

This book contains the account of Hosea telling about the Israeli people rejecting God, and foretelling about God punishing and restoring them. We call this book Hosea

¹ *I am* Hosea, the son of Beeri. Yahweh gave me these messages *at various times* during the years that Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah were the kings of Judah, and Jeroboam the son of Jehoash was the King of Israel.

Hosea's wife and children

² When Yahweh first *began to* give messages to me *to tell to the people of Israel*, he said to me, "Go and marry a prostitute. But *some of* her children will be born as a result of her having sex with men to whom she is not married. That will illustrate how the people of Israel have turned away from me and worship ◀idols/other gods▶."

³ So I married Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim. She became pregnant and gave birth to my son.

⁴ Yahweh said to me, "Give him the name Jezreel, *which means 'God scatters'*, because I will soon punish the descendants [MTY] of King Jehu *by scattering them*, because he killed many of my people at Jezreel town. *Some day* I will end the kingdom of Israel,

⁵ by destroying the power [MTY] of *the army of Israel in Jezreel Valley.*”

⁶ *Later* Gomer became pregnant *again*, and she gave birth to a daughter. Yahweh said to me “Give her the name Lo-ruhamah, *which means ‘not loved,’* because I will no longer *show that I love* the people [MET] of Israel, and I will not forgive them *for the sins that they have committed.*”

⁷ But I will *show that I love* the people [MTY] of Judah *by saving them from their enemies.* However, it will not be by weapons and armies or horses and chariots that I will save them. Instead, it will be by *the power that I, Yahweh their God, have.*”

⁸ After Gomer had ◀weaned/stopped breast-feeding▶ Lo-ruhamah, she became pregnant again, and she gave birth to another son.

⁹ Yahweh said “Give him the name Lo-ammi, *which means ‘not my people,’* because the people of Israel are no *longer my people,* and I am not their God.

¹⁰ But *some day* the people of Israel will be *as numerous* as [SIM] the *grains of sand* on the seashore; no one will be able to count them. Now *I am saying* to them, ‘You are not my people,’ but then people will say to them, ‘*You are the children of God who is all-powerful.*’

¹¹ *At that time,* the people of Judah and the people of Israel will unite. They will appoint one leader for all of them, and they will return from the countries *to which they have been* ◀exiled/forced to go▶. That will be a great time; Jezreel

also means 'God plants', and it will be as though God will plant them in this country again."

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¹ *At that time, you will say to your fellow-Israeli men, "You are God's people," and you will say to your fellow-Israeli women, "You are ones whom God loves."*

Israel will be punished and later restored

² *Yahweh also said to me, "I want you to accuse the Israeli people.*

It is as though [MET] this nation is your mother,

but this nation is no longer as though it is [MET] my wife,

and it is no longer as though [MET] I am its husband.

Tell the Israeli people that they must stop acting like a prostitute by worshiping other gods; they must stop showing by their behavior that they ◀are unfaithful to/have abandoned▶ me [MET].

³ *If they do not do that,*

I will not give them food and clothes as a husband should give to his wife;

I will take away those things,

and I will cause their nation to become as deserted as it was on the day that I brought their ancestors out of Egypt and caused them to become a nation [MET].

I will cause their country to be like [SIM] a desert; there will be no rain to water the ground [MET].

- ⁴ I will not pity the people,
because they have *abandoned me* as [MET]
prostitutes abandon their husbands.
- ⁵ Their parents are like prostitutes [MET]: they
have been unfaithful *to me*,
and they have done *very* disgraceful things.
They said, 'We will run to *our idols/gods* who love
us;
they are the ones who give us food and water
and wool and linen and *olive* oil, and *wine* to
drink.'
- ⁶ So *it will be as though* [MET] I am blocking their
road with thornbushes,
and putting put a wall around them
so that they do not know which way to go.
- ⁷ They will run to their idols/gods that *they think*
love them,
but they will not find them.
They will search for their false gods,
but they will not find them.
Then they will say, '*Perhaps* we should return to
Yahweh, whom we worshiped previously
[MET],
because things were better for us then than
they are now.'
- ⁸ But they do not realize that I, *Yahweh*, am the
one who gave them grain and wine and
olive oil;
I am the one who gave them silver and gold
which they used to worship Baal.
- ⁹ Therefore I will return and take my grain and
grapes from them when they are ripe.
I will take from them the wool and linen that
I gave to them *to make their clothes* [MTY].

10 I will show those false gods/idols that what my people are doing is disgusting [MET], and no one will be able to hinder me from *punishing them*.

11 I will cause their religious celebrations to cease, the festivals that they celebrate every year and at every new moon and on their ◀Sabbath days/weekly days of rest▶. I will cause all their religious celebrations to cease.

12 I will destroy *all* their grapevines and fig trees, which they said were what their *idols/gods* who loved them paid them for worshiping those idols.

I will cause those places to become a desert, and wild animals will eat the fruit *that remains*.

13 I will punish my people for *all* the times that they burned incense to *honor* the idols of Baal.

They decorated themselves with rings and jewelry, and they went to worship those *false gods/idols* that *they thought* [IRO] loved them, but they abandoned/forgot me!

That is what I, Yahweh, say.

14 But listen! *Some day* I will persuade my people *to worship me again*;

I will lead them *out* into the desert and speak kindly to them *there*.

15 I will give their vineyards *back* to them,

and I will cause Achor Valley, *which means 'valley of trouble'*, to become a valley where they will confidently expect *me to do good things for them*.

They will ◀respond to/want to please▶ me there like they did long ago,
when I freed them from *being slaves in Egypt*.

16 At that time,
they will say to me, '*It is as though* [MET] you are our husband.'

They will not say that I am their *master, like they considered that Baal was*.

17 I will not allow them to speak [MTY] the names of Baal;
they will never use those names again.

18 At that time *it will be as though* I will make an agreement
with *all* the wild animals and birds,
and *even with* the little animals that scurry across the ground,
so that they will never harm my people *again*.

And I will remove from their nation all the weapons *for fighting* battles,
like swords and bows *and* arrows.

The result will be that my people will live peacefully and safely,
and will not be afraid.

19 I will cause them to be *as though they are* [MET] my bride forever.
I will be righteous and fair/just;

I will faithfully love them and be kind to them.

²⁰ I will not abandon them,
and they will realize *that I Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do.*

²¹ At that time, *when they request me to do things for them,*
I will do those things.

When they request clouds and rain to fall on their land,
I will speak to the clouds, and rain will fall on the earth,

²² and grain will grow, and the vineyards and the olive trees will grow in Jezreel Valley.

²³ *At that time, I will take care of the Israeli people like a farmer plants and takes care of his crops [MET].*

I will love those people that I previously said were ones I did not love,
and I previously said, 'You are not my people,'
and *then* they will say to me, 'You are our God.' "

3

Hosea bought his wife again

¹ Then Yahweh said to me, "Go and show to your wife that you still love her, even though she has been committing adultery with another man who loves her. *That will show that I still love the people of Israel, even though they worship*

other gods/idols and eat raisin cakes *in feasts that honor those gods.*"

² *My wife had become a slave*, but I bought her for ◀6 ounces/179 grams▶ of silver and ten bushels of barley.

³ Then I said to her, "You must wait for many days *before we sleep together* [EUP]. During that time, you must not be a prostitute, and you must not have sex with any other man; but I will live with you."

⁴ *Our doing that will show that* in the same way, the people of Israel will not have a king and *other* leaders for many years. They will not offer sacrifices or *have sacred stone* pillars, no sacred vest *for the Supreme Priest*, and no idols!

⁵ But later, the people of Israel will return to Yahweh their God and *be guided by him and by* a king who is a descendant of *King David*. In the last/future days they will come to Yahweh, revering him and trembling *in his presence*, and he will bless them.

4

Yahweh's accusation against Israel

¹ You Israeli people, listen to this message from Yahweh!

He is accusing you people who live in this country,

saying "The people are not faithfully doing what pleases me,

they are not kind to others,

and they do not even know me!

² Everywhere in this land they curse *others*,
they murder *others*, they steal, and they
commit adultery.

They act violently toward others
and commit one murder after another.

³ It is because of their doing those things that
there is no rain [MTY], the land has be-
come dry,

the people are mourning,
and the people are dying *from hunger*.
Even the wild animals and the birds and the
fish in the sea are dying.

⁴ But no one should accuse someone else
and say it is his fault.

It is you priests whom I am accusing.

⁵ So I will punish [MTY] you priests, night and
day,

and I will punish the prophets with you.
I am going to destroy *Israel, the nation that is like*
[MET] a mother to you.

⁶ It is because my people do not know *about me*
that they will be destroyed.

And their not knowing about me is because
you priests have refused *to teach them*
about me;

so I will no longer allow you to be my priests.
You have forgotten the things that I taught you,
so I will forget *to bless* your children.

⁷ As there are more and more priests,
they have sinned against me more and more.
So I will no longer allow them to be honored;
instead, I will cause them to be disgraced.

- 8 The priests get food from *the offerings that the people bring in order to be forgiven for having sinned*,
so the priests want the people to sin more and more
in order that the people will bring them more and more offerings.
- 9 The priests *are as sinful* as the *other* people,
and I will punish *all of* them for what they have done;
I will pay them back for the *evil* things that they have done.
- 10 *The priests* will eat, but they will still be hungry;
they will have sex with prostitutes, but they will not have any children,
because they have abandoned *me*, Yahweh,
11 and they are devoting themselves to sleeping with prostitutes,
and to *drinking* old wine and new wine,
which results in their not being able to think clearly.”

The people are condemned for idolatry

- 12 “You my people request wooden idols
to tell you what you should do!
Like prostitutes who have left/abandoned their husbands,
13 you have abandoned *me* your God, and you are chasing after *other gods* on the tops of hills and mountains;
you burn incense under oak *trees*, poplar *trees*,
and other trees

where there is nice/pleasing shade.
 So your daughters have become prostitutes,
 and your daughters-in-law have committed
 adultery.

14 But it is not *only* your daughters
 whom I will punish for having become pros-
 titutes,
 and it is not *only* your daughters-in-law
 whom I will punish for committing adultery,
 because the men also are having sex with pros-
 titutes,
 and they offer sacrifices
 with the prostitutes *who search for men at
 the shrines of the idols.*
They are all foolish people, and they will *all* be
 ruined.

15 You Israeli *people* have abandoned me
 like [MET] those who commit adultery have
 abandoned their spouses.
 But do not cause *the people of Judah* to sin *also*.
 Do not go to Gilgal or go up to Beth-Aven
 towns
 to worship idols there.
 Do not make solemn promises *there, saying 'Just
 as surely as Yahweh lives, I will do what I
 am promising.'*

16 You *people of Israel* are as stubborn as [SIM] a
 young cow.
 So there is no way [RHQ] that *I, Yahweh, will
 provide food for them
 like a shepherd provides food for his lambs*

- by leading them to a nice meadow.*
- 17 The people of Israel have chosen to worship idols [MET],
so allow them *to do what they want to do.*
- 18 When their rulers finish drinking *their wine*,
they go to find prostitutes;
they love their disgraceful behavior.
- 19 But they will disappear
as though [MET] they were blown away by a whirlwind.
They will become *very* ashamed because of their offering sacrifices *to idols.*"

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Yahweh's accusation against the Israeli people

- 1 "Listen, you priests!
And you *other* Israeli people, you also pay attention!
And you who are members of the king's family,
you also need to listen,
because *I am going to judge you!*
Your *worshiping idols* has been *like* [MET] a trap
for *the people at Mizpah town*;
it has been *like* [MET] a net spread out to
catch people at Tabor Mountain.
- 2 You have done many evil things,
so I will punish all of you.
- 3 I know *everything about the people of Israel*;
nothing that they have done is hidden from me.
Because *the people of Israel* have given themselves *to worshiping idols*

like [MET] prostitutes *give themselves to the men they sleep with*,
they have become unacceptable to me.

⁴ Because they *like to do evil* things,
they will not return to *me*, their God.

Like prostitutes *who have abandoned their husbands* [MET], they have [IDM] abandoned [MET] me;
they do not *even* know me, Yahweh.

⁵ *It is as though* their being proud testifies [PRS] against them.

The sins that *the people of* Israel have committed *are like a heavy load* that causes them to stumble,
and *the people of* Judah stumble with them.

⁶ They will come to worship *me*, Yahweh,
bringing their herds of sheep and cattle,
but they will not *be able to* find me,
because I have abandoned them.

⁷ They have abandoned me;
and their children do not belong to me [MET].

So *they will not be able to celebrate their festivals*
at the new moons
because I will destroy them and *the crops in*
their fields.

⁸ Blow the *rams' horns* in Gibeah town
and blow the trumpets in Ramah town!

Warn *the people at* Beth-Aven town;
you warriors of the tribe of Benjamin, lead
the troops *into the battle*.

⁹ Israel will be ruined on the day that *I* destroy them.

What I am telling to the tribes of Israel will certainly *happen*.

¹⁰ *Because* the leaders of Judah *seized some land that belonged to Israel*, they are like [SIM] those who move boundary markers *to get more land for themselves*;

so I will punish them severely [MET].

¹¹ And *the people of Israel* will suffer greatly when I punish them, because they are *very* determined to worship idols.

¹² I will destroy *the people of Israel* like [SIM] ◀larvae of moths/cockroaches▶ destroy wool, and I will cause *the people of Judah* to be like [SIM] rotten wood.

¹³ When *the leaders of Israel and Judah* saw that the people were suffering because of what *their enemies were doing to them* [MET],

they sent *messages* to the great King of Assyria requesting *his help*.

But he cannot help you;

he cannot cause you to stop suffering, *because I am the one who is punishing Israel and Judah*.

¹⁴ I will become like [SIM] a lion [DOU] to both nations;

I will *attack them and* tear them to pieces.

I will drag them away,

and no one will *be able to* rescue them.

¹⁵ *After that*, I will return to my place *in heaven*

until they admit that they have sinned [MTY]
and return to me;
when they will experience *many* troubles,
they will request me *to help them.*"

6

The Israeli people were insincere about repenting

¹ *The Israeli people say, "Come, let's return to Yahweh!*

He has caused *us* to be injured,
but he will heal us.

He has caused *us* to be wounded,
but *it is as though* he will put bandages on
our wounds [MET].

² *After a very short time he will revive us;
in less than three days he will restore us
in order that we may live in his presence.*

³ *We must try to know Yahweh;
if we do that, he will come and help us,
as surely as the sun rises every morning,
as surely as rain falls every winter/cold
season,*

and as surely as the rain falls again ◀in the
springtime/at the end of the cold season▶."

⁴ *But Yahweh knows they are insincere;
so he says to them, "You people of Israel, and you
people of Judah,*

*I do not know [RHQ] what I should do to you.
Your being faithful to me will disappear as quickly
as [SIM] the morning mist disappears,
like [SIM] the dew on the ground that dis-
appears quickly when the sun shines.*

⁵ I warned [HYP] you by *the messages that I gave to the prophets,*
but you did not pay attention to my messages.

Therefore I will completely destroy you;
the punishment that I give you will strike
you like lightning.

⁶ I want *my people* to faithfully love *me*
more than *I want them to offer sacrifices to me;*

I want them to know me
more than *I want them to completely burn sacrifices on the altar.*

⁷ But they have refused to obey my agreement,
just like Adam did;
they have not been faithful to me.

⁸ Gilead is a city *full* of people who do wicked things;
in the streets are the bloody footprints of
those who have murdered others.

⁹ The priests are like [SIM] bandits who wait
◀in ambushes/along the road▶ to attack
people;

they murder *people who are walking* on the
road to Shechem,
and they commit other disgraceful crimes.

¹⁰ I have seen horrible things *being done* in Israel
[MTY].

The people have abandoned me *like prostitutes who have abandoned their husbands*
[MET];
so the people of Israel have become unacceptable
to me.

¹¹ And you *people of Judah,*

I have appointed a time when I will punish
[MET] you, too.

Whenever I wanted to enable my people to
prosper again,”

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¹ “and when I wanted to heal them *again*,
I did not do it,
because I saw the wicked things that *the people*
of Samaria city and other places in Israel
[DOU] have done.

They constantly deceive others;
bandits rob people in the streets.

² But they do not realize that I do not forget all
the evil things that they do.
It is as though they are surrounded by *all* the
sins that they commit;
and *it is though* those sins are *always right*
in front of me [MTY].

³ Their king is delighted with the wicked things
that the people do;
his officials are happy about the people’s lies.

⁴ *The king and his officials* are all treacherous.
They are always eager to do wicked things;
they are like [SIM] an oven that is *very* hot:
a baker mixes the dough and waits for it to
expand,
and he does not *need to* cause the oven to
become hotter.

⁵ The king and his officials get very drunk during
their festivals,

carousing with others who also do foolish things.

⁶ The officials angrily plan to murder the king; it is like [SIM] they have an oven in their inner beings.

All during the night their *eagerness/wanting to murder the king* is like a fire that is smouldering, but in the morning it becomes like [MET] a roaring fire.

⁷ All those officials are like [MET] hot flames that completely burn up their rulers, so all their kings are murdered, and no one pleads with me *to help them.*"

Other nations will not help them

⁸ "The leaders of Israel join with leaders of godless nations; so the leaders of Israel are as worthless as a pancake that is cooked on only one side.

⁹ Joining with the rulers of foreign nations has caused Israel to be a weak *nation*, but the Israelis do not realize that.

Israel has become *like* [MET] a gray-haired old man, but the people of Israel do not realize it.

¹⁰ Their being proud [PRS] testifies against them, but in spite of that, they do not return to *me*, Yahweh, their God, or *even* try to know me.

¹¹ *The people of Israel* have become foolish and stupid like [SIM] doves.

*First they called out to Egypt to help them,
and then they sought help from Assyria.*

¹² But wherever they go to get help,
*I will not allow them to succeed;
it will be as though [MET] I will throw a net over
them
like [SIM] a hunter uses a net to capture birds;*
I will punish them for the evil things that they
do.

¹³ Terrible things will happen to them
because they abandoned/deserted me!
They will be destroyed
because they rebelled against me.

I wanted to rescue them,
but they tell lies about me.

¹⁴ They do not cry out to me sincerely [IDM];
they *only* lie on their beds and wail.
They gather together and ask *me to give them*
grain and wine,
but they turn away from me.

¹⁵ I trained/taught them and enabled them to
become strong,
but now they plan *to do* evil things to me.

¹⁶ They have rejected me, their Great God, and
turned to their god Baal;
they are *as useless* as [SIM] a crooked bow.
Their leaders boast *that they are very strong*,
but they will be killed by *their enemies'*
swords.

As a result, *the people of* Egypt will laugh at
them."

8

The Israelis will be punished because of their wrong decisions

¹ *Yahweh said to me, “Blow [MTY] your trumpet to warn the people!*

My people have rejected the agreement that I made with them,
and they have rebelled against *obeying* my laws.

Therefore, *their enemies* are swooping down on my people’s country like [SIM] an eagle.

² My Israeli people cry out to me,
‘Our God, we know that you are our God!’

³ But because the Israeli people have rejected what is good,
their enemies will pursue them.

⁴ The Israel people appointed *their last three kings*,
but they did not ask me if I agreed to *what they were doing*.

They chose their own leaders
without asking if I would approve of them.

They used their own silver and gold to make for themselves idols,
and doing that led them to be destroyed.

⁵ You people of Samaria, throw away your *idol that resembles a calf!*

I am extremely angry with you people!
How long [RHQ] will you *do things that cause you to be unacceptable to me?*

⁶ *Someone in Israel made that idol for you; but I am God and it is not.*

So that idol of a calf in Samaria must be smashed to pieces.

⁷ *The foolish thing that the people of Israel have done is like [MET] trying to plant wind; but what they harvest will be like [MET] a whirlwind.*

So the grain that they planted will have no heads *on the stalks*, and as a result *there will be no grain* from which to make flour.

And if it did produce good grain, foreigners would *come and* steal it.

⁸ *The people of Israel will be defeated [MET] by their enemies; they will be scattered* among other nations and become worthless.

⁹ Like [MET] donkeys that are looking for mates, they have requested *help* from Assyria; they paid money to *the leaders of Assyria* in order to *persuade those leaders* to protect them.

¹⁰ But although they have agreed to pay money each year to *the leaders of* those countries, I will soon gather them together to *punish them*. The great King of *Assyria* will cause them to suffer greatly.

¹¹ Although *the people of Israel* built many altars to present offerings to *their idols* to take away *their guilt for* sinning, those altars have become places where they commit *more* sins.

¹² I wrote many laws for them,
but they disregarded them, saying that *they did not have to obey them because they were different from laws that they had known previously.*

¹³ They offer sacrifices to me,
and they eat *some of* the meat of those sacrifices, *which is what I permitted them to do.*

But I, Yahweh, am not pleased with those sacrifices.

I remember the evil things that they have done,
and I will punish them for the sins that they have committed:

I will force them to *go to other countries and become slaves like they were* [MET] in Egypt.

¹⁴ *The people of Israel* have abandoned/forgotten me, the one who created their *nation*;
they have built palaces,
and *the people of Judah* have built walls around many towns.

But I will send a fire
that will destroy all their cities and their fortresses."

9

Israel will be punished

¹ *You people of Israel*, do not shout joyfully *during your festivals* like *people of other nations* do!

I say that because you have ◀not been faithful to/abandoned▶ me, your God.

At every place where the people thresh grain
you have *presented gifts to your idols like*
men pay money to prostitutes.

² *But soon* there will not be enough grain [MTY,
PRS] and wine [MTY, PRS] for you.

³ And you people will not remain in the land that
I, Yahweh, *gave to your ancestors.*

You will be *captured and taken to Assyria,*
where you will become slaves like your ances-
tors were in Egypt;

and in Assyria you will be forced to eat food that
Yahweh has forbidden you to eat.

⁴ You Israelis will not *be able to* give wine
offerings to him,
or bring sacrifices to him.

None of your other sacrifices will please him;
they will be unacceptable to him, like [SIM]
food that is touched by people at funerals,
and everyone who eats that food will become
unacceptable to him.

They will be permitted to eat that food them-
selves,

but they will not *be permitted to* bring it into
the temple.

⁵ At that time you will not [RHQ] be able to
celebrate the feasts and sacred festivals.

⁶ And even if you escape and are not killed *by the*
Assyrians,

you will be captured *by the army of Egypt,*
and you will *die and* be buried in Memphis,
the capital of Egypt.

Briers will *grow up and* cover your treasures of
silver,

and thorns will grow in your *ruined* tents/
houses.

⁷ It is now the time for Yahweh to punish you,
to pay you back for all the sins that you have
committed.

You people will *soon* know that.

You have *committed* very many sins,
and you very much hate Yahweh.

You consider that the prophets are foolish,
and you think that those who proclaim
messages from him are crazy.

⁸ My God appointed *me and the other* prophets
to be *like* [MET] watchmen *to warn* you
people of Israel,

but everywhere that we go, *it is as though* people
set traps for us
and people are hostile *to us, even* in the
temple of our God.

⁹ The sins that the Israeli people have committed
are as awful as *what the men of* Gibeah did
long ago;

so God will not forget the wicked things that they
have done;
he will punish the Israelis for *all* those sins.

¹⁰ *Yahweh says*, “When I first started *to do things*
to help Israel,

it seemed to me as though [SIM] I had found
grapes in the desert.

Your ancestors were *delightful*,

like [SIM] the first figs that grow on fig trees
each year.

But when they came to Peor *Mountain*,

they worshiped that disgusting idol Baal,
and they became as disgusting as the idol
that they loved.

11 The things that cause Israel to be great will
disappear

like [SIM] a bird that flies away;
most of their women will not become pregnant
[DOU] or give birth to children.

12 Even if their children are born and start to
grow up,

I will cause all of them to die *while they are*
still young.

Terrible things will happen to them
when I abandon them!

13 I have seen Israel become beautiful and
prosperous like Tyre *city was before it was*
destroyed,

but now the people of Israel will *be forced*
to take their children to be slaughtered *by*
their enemies."

14 Yahweh, *I do not know* [RHQ] what I should
ask for my people.

So I ask that you do this one thing:
Cause the women who are pregnant to have
miscarriages
and *unable to nurse their babies.*

15 *Yahweh says,* "Because of all the wicked things
that my people did at Gilgal,
that is where I started to hate them.
And now, because of *all* the sinful things that they
have done,
I will expel them from my country.

I will not love them any longer;
all their leaders rebel *against me*.

¹⁶ Israel is like [MET] a grapevine that is dried up;

like a vine [MET] whose roots are withered
and that produces no fruit.

Even if the *women of Israel* give birth to *more*
children,

I will cause those children, whom they love,
to die.

¹⁷ The people of Israel have not obeyed me, their
God,

so I will reject them.

*As a result, they will wander among the
other nations, searching for a place to live."*

10

¹ "Israel was *like a large* healthy/luxuriant vine
[MET]

that produced *a lot of* grapes.

But as the people became richer,

they made more altars *at which to worship
idols*.

As the people prospered,

they *built and* decorated sacred pillars *that
they worshiped*.

² They are deceitful;

so now they are guilty and must be pun-
ished.

I, Yahweh, will tear down their altars
and smash those pillars.

³ Then they will say, 'It is because we did not
revere Yahweh

that we no *longer* have a king.
But *even if we had* a king,
he certainly could not [RHQ] do anything to
help us.'

⁴ They falsely promise *that they will do many things*;
they solemnly promise and make agree-
ments,
but they do not do what they promise.

So people accuse and sue *each other in the courts*;
they are like [SIM] poisonous weeds *that grow* in a plowed field.

⁵ The people who live in Samaria *city* are worried
about *what may happen to the idol that resembles* a calf *that they set up* at Beth-
Aven town.

The people in Samaria will mourn,
and the priests there will cry about it
if it is damaged or destroyed.

Previously they shouted joyfully
about its being very great;
but now it will not be great any more.

⁶ It will be taken to Assyria
to be a gift for the great King *of Assyria*.
So the people of Israel will be disgraced,
and they will be ashamed
because *they trusted in* that idol.

⁷ The King of Samaria *and the other people in Samaria* will be gone;
they will be like [SIM] a twig *that floats away*
on the surface of the water *and disappears*.

⁸ The altars on the tops of hills *where the people worshiped idols* will be destroyed;

those have been the places where the people
of Israel sinned greatly.
Thorns and weeds will grow and cover those
altars.
Then the people will plead to the mountains
and hills,
'Fall *down and* cover us
to protect us from God punishing us!'

⁹ *You people of Israel, ever since your ancestors
did evil things at Gibeah,
you have continued to sin.
When the people at [PRS] Gibeah did evil things,
the result was a war in which thousands of
people died.*

¹⁰ *So now, when I want to, I will punish the Israeli
people.
Because of the many sins that they have
committed,
the armies of other nations will gather to attack
them,
and they will cause the Israeli people to
become their slaves.*

¹¹ *Israel is like [MET] a well-trained ◀heifer/
young cow▶
that likes to thresh grain.
So now you will become slaves.
It will be as though I will put a yoke on your
neck,
and you will be forced to work hard for your
enemies in their fields.
You people of Israel and Judah will be forced
to go to Assyria;*

there you [DOU] will pull plows to break up
the ground *for planting seeds*.

12 *You plow your fields and plant your seeds and
harvest your crops* [MET],

*but what you need to do is to act righteously
and to faithfully love me;*

you need to repent [MET],

because it is time to try to know *me*, Yahweh;
and if you do that, I will pour out [MET] many
blessings on you.

13 *You plant seeds and harvest the crops and eat
them;*

*but what I consider that you have really done
is that you have planted wicked things and
harvested evil things*

and eaten [MET] the results [IDM] of the lies
that you have told.

*Instead of trusting in me, you have ◀depended
on/trusted in▶ your own power
and in your many soldiers.*

14 As a result, you will *soon* hear the roar of
battle,

and all your cities that have walls around
them will be destroyed,

like [SIM] Shalman's *army* destroyed Beth-Arbel
city in a battle,

and the women *in that city* and their chil-
dren were bashed to death.

15 *You people of* [APO] Bethel *city*, that is what
will happen to you,

because you are very wicked.

And when the sun rises *on that day*,
the King of Israel will be killed *in the battle.*"

11

God's love for Israel

- ¹ “Before the Israeli *people* became a nation
[MET],
I loved them *like a man loves his son*,
and I called them out of Egypt.
- ² But while I continued to call them,
they *continued to turn away from me more*
and more.
They offered sacrifices to their statues of Baal,
and they burned incense to *honor* them.
- ³ *The people of Israel were like a little boy* [MET],
and *it was as though* it was I who taught
them to walk,
holding them by their hands.
But they did not realize that it was I who was
taking care of them.
- ⁴ *It was as though I fastened ropes around them*
to lead them,
while I loved them and was kind to them.
It was as though they were young oxen [MET],
and I lifted the yoke from their necks and
bent down to feed them.
- ⁵ But the people of Israel will become *slaves*
again,
like they were in Egypt,
and *the people of Assyria* will [RHQ] rule over
them,
because the people of Israel refused to re-
pent.
- ⁶ *Their enemies* will use their swords *to attack* the
cities in Israel

and will destroy the bars in the gates *of the city walls*.

As a result, the people of Israeli will not be able to accomplish the things that they planned to do.

⁷ My people are determined to ◀turn away from/abandon▶ me.
They say that I am the great all-powerful God,
but they do not honor me at all.

⁸ *You people of Israel*, I certainly do not want to [RHQ] abandon you
and allow *your enemies* to capture you.

I do not [RHQ] want to act toward you like I acted toward Admah and Zeboiim,
cities that I completely destroyed when I destroyed Sodom.

I [SYN] have changed my mind *about punishing you*;
my desire to pity you has increased.

⁹ Although I am extremely angry,
I do not want to punish you severely;
I do not want to ◀devastate/completely ruin▶ Israel.

Humans would easily decide to do that,
but I am God, not a human.

I, the Holy One, am with you;
although I am very angry *with you*, I will not *destroy you*.

¹⁰ You will follow me when I roar like [SIM] a lion;

when I roar, *some of you* my children will tremble as you return to *Israel* from the *islands and seacoasts toward the west*.
 11 *Some of you* will come swiftly from Egypt like a *flock of birds*;
others will return from Assyria, like doves.
 I will enable you to live in your homes in *Israel* again.
That will surely happen, because I, Yahweh, have said it."

Israel and Judah are condemned now

12 *Yahweh says, "The people of Israel have ◀surrounded me with lies/constantly told lies to me▶.*
 And the people of Judah have *also* turned/rebelled against me, their God,
 the Holy One who always does what I promise to do,
 and the people of Judah worship other gods."

12

1 *The leaders of Israel* are constantly wavering about seeking help from other countries.
Seeking their help is as useless as [MET] chasing the wind.
 They pile up their lies and violent acts.
First, they make a treaty with Assyria, and then they send olive oil to the rulers of Egypt to seek their help.
 2 *Yahweh says that he will bring accusations against the leaders of Judah, and that he will punish the descendants of Jacob for what they have done.*

³ *When Jacob was in his mother's womb, he grabbed his brother Esau's heel because he wanted to be born first.*

When Jacob grew up, he wrestled with God.

⁴ He struggled with *the one who had appeared to him in the form of an angel*, and Jacob defeated him, but *then* he cried and asked the angel to bless him.

Later, God came to Jacob at Bethel and talked with him there.

⁵ *That was the Commander of the armies of angels*

whose name is Yahweh *who talked with him!*

⁶ But you *people of Israel* must return to your God!

You must faithfully love *him*, and you must do what is fair/just and always depend on him.

⁷ The merchants *among you* use scales that do not weigh correctly; they love/like to cheat people.

⁸ *The people of Israel* boast, saying "We are very rich [DOU];

and we got all that money by our own efforts, and without committing any sin."

⁹ "I am Yahweh your God,

the one who brought your ancestors out of Egypt.

And some day I will force you to live in tents again *like your ancestors did*

when *they celebrated* the Festival of Living in Temporary Shelters.

- 10 *Many times* I spoke to the prophets,
and I gave them many visions,
and I gave them parables to tell *to the people.*"
- 11 *The people of Gilead city* are [RHQ] extremely wicked;
they are worthless.
The people sacrifice bulls in Gilgal *city*,
but their altars will soon become like [SIM]
piles of stone *at the edge of* a plowed field.
- 12 *Your ancestor* Jacob fled from his brother Esau
and went to northwest Mesopotamia.
He worked *for his uncle Laban* for many
years to get a wife;
he took care of *his uncle's* sheep to pay for her.
- 13 *Many years later*, Yahweh enabled a prophet to
bring the *ancestors of you* people of Israel
here from Egypt;
that prophet, *Moses*, took care of them.
- 14 *But now the people of* Israel have caused
Yahweh to become very angry;
Yahweh says that they deserve to die because
they caused *many others* to die [MTY];
he will pay them back for the sins that
they have committed against him and for
insulting him.

13

Israel is doomed to be destroyed

- ¹ *Previously, when the leaders of Israel spoke,*
the people trembled;
those leaders were highly respected by the
Israeli people.
But the people sinned greatly by *worshiping* Baal,
so now they will be killed *by their enemies*.
- ² Now they sin more and more;
they make idols for themselves
and coat the idols with their silver.
Those idols are statues that are very cleverly
made,
but those statues are made by *mere* humans.
But *the people are told*, “Kiss those idols *that*
resemble a calf,
and offer sacrifices to them!”
- ³ Therefore, those people will *disappear quickly*
like [SIM] the morning mist or the dew that
lies *on the ground early in the morning*;
they will disappear like [SIM] chaff that is
blown away from where *the wheat* is
threshed,
like [SIM] smoke that goes out of a chimney.
- ⁴ But *Yahweh says to his people*, “I am Yahweh,
your God,
the one who brought your ancestors out of
Egypt.
You must believe that only I am God
and that there is no other God,
and that there is no one else who can save
you!
- ⁵ I took care of your *ancestors when they were* in
the desert,
where it was extremely *hot and dry*.

⁶ When I provided food for them,
their *stomachs* were full, and they were
satisfied.

But then they became proud
and they forgot *about* me,
and you are like your ancestors!

⁷ So I will attack you like [SIM] a lion *attacks*
other animals;

I will be like [SIM] a leopard that waits
beside the road *to attack another animal*.

⁸ Like [SIM] a female bear attacks anyone that
steals her cubs,

I will attack you Israelis and rip you open.

I will completely destroy you

like [SIM] lions or *other* wild animals tear
apart the animals that they catch and
devour them.

⁹ *You people of* Israel, you will be destroyed
because you oppose me, the only one who
◀can help/helps▶ you.

¹⁰ You have a king;

◀why is he *unable to save you?*/but he is
unable to save you.▶ [RHQ]

You have [RHQ] rulers in all your towns,
but they are not helping you, *either*.

Your *ancestors* said, 'Appoint for us a king and
other leaders to rule over us
like the other nations have!'

¹¹ I was angry with them *for requesting that*,
but I appointed a king *to rule over* them.

But *later* I became very angry with them *again*,
so I took their king away.

12 *I have written on a scroll* a record of the sins that have been committed by you people of Israel, and I have stored away that record.

13 You people are not wise; and now *you are helpless*.

You are like [MET] a woman who is having birth pains but who is unable to give birth to the baby.

14 I certainly will not [RHQ] save you from being killed and from going to the place where the dead people are.

I will [RHQ] cause you to be afflicted by plagues and to die and be buried in graves.

I will not be merciful *to you*.

15 Even if you people of Israel prosper more than the nearby nations do, *the army of Assyria* will come *like* [MET] an east wind that blows from the desert; the springs and wells in Israel will become dry; and *your enemies* will take away all your valuable possessions.

16 *You people of Samaria* must be punished because you have rebelled against *me*, your God.

You will be killed by *your enemies'* swords; your little children will be *killed by being* dashed/thrown to the ground; the *bellies of* pregnant women *among you* will be ripped open."

14

Those who repent will be blessed

¹ *You people of Israel*, return to Yahweh our God.
You are being punished because of the sins
which you have committed.

² So now return to Yahweh
and say [MTY] this to him:
“Forgive us for all the sins that we have committed,
and kindly accept ◀us/our sacrifices▶
in order that we may thank/praise you [IDM].

³ *We admit that Assyria* will not save us,
and our war horses will not save us, either.
We will never again say, ‘You are our gods’
to *the idols that we* [SYN] have made.
You are the one who acts mercifully to
orphans.”

⁴ *Yahweh says*, “*If they say that to me*, I will
forgive them for having ◀turned away
from/abandoned▶ me,
and I will love them with all my inner being,
because I [PRS] will have stopped being
angry with them.

⁵ I will be to the people of Israel
like dew *that refreshes the soil*.
When I do that, they will *become as delightful as*
[MET] lilies are when they are blooming.
No one will be able to conquer them;
they will be *as unmovable as* [SIM] the roots
of cedar trees.

⁶ *Their good influence will spread like* [MET]
the branches of a tree.
They will be like [SIM] beautiful olive trees,

and *they will be as delightful as* [SIM] the
 aroma of the cedar *trees in Lebanon.*

⁷ People will *come to them to be protected*
like people are protected from the hot sun by
being [MET] in the shade of a tree.

They will *◀flourish/be strong▶* like [SIM] grain
 that grows well.

They will *be successful like* a vineyard in
which grapes grow abundantly.

They will become as famous/well-known as [SIM]
 the wines from Lebanon.

⁸ *You people of Israel, do not* [RHQ] have anything
 more to do with idols;
 if you *get rid of your idols*, I will answer your
prayers and take care of you.

I am like [MET] a strong/green pine tree,
 and your blessings come from me.”

⁹ Those who are wise will understand the things
about which I have written.

Those who think well will pay careful atten-
 tion to them.

The things that Yahweh wants us to do [MET] are
 right;

righteous people will conduct their lives
 adhering to them.

But those who rebel against Yahweh will be
 ruined.

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