. None can say, "Let me pluck the *mote* out of thy eye," because he knows that "there is a *beam* in his own."

**For thy people are]** The *people* and the *priest* are alike *rebels* against the Lord; the priests having become idolaters, as well as the people. Bp. *Newcome* renders this clause, “And as is the provocation of the priest, *so is that of my people.*” The whole clause in the original is  $\text{^hk ybyrmk \ddot{E}m[w}$  *veammecha kimeribey cohen*, “and thy people as the rebellions of the priest.” But one of my oldest MSS. omits  $\text{^hk cohen}$ , “priest;” and then the text may be read, *And thy people are as rebels.* In this MS.  $\text{^hk cohen}$  is added in the margin by a much later hand.

**Verse 5. Therefore shalt thou fall in the day]** In the most open and public manner, without *snare* or *ambush*.

**And the prophet also shall fall—in the night]** The false prophet, when employed in taking prognostications from stars, meteors, &c.

**And I will destroy thy mother.]** The *metropolis* or *mother city*. *Jerusalem* or *Samaria* is meant.

**Verse 6. My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge]** They have not the knowledge of God, nor of sacred things, nor of their own interest, nor of the danger to which they are exposed. They walk on blindly, and perish.

**Because thou hast rejected knowledge]** So they might have become wise, had they not rejected the means of improvement.

**Thou shalt be no priest to me]** If this be the true reading, there must be reference to some *particular priest*, well known, to whom these words are personally addressed; unless by *priest* the whole *priesthood* is meant, and then it may apply to the *priests of Jeroboam’s calves*.

**Verse 7. Will I change their glory into shame.]** As the idolaters at Dan and Bethel have changed my glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass, (<sup><40123></sup>**Romans 1:23**), so will I change their *glory* into *shame* or ignominy. In the day of my wrath, their calf-gods shall not deliver them.

**Verse 8. They eat up the sin of my people]**  $\text{tacj}$  *chattath*, the *sin-offering*, though it be offered contrary to the law; for their *hearts are set on iniquity*, they *wish* to do whatever is contrary to God.

**Verse 9. Like people, like priest]**

*“The priest a wanderer from the narrow way;  
The silly sheep, no wonder that they stray.”*



**I will punish them]** Both priest and people; both equally bad.

**Verse 10. They shall eat, and not have enough]** Whatever means they may use to *satisfy* or *gratify* themselves shall be ineffectual.

**Verse 11. Whoredom and wine]** These debaucheries go generally *together*.

**Take away the heart.]** Darken the understanding, deprave the judgment, pervert the will, debase all the passions, &c.

**Verse 12. At their stocks]** They consult their *wooden gods*.

**And their staff declareth]** They use divination by *rods*; see the note on <sup><2012></sup>**Ezekiel 21:21**, where this sort of divination (*rabdomancy*) is explained.

**Verse 13. Under oaks]** <sup>^wl</sup> *a allon*, from *l l a alal*, he was *strong*. Hence, the *oak*, in Latin, is called *robur*; which word means also, *strength*, the oak being the strongest of all the trees of the forest.

**The shadow thereof is good]** Their “daughters committed whoredom, and their spouses committed adultery.” 1. Their deities were worshipped by prostitution. 2. They *drank* much in their idol worship, <sup><2011></sup>**Hosea 4:11**, and thus their passions became inflamed. 3. The *thick groves* were favourable to the whoredoms and adulteries mentioned here. In imitation of these, some nations have their public gardens.

**Verse 14. I will not punish]** Why should you be stricken any more; ye will revolt more and more. When God, in judgment, removes his judgments, the case of that people is desperate. While there is *hope*, there is *correction*.

**Themselves are separated]** There is a reference here to certain debaucheries which should not be described. The state of the people at this time must have been abominable beyond all precedent; animal, sensual, bestial, diabolical: women consecrating themselves to serve their idols by public prostitution; boys dismembered like the *Galli* or priests of Cybele, men and women acting unnaturally; and all conjoining to act diabolically.

**Verse 15. Let not Judah offend]** Israel was *totally* dissolute; Judah was not so. Here she is exhorted to maintain her integrity. If the former will go to what was once *Beth-el*, the *house of God*, now *Beth-aven*, the *house of iniquity*, because Jeroboam has set up his calves there, let not Judah imitate them. *Gilgal* was the place where the covenant of circumcision was

renewed when the people passed over Jordan; but was rendered infamous by the worship of idols, after Jeroboam had set up his idolatry.

**Verse 16. Israel slideth back]** They are untractable, like an unbroken heifer or steer, that *pulls back*, rather than *draw in the yoke*.

**Will feed them as a lamb in a large place.]** A species of irony. Ye shall go to Assyria, and be scattered among the nations; ye may *sport yourselves* in the extensive empire, wither ye shall be carried captives.

**Verse 17. Ephraim]** The ten tribes.

**Is joined to idols]** Is become incorporated with false gods.

**Let him alone.]** They are irreclaimable, leave them to the consequences of their vicious conduct.

**Verse 18. Their drink is sour]** Or rather, *he is gone after their wine*. The enticements of idolatry have carried them away.

**Her rulers with shame do love]** Rather, *have loved shame*; they glory in their abominations.

**Give ye.]** Perhaps it would be better to read, *Her rulers have committed, &c. They have loved gifts. What a shame!* These were *their rulers*, literally, *their shields*. Justice and judgment were perverted.

**Verse 19. The wind hath bound her]** A parching wind has blasted them in their *wings-coasts*, borders; or they are carried away into captivity, as with the most rapid blight. These two last verses are very obscure.

## HOSEA

## CHAPTER 5

*This chapter begins with threatening the Israelites for ensnaring the people to idolatry by their sacrifices and other rites on Mizpah and Tabor, 1-5. Their sacrifices, however costly, are declared to be unacceptable, 6; and their substance is devoted to the locust, 7. Nor is judgment to stop here. The cities of Judah are called upon, in a very animated manner, to prepare for the approach of enemies. Benjamin is to be pursued; Ephraim is to be desolate; and all this is intimated to Israel, that they may by repentance avert the judgment, 8, 9. The following verses contain farther denunciations, 10-13, expressed in terms equally terrible and sublime, 14. The Lord afflicts not willingly the children of men; he visits them with temporal calamities that he may heal their spiritual malady, 15.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 5

**Verse 1. Hear ye this, O priests]** A process is instituted against the *priests*, the *Israelites*, and the *house of the king*; and they are called on to appear and defend themselves. The accusation is, that they have *ensnared* the people, caused them to practise idolatry, both at *Mizpah* and *Tabor*. Mizpah was situated beyond Jordan; in the mountains of Gilead; see <sup><07129></sup>**Judges 11:29**. And Tabor was a beautiful mountain in the tribe of Zebulun. Both these places are said to be eminent for *hunting*, &c., and hence the natural occurrence of the words *snare* and *net*, in speaking of them.

**Verse 2. The revolvers are profound to make slaughter]** Here may be a reference to the practice of *hunters*, making *deep pits* in the ground, and lightly covering them over, that the beasts, not discovering them, might fall in, and become a prey.

**Though I have been a Rebuker]** “I will bring *chastisement* on them all.” As they have made *victims* of others to their *idolatry*, I will make *victims* of them to my *justice*. Some have thought that as many as wished to depart from the idolatrous worship set up by Jeroboam, were *slaughtered*; and thus *Jeroboam the son of Nebat MADE Israel to sin*.

**Verse 3. I know Ephraim]** I know the whole to be idolaters.

**Verse 4. They will not frame their doings]** They never *purpose* to turn to God, they have fully imbibed the spirit of idolatry.

**Verse 5. The pride of Israel doth testify to his face]** The effrontery with which they practise idolatry manifests, not only their insolence, but the deep depravity of their heart; but their pride and arrogance shall be humbled.

**Verse 6. They shall go with their flocks]** They shall *offer many sacrifices*, professing to *seek* and be reconciled to the Lord; but they shall not *find him*. As they still retain the spirit of their idolatry, he has withdrawn himself from them.

**Verse 7. Now shall a month devour them]** In a month's time the king of Assyria shall be upon them, and oblige them to purchase their lives and liberties by a grievous tax of *fifty* shekels per head. This Menahem, king of Israel, gave to *Pul*, king of Assyria, <sup><121516></sup>**2 Kings 15:16-20**. Instead of *month*, some translate the original *locust*. "The locusts shall devour them."

**Verse 8. Blow ye the cornet in Gibeah]** Gibeah and Ramah were cities of Judah, in the tribe of Benjamin.

**After thee, O Benjamin]** An abrupt call of warning. "Benjamin, fly for thy life! The enemy is just behind thee!" This is a prediction of the invasion of the Assyrians, and the captivity of the *ten* tribes.

**Verse 9. Among the tribes of Israel have I made known]** They have got sufficient warning; it is their own fault that they have not taken it.

**Verse 10. Like them that remove the bound]** As execrable as they who remove the *land-mark*. They have leaped over law's enclosure, and scaled all the walls of right; they have despised and broken all laws, human and Divine.

**Verse 11. Walked after the commandment.]** Jeroboam's commandment to worship his calves at Dan and Beth-el. Many of them were not *forced* to do this, they did it *willingly*.

**Verse 12. Unto Ephraim as a moth]** I will consume them by little and little, as a moth frets a garment.

**Verse 13. When Ephraim saw his sickness]** When both Israel and Judah felt their own weakness to resist their enemies, instead of calling upon and trusting in *me*, they sought sinful alliances, and trusted in their idols.

**King Jareb]** This name occurs nowhere in Scripture but here and in <sup><8106></sup>**Hosea 10:6**. The *Vulgate* and *Targum* render **bry** *yareb*, an *avenger*, a person whom they thought able to *save them* from their enemies. It is well known that *Menahem*, king of Israel, sought alliance with *Pul* and *Tiglath-pileser*, kings of Assyria, and *Ahaz*, king of Judah. These were the *protectors* that Ephraim sought after. See <sup><121516></sup>**2 Kings 15:16-16:20**. But far from *healing them* by making them tributary, the Assyrians made their *wound* more dangerous.

**Verse 14. I will be-as a lion]** **l j vk** *cashshachel*, as a *panther* or *lioness*.

**Verse 15. I will go and return to my place]** I will abandon them till they acknowledge their offenses. This had the wished—for effect, as we shall see in the following chapter; for they repented and turned to God, and he had mercy upon them. These two verses are considered as instances of the *true sublime*.

## HOSEA

## CHAPTER 6

*The prophet earnestly exhorts to repentance, 1-3. God is then introduced as very tenderly and pathetically remonstrating against the backslidings of Ephraim and Judah, 4-11.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 6

**Verse 1. Come, and let us return unto the Lord]** When God had purposed to abandon them, and they found that he had *returned to his place*-to his temple, where alone he could be successfully sought; they, feeling their weakness, and the fickleness, weariness, and unfaithfulness of their idols and allies, now resolve to “return to the Lord;” and, referring to what he said, <sup><28614></sup>**Hosea 5:14:** “I will tear and go away;” they say, he “hath torn, but he will heal us;” their allies had *torn*, but they gave them no healing. While, therefore, they acknowledge the *justice* of God in their punishment, they depend on his well-known mercy and compassion for restoration to life and health.

**Verse 2. After two days will he revive]** Such is his power that in *two or three* days he can restore us. He can realize all our hopes, and give us the strongest token for good.

**In the third day he will raise us up]** In so short a time can he give us complete deliverance. These words are supposed to refer to the *death and resurrection of our Lord*; and it is thought that the apostle refers to them, <sup><6150></sup>**1 Corinthians 15:4:** “Christ rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures;” and this is the *only place* in the *Scriptures*, i.e., of the Old Testament, where his resurrection on the *third* day seems to be hinted at. The original, **wmmqy** *yekimenu*, has been translated, *he will raise him up*. Then they who trusted in him could believe that they should be *quicken*ed together with him.

**And we shall live in his sight.]** *His resurrection* being a proof of *theirs*.

**Verse 3. Then shall we know]** We shall have the fullest evidence that we have not believed in vain.

**If we follow on to know the Lord]** If we *continue* to be as much in earnest as we now are.

**His going forth]** The manifestation of his mercy to our souls is as certain as the *rising of the sun* at the appointed time.

**And he shall come unto us as the rain]** As surely as the early and the latter rain come. The first, to prepare the earth for the seed; this fell in *autumn*: the second, to prepare the full ear for the harvest; this fell in *spring*. Here is strong confidence; but not misplaced, however worthless the persons were. As surely as the *sun*, who is *now set*, is running his course to *arise* on us in the *morning*, and make a glorious *day* after a dreary *night*; so surely shall the Lord *come again from his place*, and the Sun of righteousness shall arise on our souls with healing in his wings. He is already *on his way* to save us.

**Verse 4. O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee?]** This is the answer of the Lord to the above pious resolutions; sincere while they lasted, but frequently forgotten, because the people were fickle. Their *goodness* (for goodness it was while it endured) was *like the morning cloud that fadeth away* before the rising sun, or like the *early dew* which is speedily evaporated by heat. Ephraim and Judah had too much *goodness* in them to admit of their total rejection, and too much *evil* to admit of their being placed among the children. Speaking after the manner of men, the *justice* and *mercy* of God seem puzzled how to act toward them. When *justice* was about to *destroy* them for their iniquity, it was prevented by their *repentance* and *contrition*: when *mercy* was about to pour upon them as penitents its choicest blessings, it was prevented by their *fickleness* and *relapse*! These things induce the just and merciful God to exclaim, “O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee?” The only thing that could be done in such a case was that which God did.

**Verse 5. Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets]** I have sent my prophets to testify against their fickleness. They have smitten them with the most solemn and awful threatenings; they have, as it were, slain them by the words of my mouth. But to what purpose?

**Thy judgments are as the light that goeth forth]** Instead of *axy rwa Ęycpcmw umispateycha* or *yetse*, “and thy judgments a light that goeth forth,” the *versions* in general have read

*rwak ycpcmw umishpati keor*, “and my judgment *is* as the light.” The final *Ē caph* in the common reading has by mistake been taken from *rwa aur*, and joined to *ycpcm mishpati*; and thus turned it from the *singular* to the *plural* number, with the postfix *Ē cha*. The proper reading is, most probably, “And my judgment is as the light going forth.” It shall be both *evident* and *swift*; alluding both to the *velocity* and *splendour* of light.

**Verse 6. I desired mercy, and not sacrifice]** I taught them righteousness by my prophets; for I desired mercy. I was more willing to *save* than to *destroy*; and would rather see them full of *penitent* and *holy resolutions*, than behold them offering the *best* and most *numerous victims* upon my altar. See <sup><4093></sup>**Matthew 9:13**.

**Verse 7. But they like men (μdak keadam, “like Adam”) have transgressed the covenant]** They have sinned against light and knowledge as *he* did. This is *sense*, the other is scarcely so. There was a striking similarity in the two cases. *Adam, in Paradise*, transgressed the commandment, and I *cast him out: Israel, in possession of the promised land*, transgressed my covenant, and I cast *them* out, and sent them into captivity.

**Verse 8. Gilead is a city of them that work iniquity]** In this place Jacob and Laban made their covenant, and set up a *heap of stones*, which was called *Galeed*, the *heap of testimony*; and most probably idolatry was set up here. Perhaps the very *heap* became the object of superstitious adoration.

**Verse 9. As troops of robbers]** What a sad picture is this of the state of the priesthood! The country of Gilead was infamous for its robberies and murders. The idolatrous priests there formed themselves into companies, and kept possession of the roads and passes; and if they found any person going to Jerusalem to worship the true God, they put him to death. The reason is given:—

**For they commit lewdness.]** They are gross idolaters.

**Verse 10. I have seen a horrible thing]** That is, the idolatry that prevailed in Israel to such a degree that the whole land was defiled.

**Verse 11. O Judah, he hath set a harvest for thee]** Thou also hast transgressed; thy *harvest* will come; thou shalt be *reaped down* and sent



into captivity. The *sickle* is already thrust in. That which thou *hast sowed* shalt thou *reap*. They who *sow* unto the *flesh* shall *reap corruption*.

**When I returned the captivity of my people.]** Bp. *Newcome* translates, “Among those who lead away the captivity of my people.” There is thy harvest; they who have led Israel into captivity shall lead thee also into the same. The Assyrians and Babylonians were the same kind of people; equally idolatrous, equally oppressive, equally cruel. From the common reading some suppose this to be a *promise of return from captivity*. It is true that *Judah* was gathered together again and brought back to their own land, but the majority of the *Israelites* did not return, and are not now to be found.

## HOSEA

## CHAPTER 7

*Here God complains that though he had employed every means for reforming Israel, they still persisted in their iniquity, without fearing the consequences, 1, 2; that those who ought to check their crimes were pleased with them, 3; and that they all burned with adultery, as an oven when fully heated, and ready to receive the kneaded dough, 4. The fifth verse alludes to some recent enormities; the sixth charges them with dividing their time between inactivity and iniquity; the seventh alludes to their civil broils and conspiracies; (see <sup><121510></sup>2 Kings 15:10, 14, 25;) the eighth to their joining themselves with idolatrous nations; and the ninth describes the sad consequence. The tenth verse reproves their pride and open contempt of God's worship; the eleventh reproves their foolish conduct in applying for aid to their enemies; (see <sup><121519></sup>2 Kings 15:19; 17:4;) the twelfth and thirteenth threaten them with punishments; the fourteenth charges them with hypocrisy in their acts of humiliation; the fifteenth with ingratitude; and the image of the deceitful bow, in the sixteenth verse, is highly expressive of their frequent apostasies; and their hard speeches against God shall be visited upon them by their becoming a reproach in the land of their enemies.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 7

**Verse 1. When I would have healed Israel]** As soon as one wound was healed, another was discovered. Scarcely was one sin blotted out till another was committed.

**The thief cometh in]** Their own princes spoil them.

**The troop of robbers spoileth without.]** The Assyrians, under different leaders, waste and plunder the country.

**Verse 2. They consider not in their hearts]** They do not consider that *my eye is upon all their ways*; they do not think that I *record* all their wickedness; and they know not their *own evil doings* are as a *host of enemies encompassing* them about.

**Verse 3. They make the king glad]** They pleased Jeroboam by coming readily into his measures, and heartily joining with him in his idolatry. And they professed to be perfectly happy in their change, and to be greatly advantaged by their new gods; and that the religion of the state now was

better than that of Jehovah. Thus, they made all their rulers, “glad with their lies.”

**Verse 4. As an oven heated by the baker]** *Calmet's* paraphrase on this and the following verses expresses pretty nearly the sense: Hosea makes a twofold comparison of the Israelites; to an *oven*, and to *dough*. Jeroboam set fire to his own *oven*-his kingdom-and put the leaven in his dough; and afterwards went to rest, that the fire might have time to heat his *oven*, and the *leaven* to raise his *dough*, that the false principles which he introduced might infect the whole population. This prince, purposing to make his subjects relinquish their ancient religion, put, in a certain sense, the fire to his own oven, and mixed his dough with leaven. At first he used no violence; but was satisfied with exhorting them, and proclaiming a feast. This *fire* spread very rapidly, and the *dough* was very soon impregnated by the *leaven*. All Israel was seen running to this feast, and partaking in these innovations. But what shall become of the *oven*—the *kingdom*; and the *bread*-the *people*? The *oven* shall be consumed by these flames; the king, the princes, and the people shall be enveloped in the burning, <sup><2070></sup>**Hosea 7:7**. Israel was *put under the ashes*, as a loaf well kneaded and leavened; but not being carefully *turned*, it was burnt on one side before those who prepared it could eat of it; and *enemies* and *strangers* came and carried off the loaf. See <sup><2070></sup>**Hosea 7:8, 9**. Their lasting captivity was the consequence of their wickedness and their apostasy from the religion of their fathers. On this explication <sup><2070></sup>**Hosea 7:4-9**, may be easily understood.

**Verse 7. All their kings are fallen]** There was a pitiful slaughter among the idolatrous kings of Israel; *four* of them had fallen in the time of this prophet. Zechariah was slain by Shallum; Shallum, by Menahem; Pekahiah, by Pekah; and Pekah, by Hoshea, <sup><2150></sup>**2 Kings 15:8-30**. All were idolaters, and all came to an untimely death.

**Verse 8. A cake not turned.]** In the East having heated the *hearth*, they sweep one corner, put the cake upon it, and cover it with embers; in a short time they *turn* it, cover it again, and continue this several times, till they find it sufficiently baked. All travellers into Asiatic countries have noted this.

**Verse 9. Gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not.]** The kingdom is grown old in iniquity; the time of their captivity is at hand, and they are apprehensive of no danger. They are in the state of a *silly old man*, who through age and infirmities is become nearly *bald*, and

the few *remaining hairs* on his head are quite *gray*. But he does not consider his latter end; is making no provision for that eternity on the brink of which he is constantly standing; does not apply to the sovereign Physician to heal his spiritual diseases; but calls in the *doctors* to cure him of *old age* and *death*! This miserable state and preposterous conduct we witness every day. O how fast does the human being cling to his native earth! Reader, hear the voice of an old man:—

*O my coevals! remnants of yourselves,  
Shall our pale withered hands be still stretched out?  
Trembling at once with eagerness and age;  
With avarice and ambition grasping-fast  
Grasping at air! For what hath earth beside?  
We want but little; nor THAT LITTLE long.*

**Verse 10. The pride of Israel]** The same words as at <sup><2816></sup>Hosea 5:6, where see the note. See Clarke “<sup><2816></sup>Hosea 5:6”.

**Verse 11. Ephraim also is like a silly dove without heart]** A bird that has *little understanding*; that is *easily snared* and taken; that is careless about its *own young*, and seems to live without *any kind of thought*. It has been made, by those who, like itself, are *without heart*, the *symbol of conjugal affection*. Nothing *worse* could have been chosen, for the dove and its mate are continually quarrelling.

**They call to Egypt, they go to Assyria.]** They strive to make these their allies and friends; but in this they showed that they were *without heart*, had not a *sound understanding*; for these were rival nations, and Israel could not attach itself to the one without incurring the jealousy and displeasure of the other. Thus, like the *silly dove*, they were constantly falling into *snares*; sometimes of the Egyptians, at others of the Assyrians. By the former they were *betrayed*; by the latter, *ruined*.

**Verse 12. When they shall go]** To those nations for help—

**I will spread my net upon them]** I will cause them to be taken by those in whom they trusted.

**I will bring them down]** They shall no sooner set off to seek this foreign help, than *my net* shall *bring them down to the earth*. The allusion to the *dove*, and to the mode of taking the *fowls of heaven*, is still carried on.

**As their congregation hath heard.]** As in their *solemn assemblies* they before have heard; in the *reading of my law*, and the denunciation of my wrath against *idolaters*.

Bishop *Newcome* translates: “I will chastise them when they hearken to their assembly.” That is, when they take the counsel of their elders to go down to Egypt for help, and trust in the arm of the Assyrians for succour.

**Verse 13. Wo unto them!]** They shall have *wo*, because they *have fled from me*. They shall have *destruction*, because they *have transgressed against me*.

**Though I have redeemed them]** Out of Egypt; and given them the fullest proof of my love and power.

**Yet they have spoken lies against me.]** They have represented me as rigorous and cruel; and my service as painful and unprofitable.

**Verse 14. They have not cried unto me with their heart]** They say they have sought me, but could not find me; that they have cried unto me, but I did not answer. I know they have *cried*, yea, *howled*; but could I hear them when all was forced and hypocritical, not one sigh coming from their *heart*?

**They assemble themselves for corn and wine]** In dearth and famine they call and howl: but they assemble themselves, not to seek ME, but to invoke their false gods for corn and wine.

**Verse 15. Though I have bound and strengthened their arms]** Whether I dealt with them in *judgment* or *mercy*, it was all one; in all circumstances they rebelled against me.

**Verse 16. They return, but not to the Most High]** They go to their idols.

**They are like a deceitful bow]** Which, when it is *reflexed*, in order to be strung, suddenly *springs back* into its *quiescent curve*; for the *eastern bows* stand in their quiescent state in a curve, something like [curved figure “C”]; and in order to be strung must be *bended back* in the *opposite direction*. This bending of the bow requires both *strength* and *skill*; and if not properly done, it will fly back, and regain its former position; and in this recoil endanger the archer—may even break an arm. I have been in this danger myself in bending the Asiatic bow. For want of this knowledge not one commentator has hit the meaning of the passage.

**Shall fall by the sword]** Their *tongue* has been enraged against ME; the *sword* shall be enraged against them. They have *mocked* me, (~~2005~~ **Hosea 7:5**.) and their fall is now a subject of *derision in the land of Egypt*. What they have sown, that do they now reap.

## HOSEA

## CHAPTER 8

*This chapter begins with threatening some hostile invasion in short and broken sentences, full of rapidity, and expressive of sudden danger and alarm: "The trumpet to thy mouth; he cometh as an eagle," 1. And why? For their hypocrisy, 2; iniquity, 3; treason (see <sup><121513></sup>2 Kings 15:13, 17) and idolatry, 4; particularly the worshipping of the calves of Dan and Bethel, 5, 6. The folly and unprofitableness of pursuing evil courses is then set forth in brief but very emphatic terms. The labour of the wicked is vain, like sowing of the wind; and the fruit of it destructive as the whirlwind. Like corn blighted in the bud, their toil shall have no recompense; or if it should have a little, their enemies shall devour it, 7. They themselves, too, shall suffer the same fate, and shall be treated by the nations of Assyria and Egypt as the vile sherds of a broken vessel, 8, 9. Their incorrigible idolatry is again declared to be the cause of their approaching captivity under the king of Assyria. And as they delighted in idolatrous altars, there they shall have these in abundance, 10-14. The last words contain a prediction of the destruction of the fenced cities of Judah, because the people trusted in these for deliverance, and not in the Lord their God.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 8

**Verse 1. Set the trumpet to thy mouth]** Sound another alarm. Let them know that an enemy is fast approaching.

**As an eagle against the house of the Lord]** of this be a prophecy against Judah, as some have supposed, then by the *eagle* Nebuchadnezzar is meant, who is often compared to this king of birds. See <sup><261703></sup>Ezekiel 17:3; <sup><44840></sup>Jeremiah 48:40; 49:22; <sup><27074></sup>Daniel 7:4.

But if the prophecy be against *Israel*, which is the most likely, then *Shalmaneser*, king of Assyria, is intended, who, for his rapidity, avarice, rapacity, and strength, is fitly compared to this royal bird. He is represented here as *hovering over the house of God*, as the eagle does over the prey which he has just espied, and on which he is immediately to pounce.

**Verse 2. Israel shalt cry]** The rapidity of the eagle's flight is well imitated in the rapidity of the sentences in this place.

**My God, we know thee.]** The same sentiment, from the same sort of persons, under the same feelings, as that in the Gospel of St. Matthew,

◀1072▶ **Matthew 7:22:** “Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? Then will I profess unto them, I never KNEW YOU.”

**Verse 4. They have set up kings, but not by me]** Properly speaking, not one of the kings of Israel, from the defection of the ten tribes from the house of David, was the *anointed* of the Lord.

**I knew it not]** It had not my *approbation*. In this sense the word *know* is frequently understood.

**That they may be cut off.]** That is, They shall be cut off in consequence of their idolatry.

**Verse 5. Thy calf, O Samaria, hath cast thee off]** Bishop *Newcome* translates: “Remove far from thee thy calf, O Samaria!” Abandon thy idolatry; for *my anger is kindled against thee*.

**How long will it be ere they attain to innocency?]** How long will ye continue your guilty practices? When shall it be said that ye are from these vices? The *calf* or *ox*, which was the object of the idolatrous worship of the Israelites, was a supreme deity in Egypt; and it was there they learned this idolatry. A white ox was worshipped under the name of *Apis*, at Memphis; and another ox under the name of *Mnevis*, was worshipped at On, or Heliopolis. To Osiris the males of this genus were consecrated, and the females to Isis. It is a most ancient superstition, and still prevails in the East. The cow is a most sacred animal among the Hindoos.

**Verse 6. The workman made it; therefore it is not God]** As God signifies the supreme eternal Good, the Creator and Upholder of all things, therefore the workman cannot make Him who made all things. This is an overwhelming argument against all idols. Nothing need be added. *The workman has made them; therefore they are not God*.

**Verse 7. They have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind]** As the husbandman reaps the same kind of grain which he has sown, but in far greater abundance, *thirty*, *sixty*, or *one hundred* fold; so he who sows the wind shall have a whirlwind to reap. The *vental* seed shall be multiplied into a tempest; so they who sow the seed of unrighteousness shall reap a harvest of judgment. This is a fine, bold, and energetic metaphor.



**It hath no stalk]** Nothing that can yield a *blossom*. If it have a *blossom*, that blossom shall not yield *fruit*; if there be *fruit*, the sower shall not enjoy it, for *strangers shall eat it*. The meaning is, the labours of this people shall be utterly unprofitable and vain.

**Verse 8. Now shall they be among the Gentiles]** They shall be carried into captivity, and there be as a vessel wherein there is no pleasure; one soiled, unclean, infectious, to be despised, abhorred, not used. The allusion is to a rotten, corrupted skin-bottle; a bottle made of goat, deer, or calf hide, still commonly used in Asia and Africa. Some of them are splendidly ornamented. This is the case with one now before me made of a goat's skin well dressed, variously painted, and ornamented with leather fringes, tassels, &c. In such a bottle there might be pleasure; but the Israelites are compared to such a bottle, rough, ill-dressed, not ornamented, old, musty, and putrid. This shows the force of the comparison.

**Verse 9. They are gone up to Assyria]** For succour.

**A wild ass alone by himself]** Like that animal, jealous of its liberty, and suffering no rival. If we may credit *Pliny* and others, one male wild ass will keep a whole flock of females to himself, suffer no other to approach them, and even bite off the genitals of the colts, lest in process of time they should become his rivals. “Mares singuli fæminarum gregibus imperitant; timent libidinis æmulos, et ideo gravidas custodiunt, morsuque natos mares castrant.”—*Hist. Nat.*, lib. viii., c. 30. The Israelites, with all this selfishness and love of liberty, took no step that did not necessarily lead to their thralldom and destruction.

**Ephraim hath hired lovers.]** Hath subsidized the neighbouring heathen states.

**Verse 10. For the burden of the king of princes.]** The exactions of the Assyrian king, and the princes of the provinces.

**Verse 11. Many altars to sin]** Though it does not appear that the Jews in Babylon were obliged to worship the idols of the country, except in the case mentioned by Daniel, yet it was far otherwise with the Israelites in Assyria, and the other countries of their dispersion. Because they had made many altars to sin while they were in their own land, they were obliged to *continue* in the land of their captivity a similar system of idolatry against

their will. Thus they felt and saw the evil of their idolatry, without power to help themselves.

**Verse 12. I have written to him the great things of my law]** I have as it were inscribed my laws to them, and they have treated them as matters in which they had no interest.

**Verse 13. They sacrifice flesh]** Bp. *Newcome* translates thus: “They sacrifice gifts appointed unto me, and eat flesh.” They offer to their idols the things which belong to Jehovah; or, while pretending to offer unto the Lord, they eat and drink idolatrously; and therefore the Lord will not accept them.

**They shall return to Egypt.]** Many of them did return to Egypt after the conquest of Palestine by Shalmaneser, and many after the ruin of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar; but they had in effect returned to Egypt by setting up the worship of the golden calves, which were in imitation of the Egyptian *Apis*.

**Verse 14. Israel hath forgotten his Maker]** And therefore built *temples* to other gods. *Judah* had lost all confidence in the Divine protection, and therefore built many fenced cities. But the *fire* of God’s anger burnt up both the temples and the fortified cities.

## HOSEA

## CHAPTER 9

*The prophet reproveth the Israelites for their sacrifices and rejoicings on their corn-floors, by which they ascribed to idols, as the heathen did, the praise of all their plenty, 1. For which reason they are threatened with famine and exile, 2, 3, in a land where they should be polluted, and want the means of worshipping the God of their fathers, or observing the solemnities of his appointment, 4, 5. Nay more; they shall speedily fall before the destroyer, be buried in Egypt, and leave their own pleasant places desolate, 6-9. God is then introduced declaring his early favour for his people, and the delight he took in their obedience; but now they had so deeply revolted, all their glory will take wing, God will forsake them, and their offspring be devoted to destruction, 10-16.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 9

**Verse 1. Rejoice not]** Do not imitate the heathens, nor serve their idols. Do not *prostitute* thy soul and body in practicing their impurities. Hitherto thou hast acted as a *common harlot*, who goes even to the common *threshing places*; connects herself with the meanest, in order to get a *hire* even of the grain there threshed out.

**Verse 3. But Ephraim shall return to Egypt]** See on ~~20813~~ **Hosea 8:13.**

**Verse 4. As the bread of mourners]** By the law, a dead body, and every thing that related to it, the house where it lay, and the persons who touched it, were all polluted and unclean, and whatever they touched was considered as defiled. See ~~63614~~ **Deuteronomy 26:14;** ~~041911~~ **Numbers 19:11, 13, 14.**

**For their bread for their soul]** The bread for the common support of *life* shall not be sanctified to them by having the *first-fruits* presented at the temple.

**Verse 5. What will ye do in the solemn day]** When ye shall be despoiled of every thing by the Assyrians; for the Israelites who remained in the land after its subjection to the Assyrians did worship the true God, and offer unto him the sacrifices appointed by the law, though in an imperfect and schismatic manner; and it was a great mortification to them to be deprived of their religious *festivals* in a land of strangers. See *Calmet*.

**Verse 6. For, lo, they are gone]** Many of them fled to Egypt to avoid the *destruction*; but they went there only to *die*.

**Memphis]** Now *Cairo*, or *Kahira*, found them *graves*.

**The pleasant places for their silver]** The fine estates or *villas* which they had purchased by their money, being now neglected and uninhabited, are covered with *nettles*; and even in their *tabernacles*, *thorns* and *brambles* of different kinds grow. These are the fullest marks of *utter desolation*.

**Verse 7. The days of visitation]** Of punishment *are come*.

**The prophet is a fool]** Who has pretended to foretell, on Divine authority, peace and plenty; for behold all is desolation.

**The spiritual man]** *j wrh vya ish haruach*, the man of spirit, who was ever pretending to be under a *Divine afflatus*.

Is **mad]** He is now *enraged* to see every thing falling out contrary to his prediction.

**Verse 8. The watchman of Ephraim]** The true prophet, *was with-faithful to, God*.

**The prophet]** The *false prophet* is the *snare of a fowler*; is continually deceiving the people, and leading them into *snares*, and infusing into their hearts deep hatred against God and his worship.

**Verse 9. They have deeply corrupted themselves, as in the days of Gibeah]** This relates to that shocking rape and murder of the Levite's wife, mentioned <sup><071916></sup> **Judges 19:16**, &c.

**Verse 10. I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness]** While they were faithful, they were as *acceptable* to me as *ripe grapes* would be to a *thirsty traveller* in the desert.

**I saw your fathers]** Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Caleb, Samuel, &c.

**As the first ripe]** Those grapes, whose bud having come first, and being exposed most to the sun, have been the *first ripe* upon the tree; which tree was now in the vigour of youth, and bore fruit for the *first time*. A metaphor of the *rising prosperity* of the Jewish state.

But **they went to Baal-Peor]** The same as the Roman *Priapus*, and worshipped with the most impure rites.

**And their abominations were according as they loved.]** Or, “they became as abominable as the *object* of their love.” So Bp. *Newcome*. And this was superlatively abominable.

**Verse 11. Their glory shall fly away]** It shall suddenly spring away from them, and return no more.

**From the birth]** “So that there shall be no birth, no carrying in the womb, no conception.”—*Newcome*. They shall cease to glory in their *numbers*; for no *children* shall be *born*, no woman shall be *pregnant*, for none shall *conceive*. Here judgment blasts the very *germs* of population.

**Verse 12. Though they bring up their children]** And were they even to have children, I would *bereave* them of them; for, when I *depart from them*, they shall have all manner of wretchedness and wo.

**Verse 13. Ephraim, as I saw Tyrus]** Tyre was strongly situated on a rock in the sea; Samaria was on a mountain, both strong and pleasant. But the strength and beauty of those cities shall not save them from destruction.

**Ephraim shall bring forth his children to the murderer.]** The people shall be destroyed, or led into captivity by the Assyrians. Of the grandeur, wealth, power, &c., of Tyre, see the notes on Ezekiel, <sup>27:2</sup> **Ezekiel 27:2-28:25.**

**Verse 14. Give them, O Lord: what wilt thou give?]** There is an uncommon beauty in these words. The prophet, seeing the evils that were likely to fall upon his countrymen, begins to make intercession for them; but when he had formed the first part of his petition, “Give them, O Lord!” the prophetic light discovered to him that the petition would not be answered and that God was about to give them something widely different. Then changing his petition, which the Divine Spirit had interrupted, by signifying that he must not proceed in his request, he asks the question, then, “What wilt thou give them?” and the answer is, “Give them a miscarrying womb, and dry breasts.” And this he is commanded to announce. It is probable that the Israelites had prided themselves in the *fruitfulness* of their families, and the numerous *population* of their country. God now tells them that this shall be no more; their wives shall be barren, and their land cursed.

**Verse 15. All their wickedness is in Gilgal]** though we are not directly informed of the fact, yet we have reason to believe they had been guilty of some scandalous practices of idolatry in *Gilgal*. See <sup><2045></sup>**Hosea 4:15**.

**For there I hated them]** And therefore he determined, “for the wickedness of their doings, to drive them out of his house,” so that they should cease to be a part of the heavenly family, either as *sons* or *servants*; for he would “love them no more,” and bear with them no longer.

**Verse 16. Ephraim is smitten]** The thing being determined, it is considered as already done.

**Their root is dried up]** They shall never more be a kingdom. And they never had any political form from their captivity by the Assyrians to the present day.

**Yea, though they bring forth]** See Clarke’s notes on “<sup><2091></sup>**Hosea 9:11-12**”.

**Verse 17. My God will cast them away]** Here the prophet seems to apologize for the severity of these denunciations; and to vindicate the Divine justice, from which they proceeded. It is-

**Because they did not hearken unto him]** That “my God,” the fountain of mercy and kindness, “will cast them away.”

**And they shall be wanderers among the nations.]** And where they have *wandered* to, who can tell? and in what nations to be found, no man knows. *Wanderers* they are; and perhaps even now unknown to themselves. Some have thought they have found them in one country; some, in another; and a very pious writer, in a book entitled, *The Star in the West*, thinks he has found their descendants in the *American Indians*; among whom he has discovered many *customs*, apparently the same with those of the *ancient Jews*, and commanded in the *Law*. He even thinks that the word *Je-ho-vah* is found in their solemn festal cry, *Ye-ho-wa-he*. If they be this long lost people, they are utterly unknown to themselves; their origin being lost in a very remote antiquity.

## HOSEA

## CHAPTER 10

*This chapter treats of the same subject, but elegantly varied. It begins with comparing Israel to a fruitful vine but corrupted by too much prosperity, 1. It next reproves and threatens them for their idolatry, 2; anarchy, 3; and breach of covenant, 4. Their idolatry is then enlarged on; and its fatal consequences declared in terms full of sublimity and pathos, 5-8. God is now introduced complaining of their excessive guilt; and threatening them with captivity in terms that bear a manifest allusion to their favourite idolatry, the worshipping the similitude of a calf or heifer, 9-11. Upon which the prophet, in a beautiful allegory suggested by the preceding metaphors, exhorts them to repentance; and warns them of the dreadful consequences of their evil courses, if obstinately persisted in, 12-15.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 10

**Verse 1. Israel is an empty vine]** Or, *a vine that casteth its grapes.*

**He bringeth forth fruit]** Or, *he laid up fruit for himself.* He abused the blessings of God to the purposes of idolatry. He was prosperous; but his prosperity corrupted his heart.

**According to the multitude of his fruit]** He became idolatrous in proportion to his prosperity; and in proportion to their wealth was the costliness of their images, and the expensiveness of their idol worship. True is the homely saying of old *Quarles*:—

*“So God’s best gifts, usurp’d by wicked ones,  
To poison turn, by their con-ta-gi-ons.”*

Another poet, of a higher order, but worse school, says:—

*Effodiuntur opes, irritamenta malorum.—OVID.*

Of which the words of St. Paul are nearly a literal rendering,—

^Ριζα γαρ πανθων των κακων εστιν η θιλαργυρια.

“For the love of money is the root of all these evils” <sup><50610></sup> **1 Timothy 6:10.** Pity that this beautiful metal, on which God has bestowed such a large portion of mineral perfection, and then hid in the earth, should, on its being *digged up* by man, become the *incentive* to so many *vices*, and draw away

his heart from the Creator of all things, and the fountain of ineffable perfection and goodness.

**Verse 2. Their heart is divided]** They wish to serve God and Mammon, Jehovah and Baal: but this is impossible. Now GOD will do in *judgment* what *they* should have done in *contrition*, “break down their altars, and spoil their images.”

**Verse 3. We have no king]** We have rejected the King of kings; and had we any king, he would be of no service to us in this state, as he would be a captive like ourselves; nor could we have the approbation of God, as we now justly lie under his displeasure.

**Verse 4. They have spoken words]** Vain, empty, deceitful *words*.

**Swearing falsely]** This refers to the alliances made with strange powers, to whom they promised fidelity without intending to be faithful; and from whom they promised themselves protection and support, notwithstanding God was against them, and they knew it. All their words were vain, and in the end as *bitter as gall*.

**Judgment springeth up as hemlock]** As our land lies without cultivation, so that we have nothing but noxious weeds instead of crops; so we have no administration of justice. What is done in this way is a perversion of law, and is as hurtful to society as hemlock would be to animal life. All this may refer to the anarchy that was in the kingdom of Israel before Hoshea’s reign, and which lasted, according to Archbishop *Usher*, *nine* years. They then, literally, “had no king.”

**Verse 5. The inhabitants of Samaria shall fear]** According to *Calmet*, shall worship the calves of Beth-aven; those set up by Jeroboam, at Beth-el. *Fear* is often taken for religious reverence.

**The people thereof shall mourn]** On seeing the object of their worship carried into captivity, as well as themselves.

**And the priests thereof]** **pyrmk** *kemarim*. The priests of Samaria, says *Calmet*, are here called *kemarim*, that is, *black coats*, or *shouters*, because they made loud cries in their sacrifices. Instead of **wl ygy yagilu**, “they shall rejoice;” learned men propose **wl yl y yalilu**, “shall howl,” which is likely to be the true reading, but it is not supported by any of the MSS. yet



discovered. But the *exigentia loci*, the necessity of the place, requires some such word.

**Verse 6. A present to King Jareb]** See on <sup><28513></sup>**Hosea 5:13**. If this be a proper name, the person intended is not known in history: but it is most likely that *Pul*, king of Assyria, is intended, to whom Menahem, king of Israel, appears to have given one of the golden calves, to insure his assistance.

**Verse 7. Her king is cut off as the foam]** As lightly as a puff of wind blows off the foam that is formed below by a fall of water, so shall the kings of Israel be cut off. We have already seen that not less than *four* of them died by assassination in a very short time. See on <sup><28707></sup>**Hosea 7:7**.

**Verse 8. The high-places]** Idol temples.

**Of Aven]** Beth-aven.

**The thorn and the thistle shall come up on their altars]** Owing to the uncultivated and unfrequented state of the land, and of their places of idol worship, the people being all carried away into captivity.

*“And they shall say to the mountains, Cover us,  
And to the hills, Fall on us.”*

“This sublime description of fear and distress our Lord had in view, <sup><22330></sup>**Luke 23:30**, which may be a reference, and not a quotation. However, the *Septuagint*, in the *Codex Alexandrinus*, has the same order of words as occurs in the evangelist. The parallelism makes the passages more beautiful than <sup><11616></sup>**Revelation 6:16**; and <sup><23219></sup>**Isaiah 2:19** wants the animated dramatic form. That there is a reference to the caverns that abounded in the mountainous countries of Palestine, see **Clarke’s note on “<sup><23219></sup>Isaiah 2:19”**.” —*Newcome*.

**Verse 9. Thou hast sinned from the days of Gibeah]** This is another reference to the horrible rape and murder of the Levite’s wife, <sup><17913></sup>**Judges 19:13, 14**.

**There they stood]** Only one tribe was nearly destroyed, viz., that of *Benjamin*. They were *the criminals, the children of iniquity*; the others were faultless, and *stood* only for the rights of justice and mercy.

**Verse 10. When they shall bind themselves in their two furrows.]**

“When they are chastised for their two iniquities,” i.e., the calves in Dan and Beth-el.—*Newcome*. But this double iniquity may refer to what Jeremiah says, <sup>241113</sup>**Jeremiah 11:13**: “My people have committed *two* evils.”—1. They have forsaken me. 2. They have joined themselves to idols.

**Verse 11. Ephraim is as a heifer that is taught]** One thoroughly broken in to the yoke.

**And loveth to tread out]** Goes peaceably in the yoke; and is pleased because, *not being nuzzled*, she eats of the corn.

**I passed over upon her fair neck]** I brought the yoke upon it, that she should not tread out the corn merely, but draw the plough and drag the harrow. These operations of husbandry are all referred to here, with some others. *Ephraim* shall *tread out the corn*, that there may be *seed* for the fields.

**Judah shall plough]** That the *furrows* may receive it.

**Jacob shall break his clods.]** Harrow—that the seed may be covered with the mould.

Israel very frequently made great depredations on Judah; and as this heifer *loved to tread out the corn*, and not *plough*, it is therefore added that he should be made to *plough*, be *put under the yoke*, namely, that of the Assyrians. What is added, “Judah and Jacob shall plough for themselves,” means, that Judah should not now plough for Israel, but for *himself*; as Israel shall no more make depredations upon him.—*Dodd*.

**Verse 12. Sow to yourselves in righteousness]** Let the seed you sow be of the best kind, and in just measure.

**Reap in mercy]** By the blessing of God on this ploughing, sowing, and harrowing, you may expect a good crop in harvest.

**Break up your fallow ground]** Do not be satisfied with a *slight furrow*; let the land that was *fallowed* (slightly ploughed) be broken up again with a *deep furrow*.

**For it is time to seek the Lord]** This should be immediately done: the season is passing; and if you do not get the seed in the ground, the early rain will be past, and your fields will be unfruitful.

**Rain righteousness upon you.]** God will give you the early rain in due time, and in proper measure. Here are the metaphors, and the application cannot be difficult. Here are *ploughing, fallowing, sowing, harrowing, watering, reaping, threshing*, and *feeding* on the produce of well-directed labour. All may be applied to the human heart, and the work of God upon it. Correction, contrition, conversion, receiving the grace of Christ, bringing forth fruit, &c.

**Verse 13. Ye have ploughed wickedness]** Ye have laboured sinfully.

**Ye have reaped iniquity]** The *punishment* due to your iniquity.

**Ye have eaten the fruit of lies]** Your *false worship* and your *false gods* have brought you into *captivity* and *misery*.

**Because thou didst trust in thy way]** Didst confide in thy own counsels, and in *thy mighty men*, and not in the God who made you.

**Verse 14. Shall a tumult arise]** The enemy shall soon fall upon thy people, and take all thy *fortified* places.

**As Shalman spoiled Beth-arbel]** Some think that this refers to *Jerubbaal*, or *Gideon's* victory over *Zalmunna*, general of the Midianites; see ~~1000~~ **Judges 7:1-8:21**. Others think that an allusion is made here to the destruction of *Arbela*, a city of *Armenia*, by *Shalmaneser*, here called *Shalman*; and this while he was only general of the Assyrian forces, and not yet *king*. I think the history to which this refers is unknown. It seems that it was distinguished by some remarkable ferocities.

**The mother was dashed in pieces upon her children.]** But *when, where, how*, and by *whom*, still remain unknown. Conjecture in such a case must be useless.

**Verse 15. So shall Beth-el do unto you]** This shall be the consequence of your *idolatry*.

**In a morning shall the king of Israel utterly be cut off.]** Suddenly, unexpectedly. *Hoshea*, the king of Israel, shall be cut off by the Assyrians. There are some allusions to facts in this chapter, which cannot be easily

verified, as we have not sufficient acquaintance with the history of those times.

## HOSEA

## CHAPTER 11

*This chapter gives a very pathetic representation of God's tender and affectionate regard for Israel, by metaphors chiefly borrowed from the conduct of mothers toward their tender offspring. From this, occasion is taken to reflect on their ungrateful return to the Divine goodness, and to denounce against them the judgments of the Almighty, 1-7. But suddenly and unexpectedly the prospect changes. Beams of mercy break from the clouds just now fraught with vengeance. God, to speak in the language of men, feels the relentings of a tender parent; his bowels yearn; his mercy triumphs; his rebellious child shall yet be pardoned. As the lion of the tribe of Judah, he will employ his power to save his people, he will call his children from the land of their captivity; and, as doves, they will fly to him, a faithful and a holy people, 8-12.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 11

**Verse 1. When Israel was a child]** In the infancy of *his political existence*.

**I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.]** Where he was greatly oppressed; and in this I gave the proof of my *love*. I *preserved* my people in their affliction there, and *brought* them safely out of it.

**Verse 3. I taught Ephraim also to go]** An allusion to a mother or nurse *teaching a child to walk*, directing it how to *lift and lay its feet*, and supporting it in the meantime *by the arms*, that it may use its feet with the greater ease. This is a passage truly pathetic.

**Verse 4. I drew them with cords of a man]** This is a reference to *leading strings*, one end of which is held by the child, the other by the nurse, by which the little one, feeling some support, and gaining confidence, endeavours to walk. God, their heavenly Father, made use of every means and method to teach them to walk in the right and only safe path; for, as the *Targum* says, "As beloved children are drawn I drew them by the strength of love."

**That take of the yoke on their jaws]** I did every thing that mercy could suggest, and justice permit, to make their *duty* their *delight* and *profit*. There appears to be here an illusion to the *moving and pulling forward* the collar or *yoke of beasts* which have been hard at work, to let in the cool air

between it and their neck, so as to refresh them, and prevent that *heat*, which with the *sweat* would scald their necks, and take off not only the *hair*, but the *skin*. I have often done this at the land ends, in ploughing, when at the *turnings* the cattle were permitted a few moments to draw their breath after the hard pull that terminated the furrow at either end of the field:—

**And I laid meat unto them.]** Giving them at the same time a bite of *grass* or *hay*, to encourage them to go on afresh. The metaphor is strong and expressive; and he who ever had or saw the management of cattle in the *plough* or *cart* must admire it. Thus God acted with the people on *whose necks* was the *yoke of his law*. How many privileges, advantages, and comforts did he mingle with his precepts, to make them at once a righteous and happy people!

**Verse 5. He shall not return into—Egypt]** I have brought them thence already, with the design that the *nation* should never return thither again; but as they have sinned, and forfeited my favour and protection, they shall go to *Assyria*; and this *because they refused to return* to me. This view of the verse removes every difficulty.

**Verse 6. The sword shall abide on his cities]** Israel was agitated with external and intestine wars from the time of *Jeroboam the Second*. Although *Zechariah* his son reigned *twelve* years, yet it was in *continual troubles*; and he was at last slain by the rebel *Shallum*, who, having reigned one month, was slain by *Menahem*. *Pekahiah* succeeded his father *Menahem*, and reigned two years, and was killed by *Pekah*, son of *Remaliah*. He joined *Rezin*, king of *Syria*, and made an irruption into the land of *Judah*; but *Ahaz* having obtained succour from *Tiglath-Pileser*, king of *Assyria*, *Pekah* was defeated, and the tribes of *Reuben*, *Gad*, *Naphtali*, and the half-tribe of *Manasseh*, were carried away captives by the *Assyrian* king; and in a short time after, *Hosea*, son of *Elah*, slew *Pekah*, and usurped the kingdom, which he could not possess without the assistance of *Shalmaneser*, who for his services imposed a tribute on the *Israelitish* king. Wishing to rid himself of this yoke, he applied to the king of *Egypt*; but this being known to *Shalmaneser*, he came against *Samaria*, and after a three years' siege took and destroyed it. Thus the sword rested on their cities; it continued in the land till all was ruined. See *Calmet*.

**Verse 7. Though they called them to the Most High]** *Newcome* is better: “And though *they call on him together because of the yoke, he will not*

raise it. He shall receive no refreshment.” See the metaphor, <sup><281104></sup>Hosea 11:4.

**Verse 8. How shall I give thee up]** See Clarke’s notes on “<sup><28104></sup>Hosea 6:4”, where we have similar words from similar feeling.

**Mine heart is turned within me]** *Justice* demands thy *punishment*; *Mercy* pleads for thy *life*. As thou *changest*, *Justice* resolves to *destroy*, or *Mercy* to *save*. My heart is oppressed, and I am weary with *repenting*—with so frequently changing my purpose. All this, though spoken after the manner of men, shows how merciful, compassionate, and loath to punish the God of heaven is. What *sinner* or *saint* upon earth has not been a subject of these *gracious* operations?

**Verse 9. I will not execute]** Here is the *issue* of this conflict in the Divine mind. *Mercy* triumphs over *Judgment*; Ephraim shall be spared. *He is God, and not man*. He cannot be affected by human caprices. They are now *penitent*, and implore mercy; he will not, as *man* would do, punish them for former offenses, when they have fallen into his hand. The *holy place* is in Ephraim, and *God is in this holy place*; and he will not *go into the cities*, as he did into Sodom and Gomorrah, to destroy them. *Judgment* is his strange work. How exceedingly affecting are these two verses!

**Verse 10. They shall walk after the Lord]** They shall discern the operations of his providence, when,

**He shall roar like a lion]** When he shall utter his majestic voice, Cyrus shall make his decree. The *people shall tremble*—be in a state of commotion; every one hurrying to avail himself of the opportunity to return to his own land.

**Verse 11. They shall tremble as a bird]** Those of them that are in *Egypt* shall also be called thence, and shall *speed* hither *as a bird*. Those in *Assyria* shall also be called to return, and they shall *flee as doves* to their windows. All shall, in the fulness of time, return to their own land. And,

**I will place them in their houses, saith the Lord.]** They shall have their *temple* once more, and all their holy ordinances.

**Verse 12. Ephraim compasseth me about with lies]** I think this verse does not well *unite* with the *above*; it belongs to *another subject*, and should begin the following chapter, as in the Hebrew.

**Judah yet ruleth with God]** There is an allusion here to ~~Gen 32:24~~ **Genesis 32:24**, where *Jacob*, having “wrestled with the Angel,” had his name changed to *Israel*, one that *rules with God*. That glory the *Israelites* had lost by their idolatry; but *Judah* still retained the true worship, and alone deserved the name of Israel.

Bp. *Newcome* translates this clause thus:—

“But hereafter they shall come down a people of God, even a faithful people of saints.”

Even allowing this to be the most correct view of the original, I do not see what we gain by this change.



## HOSEA

## CHAPTER 12

*The prophet, in very pointed terms, describes the unprofitableness and destruction attending vicious courses; particularly such as Ephraim pursued, who forsook God, and courted the alliance of idolatrous princes, 1. Judah is also reproved, 2. He is reminded of the extraordinary favour of God to his father Jacob, in giving him the birthright; and exhorted, after his example, to wrestle with God (the Angel of the covenant, the same unchangeable Jehovah) for a blessing; and to love mercy and execute justice, 3-6. Ephraim is accused of pursuing practices that are deceitful, although pretending to integrity, 7, 8. God then threatens to deprive this people of their possessions, 9, as they had rejected every means of reformation, 10, and given themselves up to gross impieties, 11. And, as an aggravation of their guilt, they are reminded from what humble beginnings they had been raised, 12, 13. The Divine judgments about to fall upon Israel are declared to be the result of great provocation, 14.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 12

**Verse 1. Ephraim feedeth on wind]** He forms and follows empty and unstable counsels.

**Followeth after the east wind]** They are not only empty, but *dangerous* and *destructive*. The *east wind* was, and still is, in all countries, a *parching, wasting, injurious* wind.

**He daily increaseth lies]** He promises himself safety from foreign alliances. He “made a covenant with the Assyrians,” and *sent* a subsidy of “oil to Egypt.” The latter *abandoned* him; the *former oppressed* him.

**Verse 2. The Lord hath also a controversy with Judah]** The rest of the prophecy belongs both to Judah and Israel. He reproaches both with their ingratitude, and threatens them with God’s anger. In order to make their infidelity the more hateful, and their malice the more sensible, he opposes to them the righteousness, obedience, and piety of their father Jacob. He recalls to their minds the benefits they had received since they returned from Egypt. He speaks afterwards of their kings; and how, in their ingratitude, they refused to have him for their monarch. Having mentioned this fact, he subjoins reflections, exhortations, invectives, and threatenings, and continues this subject in *this* and the *two* following *chapters*.—*Calmet*.

**Verse 3. He took his brother by the heel]** See on <sup><012526></sup>Genesis 25:26; 32:24, &c.

**Verse 4. He had power over the Angel]** Who represented the invisible Jehovah.

**He wept, and made supplication]** He entreated with tears that God would bless him; and he *prevailed*. The circumstance of his *weeping* is not mentioned in *Genesis*.

**He found him in Beth-el]** It was there that God made those glorious promises to Jacob relative to his posterity. See <sup><012813></sup>Genesis 28:13-15.

**Verse 5. The Lord is his memorial.]** He is the same God as when Jacob so successfully wrestled with him.

**Verse 6. Therefore turn thou to thy God]** Because he is the same, and cannot change. Seek him as faithfully and as fervently as Jacob did, and you will find him the same merciful and compassionate Being.

**Verse 7. He is a merchant]** Or a *Canaanite*; referring to the *Phœnicians*, famous for their traffic. Ephraim is as corrupt as those heathenish traffickers were. He kept, as many in all ages have done, a *weight* and a *weight*; a *heavy* one to *buy* with and a *light* one to *sell* by.

**Verse 8. I am become rich]** They boasted in their riches, notwithstanding the *unjust manner* in which they were acquired.

**In all my labours they shall find none iniquity in me]** This is frequently the language of merchants, tradesmen, &c. None are so full of professions of equity and justice, while all the time they are endeavouring to overreach, both in buying and selling. “Sir, I cannot afford it at that price.” “It is not *mine* for that money.” “I assure you that it cost me more than you offer.” “I am sorry I cannot take your money; but if I did, I should lose by the article,” &c., &c., &c. I have heard such language over and over, when I knew every word was false. *Truth* is a sacred thing in the sight of God; but who regards it as he should? There are, however, many noble exceptions among merchants and tradesmen. Bp. *Newcome* gives another turn to the subject, by translating:—

*“All his labours shall not be found profitable unto him,  
For the iniquity wherewith he hath sinned.”*

**Verse 9. And I—the Lord thy God]** I who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, will again make thee to dwell in tabernacles. This appears to be a *threatening*. I will reduce you to as miserable a state in the land of your captivity, as you often were through your transgressions in the wilderness. This was the opinion of some of the ancients on this verse; and the *context* requires it to be understood in this way. I do not think that the *feast of tabernacles* is referred to.

**Verse 10. I have also spoken]** I have used every means, and employed every method, to instruct and save you. I have sent *prophets*, who spake *plainly*, exhorting, warning, and beseeching you to return to me. They have had *Divine visions*, which they have declared and *interpreted*. They have used *similitudes*, *symbols*, *metaphors*, *allegories*, &c., in order to fix your attention, and bring you back to your duty and interest. And, alas! all is in vain; you have not profited by my condescension. This text *St. Paul* seems to have had full in view, when he wrote, <sup><8010></sup>**Hebrews 1:1:** “God who, at SUNDRY TIMES and in DIVERS MANNERS, spake in *time past* unto the FATHERS by the PROPHETS.” See the note on the above.

Dr. *Dodd* supposes that there are *three* distinct kinds of prophecy mentioned here: 1. Immediate inspiration, when God declares the very words. 2. Vision; a representation of *external objects* to the *mind*, in as lively a manner as if they were conveyed by the *senses*. 3. Parables and apt resemblances.

**Verse 11. Iniquity in Gilead]** Gilgal and Gilead are equally iniquitous, and equally idolatrous. Gilead, which was beyond Jordan, had already been brought under subjection by Tiglath-Pileser. Gilgal, which was on this side Jordan, shall share the same fate; because it is now as idolatrous as the other.

**Their altars are as heaps]** They occur everywhere. The whole land is given to idolatry.

**Verse 12. Served for a wife]** Seven years for *Rachel*.

**For a wife he kept** sheep.] Seven years for *Leah*; having been cheated by Laban, who gave him first *Leah*, instead of *Rachel*; and afterwards made him serve seven years more before he would confirm his first engagement. Critics complain of want of connection here. Why is this isolated fact predicted? Thus, in a detached sentence, the prophet speaks of the low

estate of their ancestors, and how amply the providence of God had preserved and provided for them. This is all the connection the place requires.

**Verse 13. By a prophet (Moses) the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet (Joshua) was he preserved.]** Joshua succeeded Moses, and brought the Israelites into the promised land; and when they passed the Jordan at Gilgal, he received the covenant of circumcision; and yet this same place was now made by them the seat of idolatry! How blind and how ungrateful!

**Verse 14. Therefore shall he leave his blood upon him]** He will not remove his guilt. These are similar to our Lord's words, ~~4036~~ **John 3:36; 9:41:** "He that believeth not on the Son of God, shall not see life, for the wrath of God ABIDETH ON HIM"—shall not be removed by any remission, as he rejects the only way in which he can be saved. *Because ye say, We see; therefore, YOUR SIN REMAINETH*, i.e., it still stands charged against you. Your miseries and destruction are of your own procuring; your perdition is of yourselves. God is as *merciful* as he is *just*.

## HOSEA

## CHAPTER 13

*Thus chapter begins with observing that the fear of God leads to prosperity, but sin to ruin; a truth most visibly exemplified in the sin and punishment of Ephraim, 1-3. As an aggravation of their guilt, God reminds them of his former favours, 4, 5; which they had shamefully abused, 6; and which now expose them to dreadful punishments, 7, 8. He, however, tempers these awful threatenings with gracious promises; and, on their repentance, engages to save them, when no other could protect them, 9-11. But, alas! instead of repenting, Ephraim is filling up the measure of his iniquity, 12, 13. Notwithstanding this, God promises to put forth his almighty power in behalf of his people, and, as it were, raise them from the dead, 14; although, in the meantime, they must be visited with great national calamities, compared first to the noxious and parching east wind, 15, and described immediately after in the plainest terms, 16.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 13

**Verse 1. When Ephraim spake trembling]** When he was meek and humble, of a broken heart and contrite spirit.

**He exalted himself in Israel]** He became great in God's sight; he rose in the Divine esteem in proportion as he sank in his own. But this did not continue.

**He offended in Baal]** He became an idolater.

**He died.]** The sentence of death from the Divine justice went out against him.

This has been differently understood: "As soon as Ephraim spake (To your tents, O Israel!) There was a trembling or commotion: then the kingdom was exalted in Israel." Thus taken, it refers to the division of the *ten* tribes from Rehoboam, son of Solomon, <sup><11216></sup>**1 Kings 12:16**, &c., and the establishment of the kingdom of Israel under Jeroboam in opposition to that of Judah; which breach was never healed.

**Verse 2. And now they sin more and more]** They increase in every kind of vice, having abandoned the great Inspirer of virtue.

**Let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves.]** This was the *test*. If there be a Jew that pretends to sacrifice, and whose conversion is dubious, let him come openly and *kiss the calves*. This will show what he is; no *real* Jew will do this. If he be an *idolater*, he will not scruple. This was the ancient method of *adoration*. 1. They *kissed* the idol. 2. When the statue was too high or too far off, they presented the hand, in token of alliance. 3. They brought that hand respectfully to their mouths, and kissed it. This was the genuine act of *adoration*; *from ad, to, and os, oris, the mouth*. So PLINY, *Hist. Nat.*, lib. xxviii., c. 1. Adorando, dexteram ad oscula referimus.

And APULEIUS, *Asin.*, lib. iv.: Admoventes oribus suis dexteram, ut ipsam prorsus deam religiosis adorationibus venerabantur. See *Calmet*, and see **Clarke's note on "<sup><18317></sup>Job 31:17"**.

**Verse 3. Therefore they shall be as the morning CLOUD—as the early DEW—as the CHAFF—as the SMOKE]** *Four* things, most easy to be driven about and dissipated, are employed here to show how they should be *scattered* among the nations, and dissipated by captivity.

**Verse 4. I am the Lord thy God]** This was the first discovery I made of myself to you, and the *first commandment* I gave; and I showed you that besides me there was no Saviour. There is a remarkable addition in the Septuagint here: "But I am Jehovah thy God, who stretched out the heavens and created the earth. And I showed them not to thee, that thou shouldest walk after them. And I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt," &c. This might have been once in the Hebrew text.

**Verse 5. I did know thee]** I *approved* of thee; I *loved* thee; and by miraculously providing for thee in that land of *drought*, I demonstrated my love.

**Verse 6. According to their pasture]** They had a rich pasture, and were amply supplied with every good. They became *exalted in their heart*, *forgot their God*, and became a prey to their enemies. "He that exalteth himself shall be abased."

**Verse 7. I will be unto them as a lion]** לִי וְשַׁחַל is supposed to mean here the *black lion*, frequent in Ethiopia.

**As a leopard]** רִמָּנָא *namar*, so termed from its *spotted skin*, for *to be spotted* is the signification of the root.

**Will I observe them]** The leopard, tiger, and panther will hide themselves in thick bush-wood, near where they expect any prey to pass; and as soon as it comes near, spring suddenly upon it. To this is the allusion in the text: “By the way will I observe them;” watch for them as the leopard does. They shall be greatly harassed even on their way to Assyria, when going into captivity.

**Verse 8. As a bear—bereaved]** This is a figure to denote excessive ferocity. See Clarke’s note on “<sup><10178></sup>2 Samuel 17:8”, where a remarkable instance is given.

**And will rend the caul of their heart]** Every savage beast goes first to the *seat of the blood* when it has seized its prey; as in this fluid they delight more than in the most delicate parts of the flesh.

**There will I devour them like a lion]** *aybl labi*, the *old strong lion*; drinking the blood, tearing the flesh, and breaking the bones to extract the marrow.

**The wild beast shall tear them]** Probably this refers to the *chakal* or *jackal*, who frequently hunts down the prey, which the lion takes the liberty to devour, while the *jackal* stands by, and afterwards picks the bones. Hence he has been called the *lion’s PROVIDER*, and *the lion’s waiting-man*.

**Verse 9. O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself]** These evils come not by my *immediate infliction*; they are the consequences of *thy own crimes*. In the above terrifying figures of the ferocious beasts, the prophet only shows what they would meet with from the hand of the *Assyrians* in the war, the famine, and the captivity; God being represented as *doing* what he only *permits* to be done.

**But in me is thine help.]** “Though thou hast destroyed thyself, yet in me alone can thy help be found”—*Newcome*. And others read, *And who will help thee?* reading *ym mi*, *who*, for *yb bi*, *in me*. Though this is countenanced by the *Syriac*, yet there is no evidence of it in any of the MSS. yet collated, nor do I think it to be the true reading.

**Verse 10. Give me a king and princes?]** Referring to the time in which they cast off the Divine theocracy and chose *Saul* in the place of *Jehovah*.

**Verse 11. I gave thee a king in mine anger]** Such was *Saul*; for they highly offended God when they clamored to have a king like the heathen nations that were around them.

**Took him away in my wrath.]** Permitted *him* and the *Israelites* to fall before the Philistines. Others think that *Shalmaneser* was the *king thus given*, and *Hoshea* the king thus *taken away*.

**Verse 12. The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up]** It is *registered* in my court of justice; the *death warrant* is in store, and will be produced in due time. Though there be not at present the judgment inflicted which such glaring transgressions demand, yet it will surely come. Such crimes cannot go unpunished.

**Verse 13. The sorrows of a travailing woman]** These judgments shall come suddenly and *unavoidably*.

The place of **the breaking forth of children.]** As there is a critical time in parturition in which the mother in hard labour may by skilful assistants be eased of her burden, which, if neglected, may endanger the life both of parent and child, so there was a time in which Ephraim might have returned to God, but they would not; therefore they are now in danger of being finally destroyed. And, speaking after the manner of men, he must be deemed an *unwise son*, who if he had power and consideration, would prolong his stay in the porch of life, where he must necessarily be suffocated; so is Ephraim, who, though warned of his danger, having yet power to escape, continued in his sin, and is now come to destruction. I could illustrate the allusion in the text farther, and show the accurate propriety of the original; but the subject forbids it.

**Verse 14. I will ransom them from the power of the grave]** In their captivity they are represented as *dead* and *buried*, which is a similar view to that taken of the Jews in the Babylonish captivity by Ezekiel in his *vision of the valley of dry bones*. They are now lost as to the purpose for which they were made, for which God had wrought so many miracles for them and for their ancestors; but the gracious purpose of God shall not be utterly defeated. He will bring them out of that grave, and ransom them from that death; for as they have *deserved* that death and disgraceful burial, they must be *redeemed* and *ransomed* from it, or still lie under it. And who can do this but God himself? And he will do it. In the prospect of this the prophet exclaims, in the person of the universal Redeemer, “O death, I will



be thy plagues;” I will bring into thy reign the principle of its destruction. The *Prince of life* shall lie for a time under thy power, that he may destroy that power.

**O grave, I will be thy destruction]** I will put an end to thy dreary domination by rising from the dead, and bringing life and immortality to life by my Gospel, and by finally raising from the death the whole human race in the day of the general resurrection.

**I wav** *sheol*, which we translate *grave*, is the *state of the dead*. **twm** *maveth*, which we translate *death*, is the *principle of corruption* that renders the body unfit to be longer the tenement of the soul, and finally decomposes it. *Sheol* shall be destroyed, for it must deliver up all its dead. *Maveth* shall be annihilated, for the *body shall be raised incorruptible*. See the use which the apostle makes of this passage, <sup><4615></sup>**1 Corinthians 15:54, 55**; but he does not quote from the Hebrew, nor from any of the ancient versions. He had to apply the subject anew; and the Spirit, which had originally given the words, chose to adapt them to the subject then in hand, which was the *resurrection of the dead in the last day*. Instead of **Ëyrbd** *debareycha*, *thy plagues*, one of my oldest MSS., *ninety-six* of Kennicott’s and *thirty-two* of *Deuteronomy Rossi’s*, have **Ërbd** *debarcha*, *thy plague*, that which shall *carry thee off*, as the *plague* does them who are affected by it. To *carry off*, *carry away*, is one of the regular meanings of the verb **rbd** *dabar*.

**Repentance shall be hid from mine eyes.]** On these points I will not *change my purpose*; this is the signification of *repentance* when attributed to God.

**Verse 15. Though he be fruitful]** **ayrpy** *yaphri*; a paronomasia on the word **pyrpa** *ephrayim*, which comes from the same root **hrp** *parah*, to be fruitful, to *sprout*, to *bud*.

**An east wind shall come]** As the east wind parches and blasts all vegetation, so shall *Shalmaneser* blast and destroy the Israelitish state.

**Verse 16. Samaria shall become desolate]** This was the capital of the Israelitish kingdom. What follows is a simple prophetic declaration of the cruelties which should be exercised upon this hapless people by the Assyrians in the sackage of the city.

## HOSEA

## CHAPTER 14

*By the terrible denunciation of vengeance which concludes the preceding chapter, the prophet is led to exhort Israel to repentance, furnishing them with a beautiful form of prayer, very suitable to the occasion, 1-3. Upon which God, ever ready to pardon the penitent, is introduced making large promises of blessings, in allusion to those copious dews which refresh the green herbs, and which frequently denote, not only temporal salvation, but also the rich and refreshing comforts of the Gospel, 4-7. Their reformation from idolatry is foretold, and their consequent prosperity, under the emblem of a green flourishing fir tree, 8; but these promises are confined to those who may bring forth the fruits of righteousness, and the wicked are declared to have no share in them, 9.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 14

**Verse 1. O Israel, return unto the Lord]** These words may be considered as addressed to the people now in captivity; suffering much, but having still much more to suffer if they did not repent. But it seems all these evils might yet be prevented, though so positively predicted, if the people would repent and return; and the very exhortation to this repentance shows that they still had power to repent, and that God was ready to save them and avert all these evils. All this is easily accounted for on the doctrine of the *contingency of events*, i.e., the poising a multitude of events on the possibility of being and not being, and leaving the will of man to turn the scale; and that God will not foreknow a thing *as absolutely certain*, which his will has determined to make *contingent*. A doctrine against which some solemn men have blasphemed, and philosophic infidels declaimed; but without which fate and dire necessity must be the universal governors, *prayer* be a useless meddling, and Providence nothing but the ineluctable adamantine chain of unchangeable events; all virtue is vice, and vice virtue, or there is no distinction between them, each being eternally determined and unalterably fixed by a sovereign and uncontrollable will and unvarying necessity, from the operation of which no soul of man can escape, and no occurrence in the universe be otherwise than it is. From such blasphemy, and from the *monthly* publications which avouch it, good Lord, deliver us!

**Verse 2. Take with you words]** And you may be assured that you pray aright, when you use the words which God himself has put in your mouths. On this very ground there is a potency in the LORD'S PRAYER, when offered up believingly, beyond what can be found in any human composition. And it may be presumed that it was this consideration that induced our *reformers* to introduce it so *frequently* in the public liturgy.

See the order of God's directions here:—

1. Hearing these merciful invitations, believe them to be *true*.
2. Cast aside your idols; and return to God as your Maker, King, and Saviour.
3. *Take with you* the words by which you have been encouraged, and plead them before God.
4. Remember your iniquity, deeply deplore it, and beg of God to *take it all away*.
5. Let faith be in exercise to receive what God waits to impart. "Receive us graciously;"

**bwc j qw** *vekach tob, receive, or let us receive good; when thou has emptied us of evil, fill us with goodness.*

6. Be then determined, through grace, to live to his glory, "so shall we render thee the calves" (**μyrp parim**, for which the *versions* in general read **yrrp peri, fruits**, omitting the **μ mem**) "of our lips;" the sacrifices of *praise, thanksgiving, gratitude*, and the hearty *obedience* which our *lips* have often promised.

7. Having thus determined, specify your *resolutions* to depend on God alone for all that can make you wise, useful, holy, and happy. The *resolutions* are:—

1. *Asshur shall not save us*—We will neither trust in, nor fear, this rich and powerful king. We will not look either to riches or power for true rest and peace of mind.
2. *We will not ride upon horses*—We shall no more fix our hopes on the proud Egyptian cavalry, to deliver us out of the hands of enemies to whom

thy Divine justice has delivered us. We will expect no rest nor happiness in the elegances of life, and gratification of our senses.

3. *Neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods*—We will not trust in any thing *without* us; nor even in any good thing we are able to do through thy grace; knowing we have nothing but what we have received. We will trust in thy infinite mercy for our final salvation.

4. And we will do all this from the conviction, that *in thee the fatherless findeth mercy*; for we are all alike helpless, desolate, perishing *orphans*, till translated into thy family.

**Verse 4. I will heal their backsliding]** Here is the *answer* of God to these prayers and resolutions. See its parts:—

1. Ye have backslidden and fallen, and are grievously and mortally wounded by that fall; but I, who am the Author of life, and who redeem from death, will *heal* all these wounds and spiritual diseases.

2. *I will love them freely*—*hbdn nedabah*, after a *liberal, princely* manner. I will love them so as to do them incessant good. It shall not be a love of *affection* merely, but shall be a *beneficial love*. A love that not only *feels delight in itself*, but fills them with *delight* who are its objects, by making them unutterably and supremely happy.

3. *For mine anger is turned away from him*—Because he has turned back to me. Thus God and man become *friends*.

**Verse 5. I will be as the dew unto Israel]** On these metaphors I gladly avail myself of the elegant and just observations of Bp. *Lowth*. “These verses (<sup><281416></sup>**Hosea 14:5-7**) contain gracious promises of God’s favour and blessings upon Israel’s conversion. In the *fifth* verse, it is described by that refreshment which copious *dews* give to the grass in summer. If we consider the nature of the climate, and the necessity of *dews* in so hot a country, not only to refresh, but likewise to preserve life; if we consider also the beauty of the oriental *lilies*, the fragrance of the *cedars* which grow upon Lebanon, the beauteous appearance which the spreading *olive trees* afforded, the exhilarating coolness caused by the shade of such trees, and the *aromatic smell* exhaled by the *cedars*; we shall then partly understand the force of the metaphors here employed by the prophet; but their full energy no one can conceive, till he feels both the *want*, and enjoys

the *advantage*, of the particulars referred to in that climate where the prophet wrote.”—*Lowth’s twelfth and nineteenth* prelection; and *Dodd* on the place.

What a glorious prophecy! What a wonderful prophet! How sublime, how energetic, how just! The great master prophet, Isaiah, alone could have done this better. And these promises are not for *Israel* merely after the flesh; they are for all the people of God. *We* have a lot and portion in the matter; God also places his love upon *us*. Here the reader must feel some such sentiment as the shepherd in *Virgil*, when enraptured with the elegy which his associate had composed on their departed friend. The phraseology and metaphors are strikingly similar; and therefore I shall produce it.

*Tale tuum carmen nobis, divine poeta,  
Quale sopor fessis in gramine, quale per æstum  
Dulcis aquæ saliente sitim restinguere rivo.  
Nec calamis solum æquiparas, sed voce magistrum.  
Fortunate puer! tu nunc eris alter ab illo.  
Nos tamen hæc quocunque modo tibi nostra vicissim  
Dicemus, Daphninque tuum tollemus ad astra:  
Daphnin ad astra feremus: amavit nos quoque Daphnis.  
VIRGIL. Ecl. v., ver. 45.*

*“O heavenly poet, such thy verse appears,  
So sweet, so charming to my ravish’d ears,  
As to the weary swain with cares oppress’d  
“Beneath the sylvan shade, refreshing rest;  
As to the feverish traveller, when first  
He finds a crystal stream to quench his thirst.  
In singing, as in piping, you excel;  
And scarce your master could perform so well.  
O fortunate young man! at least your lays  
Are next to his, and claim the second praise.  
Such as they are, my rural songs I join  
To raise your Daphnis to the powers divine;  
For Daphnis was my friend, as well as thine.”*

**Verse 7.** They that dwell under his shadow shall return] The *Targum* is curious: “They shall be gathered together from the midst of their captivity; they shall dwell under the shadow of *his* CHRIST, and the dead shall revive.”

**They shall revive as the corn]** The justness and beauty of this metaphor is not generally perceived. After the corn has been a short time above the earth, in a single spike, the blades begin to separate, and the stalk to spring out of the centre. The side leaves turn back to make way for the protruding stalk; and fall bending down to the earth, assuming a *withered* appearance, though still attached to the plant. To look at the corn in this state, no one, unacquainted with the circumstance, could entertain any sanguine hope of a copious *harvest*. In a short time other leaves spring out; the former freshen, and begin to stand erect; and the whole seems to *revive from a vegetative death*. This is the circumstance to which the prophet refers “they shall revive as the corn.” Of this a prudent and profitable use may be made.

1. When a soul is first “drawn by the cords of love,” <sup><21104></sup>**Hosea 11:4**, every thing seems to it promising, comfortable, and delightful, like the corn in its *first state*.

2. But when the Spirit of judgment brings to the light of conscience the hidden things of iniquity, and repentance is deepened into *contrition*, the broken and the contrite heart groans, and thinks that *all is lost*; deep distress takes place, and discouragement succeeds discouragement. This answers to the corn in its *second state*.

3. By and by the pardon comes, and God’s love is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost; every hope is *revived* and realized, the *full corn* in the ear becomes manifest; and this answers to the corn in its *third state*. “They shall revive as the corn.” Glory be to God for his unspeakable gift!

**Verse 8. What have I to do any more with idols?]** The conversion of Ephraim is now as complete as it was sincere. God hears and observes this.

**I am like a green fir tree.]** Perhaps these words should be joined to the preceding, as *Newcome* has done, and be a part of God’s speech to Ephraim. “I have heard him; and I have seen him as a flourishing fir tree.” He is become strong and vigorous; and from his present appearance of healthiness, his future increase and prosperity may be safely anticipated.

**From me is thy fruit found.]** All thy goodness springs from the principle of grace which I have planted in thy soul; for as the earth cannot bring forth fruit without the blessing of God, sending the *dews* and *rains*, with the *genial rays* of the sun, so neither can the soul of man, even of the most pious, bear fruit, without a continual influence from the Most High.

Without the *former*, neither *grass* could grow for *cattle*, nor *corn* for the service of *man*; without the *latter*, no seeds of righteousness could take root, no stalk of promise could grow, no fruit of grace could be produced. And the unclean spirit, which was cast out, would soon return; and, finding his former house empty, swept, and garnished, would re-enter with seven demons of greater power and worse influence; and the latter end of that man would be worse than the first. Reader, ever consider that all *thy good* must be derived from God; and all that good must be preserved in thee by his continued influence of *light, love, and power* upon thy soul.

**Verse 9. Who is wise, and he shall understand these things?**] What things? Those which relate to the *backslidings, iniquity, and punishment* of Israel; and to the *mercy and kindness* of God in their promised restoration. *The things* which belong to the work of *sin* in the heart; *the things* which belong to the work of *grace* in the soul; and particularly *the things* mentioned in this wonderful chapter.

**Prudent, and he shall know them?**] He who endeavours to *understand* them, who lays his heart to them, such a person shall understand them.

**For the ways of the Lord are right**] This is the *conclusion* which the prophet makes from the whole. All God's conduct, both in the *dispensation of justice and mercy*, is right: all as it should be, all as it must be; because he is too wise to err, too good to be unkind.

**The just shall walk in them**] This is a truth which he will always acknowledge; and illustrate it by a righteous and godly life.

**But the transgressors shall fall therein.**] Howsoever good they might have been before, if they do not consider the necessity of depending upon God; of receiving all their light, life, power, and love from him; ever evidencing that *faith* which *worketh by love*; maintaining an obedient conduct, and having respect to all God's precepts; they shall fall, even in the "way of righteousness." When still using the *Divine ordinances*, and *associating with God's people*, they shall perish from the way; and be like Ephraim, who once "spoke trembling," and "was exalted in Israel," who was "God's beloved son," and "called out of Egypt;" yet, by "offending in Baal," giving way to "the idols of his heart," fell from God, fell into the hands of his enemies, and became a wretched thrall in a heathen land.

*“Whoso is wise, let him understand these things!  
Whoso is prudent, let him know them!”*——

He who is well instructed will make a proper application of what he has here read; will tremble at the *threatenings*, and embrace the *promises*, of his God.

The *Targum* is worthy the most serious attention.

“The ways of the Lord are right, and the just who walk in them shall live for ever; but the ungodly, because they have not walked in them, shall be delivered into hell.”

How instructive, how convincing, how awakening, and yet how consolatory, are the words of this prophecy! Reader, lay them to heart. A godly mind cannot consider them in vain; such shall know them, and know that the ways of the Lord are right.