

Hosea #3 Ch. 4-5 Israel's Willful Ignorance

by Chuck Missler

Hosea's message is a warning to us to not ignore God's Word and to remember the source of our prosperity, highlighting the dangers of idolatry and the importance of living a life of character and integrity.

Duration: 1:15:47

Scripture: Hosea 4:1, Hosea 5:6, Hosea 5:15 - 6:1, Hosea 12:7, Matthew 6:33, Luke 12:48

Topics: "Ignorance"

Description

In this sermon on the book of Hosea, the speaker begins by highlighting the broken home of Israel as a result of their adulterous relationship with God. The focus then shifts to chapter 4, where God presents his charges against Israel, comparing it to a court case. The speaker emphasizes the sins of omission, such as the lack of truth, mercy, and knowledge of God in the land. The sermon concludes by emphasizing that God's holiness demands an indictment for Israel's sin and that justice requires punishment.

Transcript

Well, I have to tell you candidly that I'm really enjoying Hosea. And I've taught it before, many years ago, more than 10 years ago. But it's fun getting back into it, and I see it in a whole different light, for lots of different reasons, probably.

And there's so much coming out here. In the interest of time, I won't try to appraise the whole background that we've done so far, other than just a quick context thing. Hosea was contemporary of Isaiah and Amos, but he primarily spoke to the Northern Kingdom.

Israel broke into two, of course, after Solomon's death. The Northern Kingdom going into idolatry. Southern Kingdom doing a little bit better for a little bit longer, but both declining.

Northern Kingdom has a very, very provocative predicament. As we jump into the Old Testament, as we read these ancient writings, it's easy to sort of dismiss it as back in its... You plunge into it to get sort of a perspective of their own historical background. We need to remember what Romans 15.4 tells us.

Paul tells us in Romans 15.4, Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we, through the patience and the comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope. We need to recognize and always be sensitive to, not just the moral lessons that are there embodied, but messages even in a broader sense for you and I and today. Now, as we look at Hosea's burden for the Northern Kingdom, we

discover that it has two characteristics that are rather startling.

Its primary characteristics were, first of all, that it was the most prosperous time of their history. Under Jeroboam, they had a standing army. They conquered all the way to Damascus.

They were prosperous. They had, you know, their stock indexes were breaking new highs. Everybody was really enjoying prosperity.

So, it was the best of times. In fact, the whole thing reminds us of the opening line of Charles Dickens' book, *The Tale of Two Cities*. It was the best of times, and it was the worst of times.

Materialistically, it was the best of times in their history. Morally, it was the lowest ebb of their history. So bad that God was about to take action on that.

And that's what Hosea is trying to get across to them. They were prosperous, and yet they had reached new lows in morality. Idol worship, and faithlessness, and all kinds of things we're going to deal with as we get into it.

And God is, through Hosea, going to warn them that it's so bad that they have turned from Him. They've forgotten who the real source of their prosperity was, that He is going to use their enemies as a means of judgment. And that's a pretty heavy message that Hosea has for them, but it's incredibly instructive if we watch for it and apply it to ourselves.

America is its most prosperous era of its history, and yet America has forgotten the source of its prosperity and turned itself from God. And what also is the best of times in America, best of times we've ever had. It's just prosperous.

You know, Tao is pushing, what, 11,000? And yet, morally, it's unbelievable. It is unbelievable as you start trying to measure and perceive that. So the parallels there are very, very, very, very disturbing.

And, of course, in Hosea, we have Hosea instructed to take Gomer as his wife, who is an adulteress. She has three children, and God has them named, these three children, prophetically. One's called Jezreel, which is a pun, sort of, or a homonym.

It can mean sown and planted, and it can also mean scattered. The idea of sowing and scattering are very similar, but they can be used opposite means. Sowing, like planting in the ground, or scattering, and it's used both ways by God describing Israel's future.

And then the daughter was Romah, which means pitied, or I should say it means love, but lo-Romah means not love, pitied, in effect. And Ami means my people. And he has them, he names the second child lo-Romah, unloved, pitied, and the third child lo-Ami, not my people.

God disowns them for a while. He uses that prophetically. And, of course, in all of this, we're going to see the message that God has also, not just profoundly significant for their day, but God also uses Hosea to lay out Israel's history, yet future, in very startling ways.

It's kind of interesting to realize that Israel was the result of a broken home, because of the adulterous wife of Jehovah. Kind of interesting observation. But we've talked about that in the first three chapters.

We're now going to talk tonight some issues, explore chapter four. We're in chapter four of Hosea, and I'm going to call chapter four the case for the prosecution, the formal charges. We're going to discover, from this point on, Hosea's personal life will fade in the background, and the rest of the book is going to be increasingly prophetic.

So out of the heartbreak of his own home, we find the heartbreak of God, as he speaks to the nation. God is going to speak out in this chapter, and the next one, the specific charges that he has against Israel, just like a prosecutor. And he's going to be prosecutor, judge, witness, all put together.

He's going to spell out the charges, including lawlessness, immorality, the ignorance of God's Word, and idolatry. Now, when we say idolatry, you and I tend to think of idols carved of stone or wood. Colossians 3.5 tells us that covetousness is idolatry.

Let me ask you something. Is there any nation on the face of the earth that's more committed to covetousness than the United States? When he speaks of adultery, spiritual adultery, he's talking about idol worship, but that's also, in our parlance, covetousness. Now, you need to understand, we're going to talk a little bit about God's law, and clearly we're not under the Mosaic law, but God does set out through Israel His pattern for any nation that wants to be blessed.

So we're not under Mosaic law, don't carry that too far, but we're going to talk more about that as we go. But this chapter, chapter 4 in Hosea spells out God's charges in a depth that's unparalleled anywhere else in the Old Testament. So it's a very worthwhile study.

God's holiness demands an indictment for Israel's sin, and God's justice requires that she be punished, and both of those are going to be coming up here. So let's take a look at this, and I'm going to call, you know, chapter 5 the subpoena from God. Chapter 1, chapter 4, verse 1, excuse me.

Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel, for the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, no mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. It almost sounds like hear ye, hear ye, the court is in session. It's almost the flavor of the way this opens.

The first thing he lists are the sins of omission, no truth, no mercy, no knowledge of God. See, they've been brainwashed in their idolatry. He says there's no truth.

He says there is no truth, no faithfulness. You know, it's interesting as we stand back and look at our own culture, how we have lost the sanctity of a commitment. We see that in marriages.

There was a day that those things were held sacred. They were vows before the throne of God. Not today.

In business, the ethics, they may not have been moral men, but the ethics were my word is my bond. And today it's so sumi, you know, different atmosphere even in business. And I won't go on to that.

We'll spend all night talking about my business experiences for the same thing. You've all been there. You know what I'm talking about.

In our culture, we have abandoned the idea of character as any prelude to destiny. It used to be that you'd grow up and you try to develop character because you felt that was one of the prerequisite ingredients for success. To be straight, to be solid, to be honorable, to have a good reputation.

Not today. If you do that, it isn't because you necessarily connect it with your destiny as far as your social and commercial intercourse is involved. So it's interesting that 700 years after Hosea, John would write, the one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

As I say, the Holy One of Israel is going to be acting here as the prosecuting attorney, the plaintiff, the witness, the judge, and the executioner. And some of this language is very similar to Amos 9, actually. Something else to notice as we watch Hosea, or God through Hosea, take after Israel, it's interesting to notice that the primary problem they have is that they ignored the Word of God.

Do you know for how long? About 200 years. Really? That's kind of interesting. We've ignored it for what, 223 years? Anyway, we're a little overdue.

Verse 2, by swearing, by lying, and killing, and stealing, committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood. As you recognize this list of things, this is a paraphrase, in a sense, or a concatenation of the Ten Commandments. Handful of them, from Exodus 20, verses 13 through 16.

Sounds very familiar, doesn't it? Swearing, lying, killing, stealing, committing adultery. In the Hebrew, by the way, in each one of these commandments is stated by Hosea in the infinitive absolute. It's a grammatical form used for vividness and emphasis.

But apparently, this is even done among relatives. Blood toucheth blood. That's what that hints at there.

Now again, we're not under the laws of Moses. I don't want to carry that too far. But the Ten Commandments do express God's will.

And somebody says, well, you know, two kinds of people says, well, I keep the Ten Commandments. Really? Let's go back and re-examine that. Others say, well, I'm not under the law.

Really? Let's hear what Jesus did to the law in the Sermon on the Mount. Boy, Moses said, thou shalt not murder. I say to whoever's angry with his brother, he's done the same thing.

Jesus cuts through the law to the intent of the heart. And he goes right through it. He says, thou shalt not commit adultery.

I say, whoever looking after a woman to last after her, and so forth. In Matthew 5, 6, and 7, any time you think the Ten Commandments are a duck soup, look out, Jesus runs down through that. And about the time you think that's, you've got it mastered.

Remember how he closes that series. He says, be thou perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect. Boy, heavy duty.

Every time I think of that, I'm reminded about the guy that gets to the, you know, you always hear these silly stories about guy gets to the pretty gates, there's Peter. That's not biblical, of course, but we have this whole genre of expressions. Where he comes up there, and he goes up to Peter, and Peter says, well, we have a hundred, we have a point system that takes a hundred points to get in.

Oh, really? Okay, good. Well, I attended Sunday school steadily for 50 years, never missed a day. He says, good, that's worth three points.

He says, well, I was an industrialist. I gave tens of millions of dollars to all the local charities. So that's good.

That's worth about another two points. And he starts to list off, get increasingly panicked. The different things he's done, he gets up to maybe about 23, 24 points.

And he's starting to sweat it. He's got to get to a hundred. He turns to Peter and says, gee, at this rate, only by the grace of God again.

He says, right on. Go ahead, enter in. We keep talking, we keep hearing in our day about the new morality.

There's nothing new about the immorality that's being promoted by the press, by the media, by our culture. They practiced it in 700 BC, and they were ultimately destroyed as a result of it. Ultimately destroyed as a result of it.

Now, by the way, they call the new morality new. That's nonsense. It's not.

It's not morality, nor is it new. But God doesn't change. God is immutable.

It's one of the aspects of Him that's very, very important. He changes not, and neither does His rules. Of course, we hear a lot about homosexuality.

God has condemned homosexuality in the strongest language. It was practiced in Sodom and Gomorrah, and they were destroyed because of that. And if people continue to indulge in homosexuality, God will give them up.

And Jesus Christ has something to say to homosexuals. He says, you must be born again, just as He says to you and I, for whatever else reason. And He can deliver you from it.

It needs only be treated as what it really is. It's not a... It's sin. Well, it's a genetic propensity.

Well, I don't happen to accept that results of that research, but so what? So is lying, stealing, murder, cheating, everything else. That's also a genetic defect we all have from Adam. So what's new? And there's only one remedy for sin.

Only one remedy for sin, and that's Jesus Christ. Anyway, verse 3. Therefore shall the land mourn, and everyone that dwelleth therein shall languish with the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven. Yea, the fish of the sea shall... also shall be taken away.

The land is going to mourn. Boy, does that sound like environmental problems? Yes, the environment is polluted as well. Man is a polluter.

We may not agree with the strange way that these environmental issues are twisted by the power brokers to take advantage of the young people committed to these things, but there are real ecological problems, and they also are a byproduct of man's sin. Verse 4. Yet let no man strive, nor reprove another, for thy people are as they that strive with the priest. Now, striving with the priest, by the way, like sitting as a judge, was punishable by death in Deuteronomy 17, verses 8 through 12.

Now, the leadership change is interesting here, by the way, because you'll notice it says, let no man strive for thy people. Notice he's not saying my people. Significant switch.

Remember, he told Isaiah to name his third child Lo-Ami, not my people, because they're not my people. God is setting them aside. Well, wait a minute.

Israel's always been God's people. No. He sets them aside.

And Jesus confirms that in Luke 19, verse 44, I think it is. How long are they set aside? Not forever. That's the message of Hosea.

We talked about that in chapter 3 and elsewhere. We'll hear more about it. That there will be a day where he will once again take them up as his people.

And Jesus tells us when that is in Romans 11, verse 25. When the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. Now, see, from verse 5 on, the blame for all of this is being laid at the feet of the priests.

And when you think of priests there, idiomatically think of our pulpits here. Now, in the case of the Northern Kingdom, this pathetic scene of leadership, rendering judgments under staggering drunkenness, it's forcibly portrayed by Hosea's contemporary Isaiah. For those of you in your notes, we won't take the time here.

But in your notes, you put Isaiah 28, first eight verses. Because Isaiah is a contemporary of Hosea, and he really hits the drunkenness of the priests and judges. How they run around in a stupor, giving their opinions and so forth.

I won't go through some of the opinions that we get from our courts. But clearly, most of the social ills in this country were not there by bad legislation. Not there alone by executive fiats and so forth.

There's some of that. The root moral problems in this country were initiatives taken by the Supreme Court. The myth of separation of church and state, the banning of Bibles and prayer in schoolrooms and so forth.

If you make a list of the social agenda of the court, you begin to realize where some of our ills are by the ill-considered changes that they've taken upon themselves. Unconstitutional changes for which there are remedies. It's called impeachment of judges.

But let's get on with the study here. Verse 5. Therefore shalt thou fall in the day, and the prophet also shall fall with thee in the night, and I will destroy thy mother. That means God's going to destroy the nation.

And by the way, the Northern Kingdom not only went into captivity, it never came back. A century later, the Southern Kingdom will go the same path. And just as Hosea tried to warn the, was called to warn the Northern Kingdom, Jeremiah is called to warn the Southern Kingdom.

And they do go into captivity, but they do return. Now, don't confuse this with this whole myth of the ten lost tribes. Look, I think we'll come to that later in the notes, but let me just, I'll take it right now.

2 Chronicles chapter 11. Let's put this to bed so we don't keep stumbling. Turn to 2 Chronicles chapter 11 because there's an issue that you should be sensitive to.

It's amazing to me how prevalent in literature and myths is this issue of the 12 lost tribes, or ten lost tribes. And in 2 Chronicles chapter 11, we have the period of Rehoboam and Jeroboam. Solomon dies, Rehoboam takes over the Southern Kingdom.

Jeroboam rebels, takes the Northern Kingdom. Well, let's see, I guess verse, we can pick it up about verse 13. The first 12 verses talk about the split and so forth.

Verse 13, the priests and the Levites who were in all Israel, that's the Northern Kingdom. The Northern Kingdom was called Israel, the Southern Kingdom called the house of Judah. Now, if you were a Levite, you didn't inherit land, you inherited cities.

The 12 tribes got their land, but the Levites got 48 cities. Because the Lord was their inheritance. Well, if you were a Levite, you wanted to stay faithful to temple worship.

Down in the South, under Judah, under Rehoboam, they maintained the temple and the worship of the true God. In the Northern Kingdom, Jeroboam set up idols, golden calves, and they went to idolatry. Now, if you were a Levite, where would you go? You weren't welcome there.

You picked up and you went South. And that's what it says, verse 11. The priests and the Levites who were in all Israel resorted to him, that is to Judah, out of all their borders.

Referring to verse 12. Verse 14, for the Levites left their suburban lands and their possession and came to Judah and Jerusalem for Jeroboam and his sons cast them off from executing the priest's office under the Lord. Jeroboam, the king to the North, wanted idol worship.

So if you were called to worship the true God, you were politically incorrect. So what did you do? You went South. And not only you, you'll find some more.

Verse 15, continuing on Jeroboam. For he appointed for himself priests of the high places and for the he goats, which is a demon term, by the way, in the Hebrew, and for the calves which he had made, these golden calves. You understand the whole worship of the golden calf that came from the Egyptian bull, right? Bad pun.

Okay, never mind. Okay, go ahead. Verse 16, and after them, out of all the tribes of Israel, such as set their hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel, came to Jerusalem to sacrifice unto the Lord God of their fathers.

Let's read that again. And after them, that is the Levites, out of all the tribes of Israel, such as set their hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel, they came to Jerusalem to sacrifice unto the Lord God of their fathers. So they strengthened the kingdom of Judah and made Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, strong.

Three years. For three years, they walked in the way of David and Solomon. And we could go through, and we did a whole special study on this called the 12 tribes, a companion, sort of like volume two when we did Joshua.

And one of those just deals with this whole issue, went right through the Old Testament, point out there is not, there are no 10 lost tribes. The term, the tribal terms are used geographically, just like we might use California for an area, or Wyoming, or whether Ephraim and Asher and Benjamin. These are, they were allocated to those tribes when the land was divided, but they also became territorial names, just like they

had boundaries.

Now, at this time, those that were faithful to God in the north migrated south. Those, it doesn't say this, but you can easily infer the converse is also true. If you were an idol worshiper in the south, you were politically incorrect in the south.

Up north, you were welcome. What do you think you did? You migrated north. They still use the tribal terms for the geographic, the area of Dan is a place you can visit today.

Are there descendants of Dan there? I doubt it. So, the point is that when the house of Judah falls to Babylon in captivity, it included members of all the 12 tribes. That's what most people don't realize.

There's a myth in literature that there's 10 tribes that are lost, and there's all these theories about who's, and I won't get into all that stuff. So, there's a whole thing. Don't stumble on that stuff.

Because there's some strange doctrines that come out of those views. But anyway, the northern kingdom, as a kingdom, got absorbed by Assyria, and Assyria had this policy of transplanting its captives. If they captured you up north, they would ship you to another part of their empire, and take the captives from the other part of the empire, and ship you there.

The capital of the northern kingdom was Samaria. And so, the descendants of that amalgamation were called Samaritans, sometimes viewed as half-Jews, and they were despised. By the time you get to the days of Christ, the true Jew looked at the Samaritans as a half-breed.

And that's why Jesus uses that example of the good Samaritan, you know, and he plays on that for that purpose. God's going to destroy the nation. Their decision to live as rebels has made them squatters who deserved eviction.

That's what's exactly going to happen. But now we get to verse 6, and verse 6 is a very key verse, at least to us and our ministry. Hosea 4, 6, God says, My people are destroyed for what? By what? What's destroying His people? My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.

Is He talking about knowledge in general, like the Encyclopedia Britannica or something? No. He's talking, My people are destroyed by the lack of what? Knowledge of the Word of God. That's why the mission statement of our ministry is very, very directly nailed.

It says, To create, develop, and distribute materials to stimulate, encourage, and facilitate serious study of the Bible as the inerrant Word of God, period. That's the key point. Anyway, verse 6 is, My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.

Because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me. Seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children. Wow, what an indictment.

What a heavy, heavy indictment. As we stand back and look at America, we've been very, very concerned by what we see. We're concerned with our administration.

We're concerned with the fact that we condone lying at the highest offices of the land. We look at our leadership, which seems to be sold out to a hidden agenda of others, and globalism, who you name, you can go through the list. We see our major industries, entertainment, exporting, adultery, and celebrating it.

And we can go on and on and on with the immorality, and the promotion and celebration of immorality. But the root problem behind all of this isn't finances, isn't politics, isn't the ballot box in the simplest simplistic sense. No, it's the lack of the knowledge of the Word of God.

And for this nation, it's tragic because that was its heritage, that was its founding, that was its traditions, until we formally, through the Supreme Court and other actions, have distanced ourselves from our heritage. And you can track the moral decay of this country dramatically. I resisted the temptation to throw up 84 slides, which show things improving slightly up until about 1960.

And there's 84 indicators that have been classically put together, teenage pregnancies, and you can make a whole bunch, and you can track the statistics. And they're somewhat getting better, divorce rates, things like, slightly better until 1960, 61, 62, 63. Then they take off disastrously.

And you look at these slides one after the other, what happened at that time? And it's pretty, pretty clear. The moral decay takes a major, major break in the 1960s with the Supreme Court decisions to outlaw prayer and Bible reading in schools. It's amazing how all the statistics start to degenerate from that point on.

The minute you get away from the Word of God, you are doomed to failure in your personal Christian walk, and also in your national life. It happens to us as individuals, and it's certainly visible as our nation. And so anyway, as a result, God's going to take, even take away their priests.

Now, let's take a look at one of the chapters in the Scripture that you really want to understand. That's Romans chapter 1. Romans chapter 1. We're going to talk a lot about Israel who had special benefits. But before we do, let's start from ground zero.

Let's talk about the, obviously, what about the heathen? What about the Gentile that doesn't have these things? Turn to Romans chapter 1, and let's pick it up about verse 18. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth and unrighteousness, because that which may be known of God is manifest in them. For God hath shown it unto them.

For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse. In other words, let's stop back. Even without the Bible, even without the Scripture, you can look at the heavens, you can look at this world.

He's holding us accountable to understand it was created by someone who holds us accountable. That's his message. And he goes on, verse 21.

Because when they knew God, they glorified Him not. As God. Neither were they thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened, professing themselves to be wise.

They became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man, and birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Now see, that was their first step. They rejected God.

They knew God. They recognized Him. They had not known all His attributes, but they clearly recognized Him.

And rather than worship Him, and accountable, I might add, they became vain in their imaginations, and they contrive all these other weird things. Verse 24. Wherefore, then, what does God do in response to that? Wherefore, God also gave them up.

They gave Him up. He gives them up. To what? To uncleanness, through the lust of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator.

For this cause, God gave them up to vile affections, for even their women did exchange the natural use for that which is against nature, and likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman burned in their lusts one toward another, men with men, working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error, which was fitting. Do I have to fill in the blanks? Verse 28. Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind to do those things which are not seemly, being filled with all unrighteousness and fornication and wickedness and covetousness and maliciousness, full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity, whispers, backbiters, haters of God, insolent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful, who knowing the judgment of God, that they who commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

Wow. That's God's statement of the world. That's God's statement of holding them accountable, even without the benefit of the Bible.

I can't help but feel that Paul, when he wrote that, had in mind Hosea. When you get some time, you can compare Hosea chapter 4 verse 6 with Romans 1.24, 26 and 28. Compare the next verse, Hosea 4.7 with Romans 1.23. Compare Hosea 4.11 with Romans 1.21 and 22.

But now, the whole point, of course, of Hosea is that that's what the Gentiles are held accountable for. Israel had more, is even more guilty because they had more revelation. They had been given the knowledge of God by direct revelation and they, Israel, had rejected it.

So the Gentiles are held accountable, as you've heard in Romans 1. Hosea is making the point that Israel is even more accountable than they were because they've had the benefit of the prophets and Moses and so forth and so on. Well, gang, where does that put us? We have even more revelation than Israel had because we have the New Testament. To whom much is given, much will be required.

Luke 12.48 reminds us. Verse 7 in Hosea chapter 4, verse 7. As they were increased, so they sinned against me. Therefore, will I change their glory into shame.

See, God had kept His promise to Abraham and multiplied them. But that just brought more sinners into the world. Because that's okay, sinners like me.

But fortunately, someone gave me a Bible very early and I was tutored well. And by the Lord's initiative, by His grace, I was able to trust Christ as my Savior. So the fact that there's more sinners, that just means that God's redemptive work can reach further.

But see, these people from verse 7 had no knowledge of the Word of God. Their darkness is the result of their own ignorance, we discover. That's verse 6 and elsewhere.

Therefore, He's going to change their glory into shame. I'm reminded as I go through Washington, D.C. and try to find some American heritage. My wife and I were there for some meetings and we had an extra day.

So we'd go and just walk the mall and see the Smithsonian and see some of the... And I was in the mood for some founding fathers. I went over to the Museum of American History and I'll never forget it. Couldn't find any.

We found exhibits of how we abused the Indians. Found exhibits of the various China that was served by the first ladies of various administrations. No founding fathers, no heritage.

We got so disgusted, we literally called Dulles and got an earlier flight and went home. Very discouraging. Somebody says, is God going to judge America? And Billy Graham, many years ago, made that wonderful quip.

Great soundbite. He says, if God doesn't judge America, He's going to have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah. Wow, that says it, doesn't it? It's worse than that.

If God does not judge America, it will cause the enemies of God to blaspheme. See, God's not as strong as you thought He was. He's not as righteous as you thought He was.

You can just start the whole sequence of things. And I don't think God's going to stand for that. Verse 8, they eat up the sin of my people.

They set their heart on iniquity. See, the people not only sinned, they bragged about it. Turn to Isaiah 5. Every time someone says they think they see America in prophecy, they ask me, do you think America is in prophecy? You know, Isaiah 19 or Revelation 17, 18.

I say, no, I think he's in prophecy, but I think the only place I see him is in Isaiah 5. Oh, really? Yeah. Turn to Isaiah 5. So we go to, we pop over here to Isaiah 5. And we have the six woes pronounced on Israel. The first seven verses talk about how God makes an analysis of a vineyard.

He does everything He can for it, doesn't bear fruit. So He's going to tear it apart. But then He pronounces verse 8 through 22 and following, six woes.

But the one I want to call your attention to is verse 18. Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope. What's it talking about here? Talking about not only sinning, but bragging about it.

Putting the sin on a cart and dragging it through a parade. When I see verse 18, especially when you read it in context, I see the gay pride parades that are so disgusting, you wouldn't let your kids watch it on television. They not only sin, they celebrate it.

They manifest it. You know, heterosexuals reproduce and homosexuals recruit. Verse 9, and back to Isaiah 4. Verse 9, and there shall be like people, like priests, and I will punish them for their ways and reward them for their doings.

See, the leadership urged the people to sin. Like people, like priests, both to be punished. You know, our government too promotes immorality.

I didn't understand this. I thought that's just, you know, political talk. Until I, I'm a systems engineer, I had to connect the dots.

The first insight that I think we all understand is that governments love crises. Because crises increase budgets and increase their ability to control people. So governments love crises.

Dictators always have, create wars and things to consolidate their power. So governments like crises, no problem. Basic fundamental behavioral thing.

In this country, they discovered social crises work just as well as military ones. War on poverty, war on drugs, you name it. Great banner, get everybody behind it.

But what is it really? Building bigger budgets, creating bureaucracies that cause that thing never to die, because then the bureaucracy goes away. No danger. They grow bigger and bigger and take more and more controls, more and more freedoms.

Crises favor governments, okay. Social crises, you know, work as well as military ones. What creates social crises? How do you make a social crisis? By immorality.

Teenage sex, abortion, whatever, you know, immorality. Well, if immorality caused crises and governments like crises, why is there a big surprise that governments have an incentive to promote what? Immorality. No wonder they promote teenage sex.

No wonder they don't push abstinence in schools. They give them condoms that don't work and so forth. Anyway, now we can go hammer about this, but the tragedies are pulpits are no better.

What a man sows, also he will reap. Paul tells the Galatians in chapter 6 and verse 7. Get back to Hosea 4 verse 10. For they shall eat and not have enough, and they shall commit whoredom and shall not increase, because they have left off to take heed to the Lord.

You know, it's a real irony here, actually, because the worship of Baal was supposed to be the fertility God. Fertility of the soil and fertility of the womb. Of course, Deuteronomy 31 has a rebuttal of that.

Forsaking the Lord will result in insatiable hunger and fruitless wombs. Appetites are never satisfied. Gluttony in any form produces frustration rather than satisfaction.

They'll be their own worst punishment. Verse 11. Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the heart.

And Washington, D.C., our capital, is the leading indicator. Harlotry, adultery, drugs, and alcoholism are rampant and condoned and even celebrated. God has condemned drunkenness.

Is drunkenness, is alcoholism a disease? A doctor wrote, if alcoholism is a disease, it's the only disease that's contracted by an act of will. It's the only disease that's habit-forming. It's the only disease that comes in a bottle.

It's the only disease promoting crime and brutality. It's the only disease playing a major part in more than half of fatal highway accidents. It's the only disease which is sold by license.

It's the only disease which can be bought in grocery stores, drug stores, and Walmart retail outlets. It's the only disease that provides government revenues. Interesting.

Verse 12. My people ask counsel at their stocks, and their staff declareth unto them, for the spirit of whoredoms has caused them to err, and they have gone a-whoring from under their God. Now, when he speaks of whoring there, he's using it in a double entendre, two different ways.

Whoring in the literal sense, as you and I think of it. Also, whoring spiritually, going after false gods. You know, the insanity of paganism staggers the imagination.

I don't think we're capable of tallying the blood and other sacrifices that's been sacrificed on the altars of gods who are not, and the demons who are. Just staggering. Habakkuk 2.19 says, Woe unto him who says to a piece of wood, Awake! Verse 13.

They sacrifice on the tops of mountains, and burn incense upon the hills, under oaks, and on poplars, and elms, because the shadow thereof is good. Therefore your daughters shall commit whoredom, and your spouses shall commit adultery. By the way, the Mosaic law forbade specifically daughters of Israel from cult prostitution in Deuteronomy 23.

And by the way, because the word for spouses here is khala in the Hebrew, which really means daughters-in-law, technically. Hosea might, some scholars suspect he might be alluding to the cultic practice of permitting a man to have sexual intercourse with his daughter-in-law to ensure fertility in her marriage. It's a weird practice that was prevalent apparently in the pagan culture there.

Anyway, covetousness and greed are the gods of America, of course. And it's interesting that adultery and immorality are the primary export of the entertainment industry of Hollywood movies and New York TV specials. It's our primary product.

No wonder that the world that does try to cling to some standard of morality hates America. Because we're the fountain of this stuff. I will not punish your daughters when they commit whoredom, nor your spouses when they commit adultery.

For themselves are separated with whores, and they sacrifice with harlots. Therefore the people that doth not understand will fall. Whoring after false gods.

If you remove God from the schools, what do you get? Columbine High School. You know, that's interesting. That punctured all the myths of the pagan left.

Despite the media's attempt to do spins here. It was not a racist issue. It didn't happen in some deprived ghetto.

It was in an upscale suburb. What they don't tell you is it involves some Satan worship, and the specific targets were Christians. You don't see that in the media, do you? Anyway, let's go on.

Verse 15. Though thou, Israel, play the harlot, yet let not Judah offend. Come not ye to Gilgal, neither go ye up to Bethaven, nor swear the Lord liveth.

Now, Hosea is primarily speaking to the Northern Kingdom. But here is sort of a P.S. To you guys down the south, don't you fall into this trap. And for about a century, they did a little better.

But they also ultimately declined and fell into it. But that took a century later. It's sort of a parenthetical note to the people in the south.

Now, Gilgal and Bethel and Bethaven were the seedbeds of idolatry. Gilgal was formerly Elisha's school, by the way, 2 Kings 2. It was now the site of idols and the source of rejection of Jehovah in 1 Samuel 7. Now, Bethaven was a small town near Bethel and sometimes used as synonyms. And just like some people use Irvine and Newport Beach as synonyms, they're suburbs of one another.

But you'll hear one used for the general area, either one used for the general area. Hosea seems to be using the name contemptuously. Instead of using Bethel, which means the house of God, Bethaven means the house of vanity.

So he's choosing the one that's, you know, has more emotional impact here. Verse 16. For Israel slideth back as a backsliding heifer.

Now the Lord will feed them as a lamb in a large place. Backsliding is used here not as we use the term. We use the term backsliding a little different sense, like someone who's slipping a little bit, not kicking, you know.

If you've tried to load on a ramp into a truck a reluctant steer, you can know how hopeless that is, where they just won't go. That's the term used here. Okay, much more resistant, defiant, openly defiant.

It doesn't mean backsliding like someone who means pretty well, but just slipped away. You know, we use the term in a softer sense. No, this is a much stronger term.

It refers to being guilty of refusing to be led of the Lord. That's what it means here. It's used three times in this book, and it's only used by Jeremiah and Hosea.

Both of them spoke to a nation ready to go into captivity. So this is not a term that implies hope of being turned around. This means that they're really resistant.

Now, verse 17 says, Ephraim is joined to idols. Let him alone. Ephraim was one of, it was the primary area in the north.

There were 10 tribal areas. Ephraim was the dominant one. So Ephraim is often used as a synecdoche.

That's, synecdoche is when the specific used for the general, or the general is used for the specific. Some examples. If you say, so-and-so sets a nice table.

What you mean, you're not talking about just the silverware. You're talking about the general decor. You know, using a term more broadly.

It's usually used specific for the general. You can also use the general. It's a figure of speech, in other words.

So when it says Ephraim, it's using Ephraim denotatively, using Ephraim connotatively, meaning northern kingdom. Ephraim is joined to idols. The word joined is kabara, which means yoked to, cleaving to, merged with.

Ephraim is used 37 times in this book. And it's used for the tribal, for the northern kingdom. But it says, Ephraim is joined to idols.

Let him alone. Boy, that's a strange term. You get the same reaction in Revelation 22 verse 11.

It has the same strange finality there. When you get to the book of Revelation in chapter 22, you get the strange verse 11. It says, he that is unjust, let him be unjust still.

He that is filthy, let him be filthy still. He that is righteous, let him be righteous still. He that is holy, let him be holy still.

Behold, I come quickly. Strange phrase. It's sort of like saying, he's made his bed, let him lie in it.

Verse 18, their drink is sour. They have committed whoredom continually. Her rulers with shame do love give ye.

Verse 19, the wind hath bound up her inner wings, and they shall be ashamed because of their sacrifices. People are carried away with every wind of doctrine, except repentance to the living God who has provided all. Now we get to chapter 5, it just continues.

Chapter 4 was the setting forth the charges. Chapter 5 is the sentencing. Verse 1, hear ye this, O priests, and hearken ye, house of Israel, and give ear, O house of the king, for judgment is toward you, because ye have been a snare on Mitzpah and a net spread upon Tabor.

Now, Mitzpah and Tabor doesn't mean much to you and I because we don't know the geography. Mitzpah was in the southwest section of the kingdom. Tabor was in the northeast.

Our equivalent phrase might be something like, from California to Maine, or from L.A. to Boston, or maybe New York. That's what he's really, in effect, saying here. And just like in chapter 4, he's saying like people, like priests, they fail to set an example.

Give ear, O king. I love that because I think of our highchair king. That's a term you may not be familiar with.

Psychologists speak of a highchair king as one who throws a tantrum until he gets what he wants. You can fill in the blank who you think that might fit. Unfortunately, our political and spiritual leadership, too, is hardly worth emulation.

And the scripture tells us we get the leaders we deserve. See, the issue in this country is not Bill and Hillary Clinton, or the Senate, or you put fill in the blank. The issue in this country is us.

They mirror us. They're there because we put them there. One person before voted to put them there.

Christians are unhappy? Good. Why didn't they get out and vote? And so forth. We get the leaders we deserve.

The pagan left runs this country through our negligence, our lack of diligence, our lack of stewardship, our lack of gratitude before the throne of God. And I think we're going to be held accountable for it. And by the way, these remarks are not aimed at the Democratic Party alone.

The Republicans, I feel more betrayed by them than the other The Democrats are at least faithful to the constituencies that they claim. They court these various segments, and they stay committed to them. The Republicans pretend to be conservatives until they're elected, and then they lose no time expressing their disdain for the very people who put them in office.

They're flying under a false banner, and they have absolutely no commitment, visible commitment, effective commitment, to straightening out the mess in this country. Both political parties should assume more responsibility for the immoral leadership that has migrated into posts of responsibility. There are too few in our country that are willing to address the trampling of our Constitution and the rampant criminalization of the offices throughout the federal establishment.

And our pulpits are no better, but let's go on. You know, in military terms, they speak of triads. If you do any strategic writing, they speak of triads.

What is a triad? It's land-based missiles, submarine-based missiles, and manned bombers. Those are the three things that make up the basic strategic triad in international strategy papers. Satan has his triad.

Liberal theology, liberal politics, and the liberal media. That triad is what we're up against. Not against flesh and blood, but against principalities' powers.

Ephesians 6 is the spell out of all of that. Verse 2, And revoters are profound to make slaughter, though I have been a rebuker of them all. God has rebuked Israel for the following things.

The brutality, there was murder, violence, and there was warfare. We're going to see murder, violence, and warfare. How about us in the United States? You're going to go through this here with Israel.

He's talked about it. What about here in the United States? Is there murder? Over a hundred murders covering up people are going to give evidence over the Vince Foster and related issues. Over a hundred, about to give evidence.

The day before they're giving evidence, they have mysterious deaths. Over a hundred of these. This one on the internet.

Covering up the shenanigans of leadership. We also had Waco. And also Columbine High School.

There are reports. I don't know how reliable they are. There weren't just two guys.

There were some well-equipped ninja-type characters seen by some of the witnesses. What's going on here? Is there more behind the scenes? I don't know. And of course, we had Vietnam.

We have Kosovo in terms of warfare and so forth. We should have been sending Bibles, not bullets and bombs. Missionaries, not missiles.

By the way, New York City. Interesting statistic. I won't give you numbers.

New York City has more recorded crimes per year than England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Switzerland, Spain, Sweden, the Netherlands, Norway, Denmark combined. One city. In verse 3, I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hid from me.

For now away from, thou committest whoredom, and Israel is defiled. This term, I know. Boy, that terrifies the unbeliever.

See, God is omniscient. He alone knows what we are really like. And that's why unbelievers don't like the idea of God because they know what they're really like.

They don't want that accountability. The fear of his knowledge. Fear of his knowledge, God's knowledge, what drives his enemies away from him.

I'm reminded of the little grandson, Aska's grandpa. Does God see me all the time? Little fear there. And the grandfather turned to him and says, God loves you so much, he can't take his eyes off you.

Isn't that a great answer? That's a great answer. Ephraim was the center of idolatry. And you'll find this all through the scripture, by the way.

When you get to the book of Revelation, of course, the 12 tribes are listed there, but the tribe of Dan is missing. You say, how can that be? Everybody knows about it. If you study Revelation 7, you know Dan's missing because he was the tribe through which idolatry entered the northern kingdom, way up there in Tel Dan and so forth.

And so everybody knows about that. The way you get 12 left, though, of course, you throw the Levites in there because Joseph was two tribes. You only have 13 to choose from.

So if you want to drop one out, you still get 12. It's listed, they're listed 20 times in the Bible, each time a different order, each time there's a different one missing. But you always have 12.

How do you do that? Well, because you've got an alphabet of 13. If you want to pull out the Levites because it's an order of march and they're to have military duty, then you take Joseph and split him to Ephraim and Manasseh. Joseph was a double tribe.

And if in Revelation you want to drop Dan out, you obviously take Joseph and split him into two. But it's interesting, in Revelation 7, it speaks of Manasseh and then later Joseph. Well, what's Joseph without Manasseh? Ephraim.

So the Holy Spirit left Dan out and put Ephraim in there, but not using his name. You see the back of the hand, you'll discover, you study your scripture. From old of the New Testament, you'll see the editor, which is the Holy Spirit, with the back of the hand on Dan and Ephraim in certain places.

And of course, the golden calf was set up in Dan, I mentioned that, by Jeroboam in Bethel. Later, a second one in Samaria, the capital. Verse 4, They will not frame their doings to turn unto their God, for the spirit of Hortums is in the midst of them, and they have not known the Lord.

The Lord knows them, but they don't know the Lord. They're unbearably proud. And of course, it's refusing to abandon the sin that always keeps a person from actually coming to God.

And Romans 3 deals with that. We'll keep moving. Verse 5, And the pride of Israel doth testify to his face.

Therefore shall Israel and Ephraim fall in their iniquity. Judah also shall fall with them. This is a prediction.

A century later, Judah would do that. It's not the same time. The southern kingdom would fall, you know, much later.

Verse 6, They shall go with their flocks and with their herds to seek the Lord, but they shall not find him. He hath withdrawn himself from them. In other words, they'll do sacrifice and all this stuff.

Too late. The Lord has withdrawn himself from them. What a terrifying thing.

What a terrifying thing when you pray to God and he's not listening. Enough's enough. It's over.

Goodbye. Do you remember what he said earlier? Not my people. He meant it.

They're set aside. Not permanently, for a while. Luke 19, 42.

Jesus mentions that. He says, How I would have gathered thee, but ye would not. But now these things are hidden from thine eyes, Jesus says.

Forever? No. Paul tells in Romans 11, 25. These things are hidden.

Israel's blinded until the fullest of the Gentiles come in. Then there's a whole thing going to unfold. We're going to talk more about that as we go on here.

See, because they withdraw from the Lord, he withdraws from them. Light refused results in darkness. Deuteronomy 32, Matthew 6, and so forth.

Next one. Verse 7 here. They have dealt treacherously against the Lord.

They have begotten strange children. Now shall a month devour them with their portions. Strange children.

Strange phrase. They're strange to God, that is. See, the people do not bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Deuteronomy chapter 6. Let's just take a look. It's the most famous thing in Judaism. It's Deuteronomy.

It's called the Shema. Every little house you go to. Every hotel has a little massusa by the door.

With some scripture in it. Usually, not always, usually that scripture is the Shema. What is the Shema? It's Deuteronomy chapter 6. And most of you will recognize the opening parts of it.

But you may not be as sensitive to the rest of it. It starts out typically verse 4. Deuteronomy 6, 4. Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

Let me pause there for a moment. Heart, soul, might. What's the difference? They're not the same thing.

It's amazing how many people write theological essays without discerning that those are not the same thing. You can look at certain stars in the sky and they look like a single star. But if you look at it with a more powerful telescope, with more resolving power, you discover they're not single, they're doubles.

See, if you really go at this theologically. My wife spent 20 years tracking down heart, soul, mind, strength. Those words that are used here.

And when Jesus quotes this, and he quotes it a little differently, by the way, all the words in the Greek and the Hebrew, what they are, and how they're used every place else in Scripture, you discover some interesting things. That's the brute discovery that underlies the King's Highway series that she's written. The way of agape, knowing God's love.

Be ye transformed, knowing God's truth. And faith in the night seasons, knowing God's will. But it's built upon understanding, denotatively, what those terms really mean.

But let's keep moving on. Verse 6. That's as far as most people quote. Let's look at verse 6. And these words which I command thee this day, God speaking, shall be in thine heart.

And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

And it goes on. They do that literally. Put them in little, they call them phylacteries, and bind them in devotions on their heads and so forth.

They take it very, very seriously. Praise God. And that's on the doorposts of the house.

That's where they get what they call the masseuses, these little things you always see in a Jewish home. See, the Word of God was to be taught in the homes. The only form of biblical schooling is homeschooling.

The only time they didn't homeschool is when the empire that they were subject to wouldn't allow it. Anyway, verse 8. Let's continue in Hosea. Verse 8. Blow ye the cornet and gibia and the trumpet and rama.

Cry aloud at Beth-Avon after thee, O Benjamin. Now gibia, rama, and Beth-Avon are all cities of Benjamin, a part of the southern kingdom adjacent to the northern kingdom. The cornet and trumpets are standard warning systems towards the people who gather behind the civil walls for battle.

The historical battle that's being alluded to here was the Syro-Ephraimite War, 735 to 733 BC, in which the alliance of Rezin of Syria and Pekah of Israel captured certain Benjamite border towns, such as gibia, rama, and Beth-Avon. This prompted King Ahaz of Judah to seek the aid of Assyria, the nation that then used Ahaz's request to sweep down from Syria upon Syria and Israel. And heartened by the aid from Assyria, the people of Judah were using the old war cry, behind you, behind you, Benjamin.

And they recaptured Gilgal, Rama, and Bethel. Now they're going to get rebuked for this, Judah, the southern kingdom that took advantage of this. The Lord reminds them here that they're not in charge of their own destiny.

God's in charge of their destiny. And as he'll say in verse 9, I might mention, by the way, that in Isaiah 7, which covers this, there are some encryptions hidden in the text that are well known to people, students of cryptography, that reveal what would have happened if that plot would have been successful. It wasn't successful, so it doesn't matter.

But the very fact that there's encryptions hidden in the Bible is a very, very key discovery, in my view. If you're a student of cryptography, it's just a historical oddity. But if you're a student of the Bible and its supernatural origins, the presence of encryptions there are staggering in their implications.

And that's what we try to deal with in our book, Cosmic Codes. Let's move on, verse 9. Ephraim shall be desolate in the day of rebuke. Among the tribes of Israel have I made known that which shall surely be.

So there's a rebuke here to Judah because they were taking advantage of Ephraim, and God's saying, hey, watch it, I'm the guy in charge. And so anyway, God did not fail to warn them. He always warns in advance, and always with the opportunity for repentance.

But in this case, it's not clear because it looks like the judgment is really certain. The southern kingdom has another chance. They have a century to turn around.

They don't, and they go down. Verse 10, the princes of Judah were like them that removed the bound. Therefore, I will pour out my wrath upon them like water.

See, he's reminding Judah that their retaliatory attack upon Ephraim was like a crime of moving a boundary line. They weren't supposed to do that, leave Ephraim to God. Moving the boundary line was forbidden under penalty of a curse in Deuteronomy 19 and 27, and some other places.

The word wrath, by the way, you missed this in the Hebrews. There are more plays on words here. The word wrath in the Hebrew comes from a root meaning to run over or flow over, overflow.

Wrath is always spoken of as being poured. You always pour wrath. See, it's in the Hebrew structure, it makes sense.

See, the whole world is going to experience God's wrath when you get to the seven angels in Revelation 16 and following. When these seven angels pour out their bowls of wrath. Again, wrath is always poured out.

It's the root that implies it's something pourable. Okay, verse 11. Ephraim is oppressed and broken in judgment because he willingly walked after the commandment.

Ephraim followed the crowd. You know, everybody's doing it, is the excuse, of course. It's interesting, when the knowledge of the true and living God is refused, false gods always move in to fill the vacuum.

You see these intellectual atheists say that they don't accept God, and you watch them a little while and see what they do take up. It's really absurd. The scripture tells us we become like the gods we worship.

That's Psalm 135. We become like the gods we worship. Are stone idols cold, unresponsive, and impersonal? If you worship them, you'll become cold, unresponsive, impersonal.

Is the world materialistic, harsh, unforgiving? If you worship the world, you'll become materialistic, harsh, unforgiving. If you worship Christ, you'll become like Him. Devoutly to be wished, huh? We become like the gods we worship.

Be careful what you worship. Verse 12. Therefore will I be unto Ephraim as a moth, and to the house of Judah as rotteness.

You know, it's interesting that figures of speech are all through the book of Hosea. And as one commentator said, there's prophet in the prophets. He's using a pun himself, see? And by the way, I don't know if I asked you this before, how many different kinds of figures of speech do you think you can find in the Bible? You know, we think of analogies, allegories, similes, metaphors.

There's four, right? Over 200. You read my book. Thank you.

Appendix to Cosmic Codes has over 200 examples of different kinds of figures of speech, where they're used, what they mean, and where they use the scripture. Anyway, moths, he's using moths. Moths do two things.

First, they distract us. Have you ever tried reading your Bible on the porch in the summer? It doesn't work, does it? Okay, they distract us. But perhaps more to the point, they can also destroy an entire wardrobe very quickly.

I'll be like a moth to Ephraim. In other words, their political fabric will be destroyed. He also says, I'll be to the house of Judah as rotteness.

Wooden boards in a foundation take a little longer to become rotten. Judah fell a century later. And our own foundations in this country are being removed in every imaginable way in our nation today.

Verse 13, when Ephraim saw his sickness and Judah saw his wound, then went Ephraim to the Assyrian and sent to King Jareb. Yet could he not heal you nor cure you of your wound? King Jareb or Jareb means warrior king in the translation. It's probably an epithet of Tiglath-Balazer III of Assyria.

Some say it was the birth name of Sargon II, the successor of Shalmaneser who conquered Samaria. Anyway, these are the names of their enemies that finally took them over. Now, in this case, it was the Assyrians that ultimately took them captive.

God used the Assyrians to take them captive. And by the way, in Isaiah 52-4, Isaiah tells us that the pharaoh that made them slaves in Egypt was an Assyrian. We all do apologize to Cecil B. DeMille and the Ten Commandments and so forth.

Isaiah's impression is that the pharaoh in those days was not Egyptian. He was Assyrian. And that's probably why he was so insecure as the Hebrew slaves grew to such large numbers.

Verse 14, for I will be unto Ephraim as a lion and as a young lion to the house of Judah. Even I will tear and go away. I will take away and none shall rescue him.

Again, another figure of speech. A lion destroys. That one's pretty obvious.

Now, a cub seems like a controllable pet. Has one small problem. It grows up to be a lion.

It's interesting, the epithet that it could never happen here echoes throughout history. It was the cry in Eastern Europe that communism would never overcome the cultures of Eastern Europe. And of course it did.

There's also a widespread presumption in our country that it can't happen here. It's actually the slogan of a fool in ignorance of God's nature and his commitments. See, we too live in a declining culture and God's judgment seems to be overdue.

And again, if he follows the path he used here, he will use our enemies as his mechanism of judgment. And our only hope is not in a strategic defense initiative or ballistic missiles. Or in our defense budgets or whatever else.

Our only hope is in national repentance. And what you and I need to do is get behind that. Not just grouse about it.

Not just moan about it. We need to spend some time in our prayer closets about it. And we need to prayerfully address that in serious ways.

But now I have one verse here that's a change of pace in a sense that really belongs to the next chapter. But I have to share this with you because I think it's a flabbergasting verse. I collect commentaries.

As you probably can gather, my basic style is to collect books on a particular Bible and prepare by trying to glean what I think is the best of a number of different experts. But I'm startled to discover how few commentators understand verse 15. It is one of the most interesting verses.

One of the most interesting in the scripture and especially it's overlooked by most commentators. So let's just stop and examine it ourselves and see what it says. God is speaking of course through Hosea.

He says in verse 15, I will go and return to my place till they acknowledge their offense and seek my face. In their affliction they will seek me early. What does that mean? The implications of this, what it really says is missed by many commentators.

God says I will go and return to my place. What does that mean? That means he must have left it. I can't go and return to my place unless I left my place.

I'm here but I'm going to go and return to my place. That means I left it. Right? That's the first coming.

For how long will I return to my place until? One of these days I've got to make a list of all the untills in the scripture that represent major dispensational milestones. I will go and return to my place until they acknowledge their offense. The word offense is singular, specific.

What offense does Israel need to acknowledge before he can come back? His rejection. Wow. I will go and return to my place.

This tells us right there that God is involved within at least two comings. The first, he came. I'll go and return until they acknowledge their offense.

What an interesting, interesting verse. Then he goes on to amplify this a little bit. See he came.

You remember he came with John 1 11? He came unto his own and his own received him not. Remember that? But as many as received him to them gave he the power to become what? The sons of God. The sons of God are a direct creation of God.

The word b'nai ha'haloim in the Hebrew means a direct creation of God. It's used of Adam and it's used of angels. It's used that he was a son of God.

The rest of us are sons of Adam. Not sons of God. Unless we're born again.

See this whole idea of born again. The whole idea of being a son of God is not loose language. It's very specific technical terms.

And it's amazing to me how many theologians miss that because they're not disciplined. They're not precise in the terminology. And he will leave until they... By the way he's returned.

I go and return to my place. Where's his place? Right hand of his father. See Revelation is all about things that are out of place.

He's not on his throne. He's on his father's throne. That's got to be fixed.

Israel is not in the land. It's got to be in the land. The church is on the earth.

It's supposed to be in heaven. You make a whole list of things that are out of place that get put in the right place in the book of Revelation. It's one way to look at the book.

Arnold Fruchtenbaum really makes this point. Great Hebrew scholar, believer, pre-trib believer, neat guy. He believes, makes quite a case, that this verse and its associated references establish a prerequisite condition for the second coming of Jesus Christ.

There's not a prerequisite condition for the rapture. When the father says to the son, go get him, he does. No one knows when.

But that's not the second coming in power and glory. That's gathering his church out of here to let a whole bunch of other things happen. But there is a prerequisite condition for the second coming.

And one of those is Israel has to ask him, acknowledge their offense and invite him back. We're going to take up that in the next chapter when we get there. And that takes us to Leviticus 26.

In fact, I know we're going to go tight, but let me do it anyway. Leviticus 26, I want to show you how precise the Holy Spirit is when he edits things. I love this.

I love this stuff. Leviticus 26, speaking about verse 32. Verse 32 through 42 deals with all of this.

But I want you to notice, put that in your notes, Leviticus 26 and 32 to 42. We won't take time to go through the whole thing. But I want you to look at verse 42.

And I will remember my covenant with Jacob and also my covenant with Isaac and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember, and I will remember the land. Do you know something strange by the way that's worded? It's backwards. It's Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham.

I thought it was God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. That's the way Abraham, Isaac. Here it's backwards.

I wonder why. Now you may recall in Daniel 7 when Daniel sees the visions of the various empires. We got the lion and we got the bear and we got the panther or whatever, right? When you get to Revelation 13, you see those same elements backwards.

Why? Because Daniel's seeing them in advance and Revelation's looking back. The writer here has in his mind looking back. See they're backwards.

It's a backwards in the timeline. I suggest there's a possibility. Anyway, getting back to just to finish up Hosea 5:15.

In their affliction, they will seek me early. The word early is an unfortunate translation. The word is shakar in the Hebrew.

It means to seek early or earnestly. They shall see in their affliction, they shall seek me earnestly. The affliction is what? The great tribulation.

In fact, that's the purpose of the great tribulation. It's the time of Jacob's trouble we find in Jeremiah 30 verse 7. People who think the church goes through the tribulation doesn't understand what the church is and doesn't understand what the tribulation is. If you do your theological homework as to understand the mystical body of Christ and what the church really is and what it's promised on the one hand and then also understand what the great tribulation is.

Yes, it's global but it's specific on who? On Israel. Now, Satan, if he knows that, it explains why there's anti-Semitism. Now, all bigotry, all prejudice is bad.

But there's something occultic about the world's hatred for Israel. Now, you can understand Satan's attack on Israel. It's all summarized for you in Revelation chapter 12.

But why the dragon, Satan, whatever is after Israel in the Old Testament is clear because he's trying to thwart the plan of God because from Israel comes the Redeemer. So you understand why there's a whole chronology how he always tries to interfere as God reveals a little more clearly the genealogy. A little more clearly what's going to happen allows Satan to focus his attack.

First on the descendants of Abraham, then it's Isaac, then Jacob. When he finds out it's going to be a house of David, boy, David gets singled out and his descendants. Again and again and again.

You can chronicle the whole Old Testament as Satan's attempt to thwart the messianic promise. You'd think that when Jesus is born and goes to his ministry and goes to the cross, hey, it's a done deal. Indeed it is.

Well, then why is Satan still so viciously trying to wipe out Israel? Because subsequent history, same thing through the diaspora. Major empires trying to wipe out the Nazi Germany, the occultic Nazi leaders trying to wipe out every Jew. Why? Why does Satan care? Because he knows there's a remnant that has to repent and seek Christ.

And if he can wipe them out, he can thwart the plan of God and presumably vindicate himself, whatever. He obviously is not going to succeed. But we begin to understand the cosmic drama.

We begin to understand the strange warfare. And we're going to talk a lot about that next chapter, because this last verse of chapter 5 really belongs with chapter 6. And we'll deal with that next time. Let's stand for a closing word of prayer.

You know, it's staggering to realize that we have in our hands God's layout of all of life. Now, his specific focus here is Israel and their sins and how he's going to deal with it. But he lays out his attitudes.

He hates whoring after false gods. He expects a nation that's going to be blessed to at least be grateful and understand where their blessings have come from. And our blessings don't come from capitalism.

They don't come because we have a country that has more resources than another country. You can make all the lists. No, no, no.

It's from the God, the provider of the universe. And what do we return him? Some words of gratitude? A little emblem on it, you know, God we trust in our bills or whatever? Come on. No, we are whoring after false idols.

Now, if God judged the Northern Kingdom that way, we need to think very, very seriously where we stand. Now, the question I don't know the answer to. Is it too late? There are some scholars that say we've crossed the Rubicon.

It's over. We've lost the cultural war and America as an entity before God is over. I hope not.

I don't think so. I remember Nineveh, 40 days from ground zero. And God called Jonah to go minister.

And he did it in a very strange way. I don't mean just calling Jonah a minister. And the greatest miracle of all time, within those 40 days, they repented and got a whole other century.

And I'd like to cling to 2 Chronicles 7, 14. If my people are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, forgive their sin and heal their land. He's not talking to the whole population, talking to his people.

If God's people in this land will humble themselves and pray and seek his face, and turn from their wicked ways. It's not the sins of Bill and Hillary Clinton or the Senate or whoever that's in our way. It's our own.

Yours and mine. That's what's standing in the way. We need a national repentance that's got to start with you and me.

Let's bow our hearts. Father, we praise you. We thank you, Father, that you've brought us together.

We thank you, Father, for your word. For we know that you even put your word above your name. We thank you, Father.

But oh, Father, we seek your Holy Spirit to just digest this word into our hearts and into our lives. Oh, Father, we do ask for discernment that we might understand what it is you would have of us in the days ahead. But oh, Father, we also ask you to help us with our resolve and our own commitments before you.

We bring before your throne our acknowledgement of our presumptions, our ingratitude, our lack of diligence. We confess it. We own it and confess it before you.

We are without excuse, Father. We of all people on this earth are without excuse. And yet, Father, we confess it as sin and ask you in Jesus' name.

To cleanse us. We know that you're faithful just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. So, Father, we seek that.

We turn from it. We repent of it. We pray, Father, that you would just take us as we are and wash us clean with the washing of your word, pleading the blood of Jesus Christ upon each of us.

We come before your throne, Father, without any plea other than Jesus died for us. And we do ask, Father, that you would just reignite in each of us a hunger and a passion for your word. Give us a real sense of our own need for repentance.

And lead us clearly in the path that you would have of us in the days that remain. As we commit ourselves before you, Father, in the name of Yeshua, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

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