

Spiritual Adultery via Idolatry

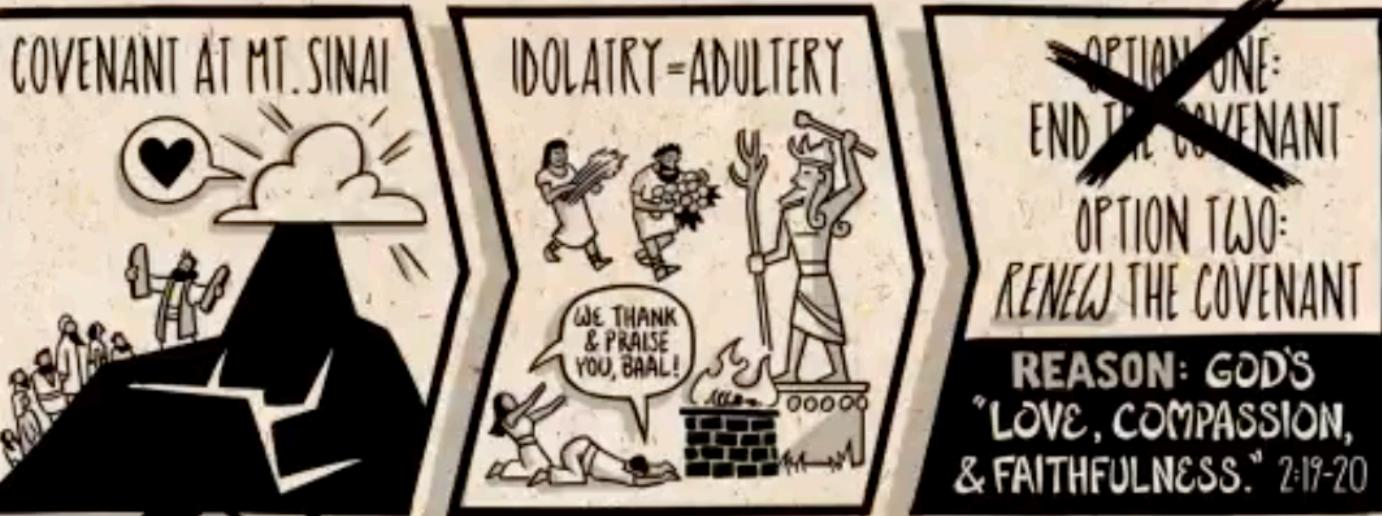
Am I teachable?



1-3 HOSEA'S MARRIAGE TO GOMER



PROPHETIC SYMBOL OF GOD'S RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL



HOSEA

1-3 INTRODUCE HOSEA'S MAIN THEMES:

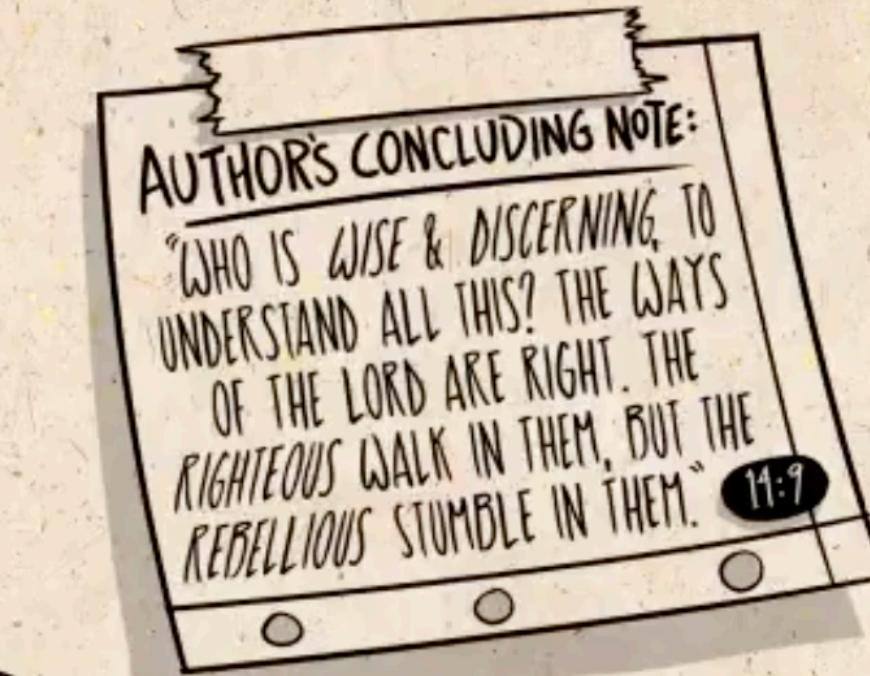
ISRAEL HAS REBELLED & GOD WILL BRING SEVERE CONSEQUENCES...
BUT GOD'S LOVE & MERCY ARE MORE POWERFUL THAN ISRAEL'S SIN.

(EXPLORED IN MORE DEPTH)

4-11 ACCUSATIONS & WARNINGS FOR ISRAEL

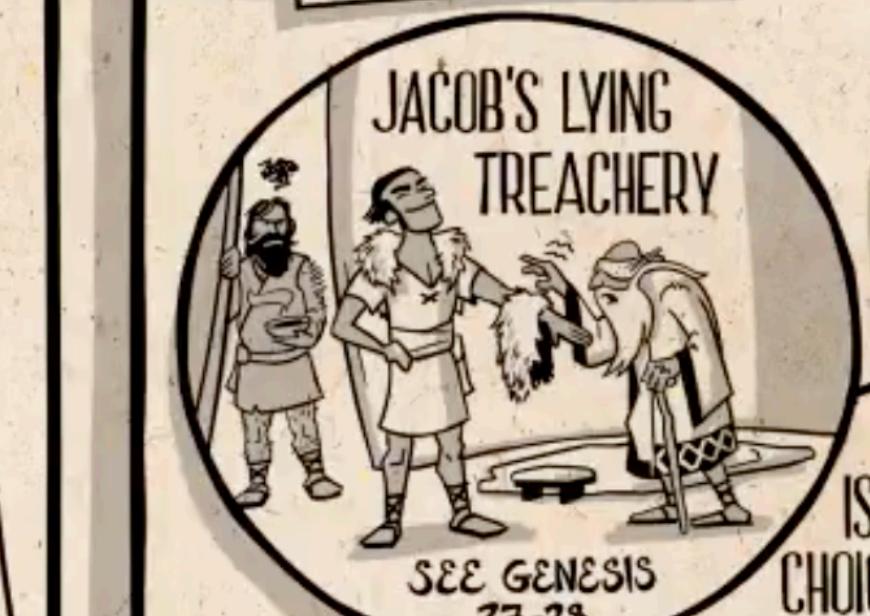


11 HOPE FOR THE FUTURE



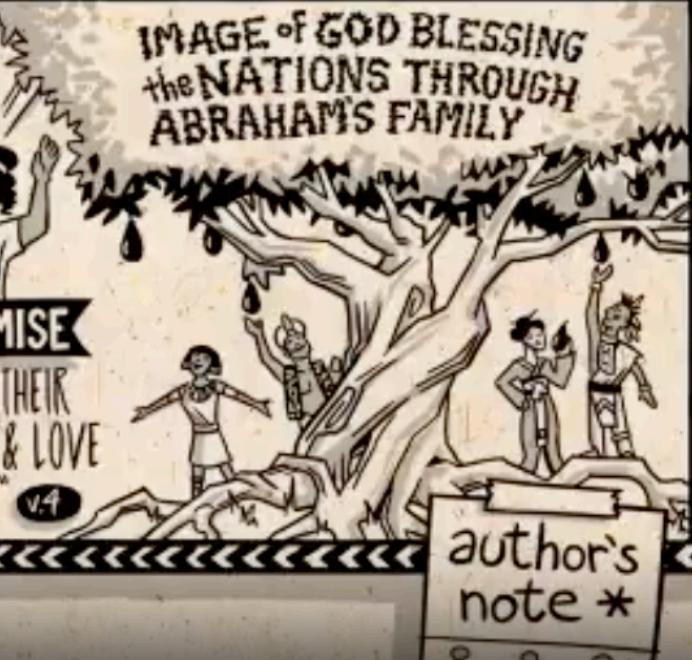
12-14 MORE ACCUSATIONS & WARNINGS

12-13 HOSEA'S HISTORY LESSON



- HOSEA'S POETRY REVEALS DEEP TRUTHS ABOUT GOD'S CHARACTER & HUMAN NATURE.
- GOD'S ULTIMATE PURPOSE IS TO

Heal & Save



author's note *

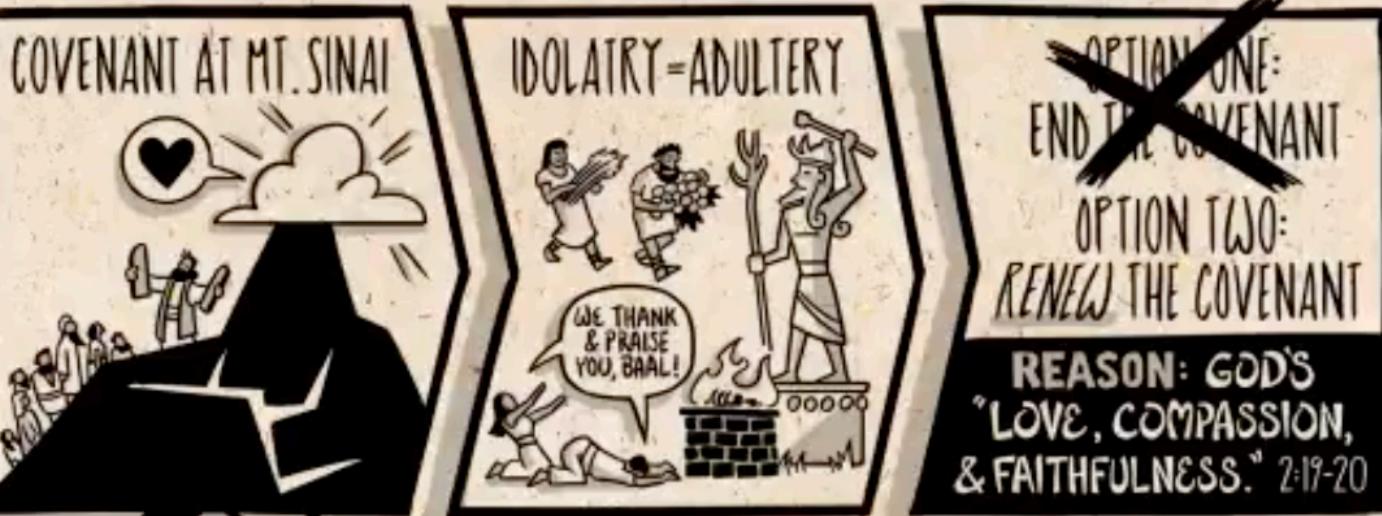


HOSEA

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PROPHETIC SYMBOL OF GOD'S RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL



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Hosea 4: 11-14

11 Infidelity, wine, and new wine take away the understanding.

12 My people consult their wooden idol, and their diviner's wand informs them;

For a spirit of infidelity has led them astray,

And they have been unfaithful, departing from their God.

13 They offer sacrifices on the tops of the mountains

And burn incense on the hills,

Under oak, poplar, and terebinth,

Because their shade is pleasant.

Therefore your daughters play the prostitute,

And your brides commit adultery.

14 I will not punish your daughters when they play the prostitute,

Or your brides when they commit adultery,

Because the men themselves slip away with the prostitutes

And offer sacrifices with temple prostitutes;

So the people without understanding are ruined.

Spiritual Adultery via Idolatry

From Last Week's Summary

“Neither the people nor the priests knew God, so their hearts were inclined toward worship of idols and pursuing pleasure and treasure.”

Spiritual Adultery via Idolatry

Hosea 4:11

11 Infidelity, wine, and new wine take away the understanding.

The word for *understanding* is literally "heart"; it describes the seat of intellect, including intent. Taken together, the verse means that debauchery occupied Israel's mind. It became her passion and destroyed her spiritual commitment to God. The people of Israel became insensitive to God and His laws as they gave themselves to *harlotry, wine and new wine*.

Proverbs 4:23

Deut. 5:29

Spiritual Adultery via Idolatry

Hosea 4:12

12 My people consult their wooden idol, and their diviner's wand informs them;
For a spirit of infidelity has led them astray,
And they have been unfaithful, departing from their God.

God's people used *their diviner's wand* ("stick" or "rod) to seek or ascertain *the will of the gods*. They drew a circle on the ground and divided it into several sections. An answer would be assigned to each section and a stick would be placed upright in the middle of the circle. As the stick is released, it would fall into the section of the circle that represented the god's answer.

Thus, instead of trusting God to provide answers to their questions and problems, they turned to idolatry. *They fell into the sin of divination because of their lack of faith in the true and living God*

Can you think of an example where we can fall into this today? Where we use our circumstances to determine God's will?

Spiritual Adultery via Idolatry

Hosea 4:11, 12

How does infidelity take away our understanding and cause us to lose our faith?

We break God's law:

Matthew 22:36-40 ³⁶“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” ³⁷And He said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ ³⁸This is the great and ^aforemost commandment. ³⁹The second is like it, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ ⁴⁰Upon these two commandments ^bhang the whole Law and the Prophets.” (NASB)

Spiritual Adultery via Idolatry

Hosea 4:13

13 They offer sacrifices on the tops of the mountains

And burn incense on the hills,

Under oak, poplar, and terebinth,

Because their shade is pleasant.

Therefore your daughters play the prostitute,

And your brides commit adultery.

It was a common cultic practice in Canaan to place the shrines (religious objects) on hills and under green *trees* ([Deuteronomy 12:2](#)). The Israelites copied this practice later during their times of apostasy ([1 Kings 14:23](#); [2 Kings 16:4](#)).

Generally speaking, adherence to idol worship went along with adopting the morality of the pagan religion. Rather than embracing the "love your neighbor as yourself" standard of their covenant with Yahweh God, paganism provided moral justification for sexual immorality and exploitation of their neighbor. Child sacrifice stemmed from this.

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Hosea 4:13

Any examples that show we no longer “love our neighbor” as ourselves?

Christians suing Christians

1 Corinthians 6:18 When one of you has a grievance against another, does he dare go to law before the unrighteous instead of the saints? 2Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you incompetent to try trivial cases? 3Do you not know that we are to judge angels? How much more, then, matters pertaining to this life! 4So if you have such cases, why do you lay them before those who have no standing in the church? 5I say this to your shame. Can it be that there is no one among you wise enough to settle a dispute between the brothers, 6but brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers? 7To have lawsuits at all with one another is already a defeat for you. Why not rather suffer wrong? Why not rather be defrauded? 8But you yourselves wrong and defraud—even your own brothers!

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Hosea 4:14

14 I will not punish your daughters when they play the prostitute,
Or your brides when they commit adultery,
Because the men themselves slip away with the prostitutes
And offer sacrifices with temple prostitutes;
So the people without understanding are ruined.

Women were not the only participants in this cultic prostitution. Their actions only showed the corruption of the society because the elders were doing the same thing. They were being exploited by those who ought to have been caring for and protecting them: their fathers and husbands! The men led the women into these corrupt practices for their own pleasure.

The *daughters and brides* engaged in sexual intercourse with male cult prostitutes with the intent of promoting fertility. The men who were supposed to lead their families in all truth went apart with *harlots and offered sacrifices with temple prostitutes*. All levels of family life were corrupt. (More on this next week.) The nation was headed for destruction. As the LORD said, *The people without understanding are ruined*. Lack of knowledge and lack of wisdom always lead to destruction.

What does it mean to be “TEACHABLE”?

5 Ideas to Consider

1. You stay open instead of proving you’re right

Teachability isn’t about having no confidence—it’s about admitting, “*I might not know everything yet, and that’s fine.*”

2. You look for lessons everywhere

From experts, peers, mistakes, failures, even younger people or beginners—a teachable person asks, “*What can I learn here?*”

3. You take feedback without melting down

You may not enjoy criticism, but you listen to it, weigh it honestly, and decide what’s useful. Proverbs 12:1 “*Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge*”.

What does it mean to be “TEACHABLE”?

5 Ideas to Consider (continued)

4. You’re not afraid to try, adjust, and try again

Teachable people **experiment**, fall short, tweak, and keep going instead of quitting or blaming.

5. You separate identity from performance

You messed up isn’t the same as *you are a mess*.

When failure isn’t personal, it becomes information—not shame.

A quality in those who desire to learn, present in the disciples of Jesus Christ and seen in Christ’s relationship to his Father. Unwillingness to receive the truth leads to spiritual darkness. (Logos Free Edition)

How do I apply this section of Hosea?

Hosea 4:11-14 addresses Israel's spiritual adultery through idolatry and its consequences.

Recognize the core warning: The passage describes how Israel abandoned God for idols, leading to spiritual emptiness ("eat but not be satisfied") and moral confusion. The application is about the futility of seeking fulfillment apart from God.

Personal application:

1. Identify modern idols: What are you tempted to turn to instead of God for security, identity, or satisfaction? This could be career success, relationships, money, pleasure, or even good things that have become ultimate things.
2. Examine spiritual fruitlessness: Are there areas where you're expending energy but experiencing no real satisfaction or growth? This might signal misplaced devotion.
3. Guard against spiritual compromise: The passage warns how syncretism (mixing worship of God with other allegiances) leads to confusion and instability. Consider where you might be dividing your loyalties.

Prayer for teachability:

Lord, I come before you with an open heart and mind.

Grant me the humility to recognize that I don't have all the answers, and the wisdom to seek them from you and from those you've placed in my life. Soften any pride that makes me resistant to correction or new understanding.

Help me to listen more than I speak, to consider before I dismiss, and to value truth over being right. When I encounter ideas that challenge me, give me the courage to examine them honestly rather than defend myself reflexively.

Teach me to see every experience—both pleasant and difficult—as an opportunity to grow. Help me learn from my mistakes without being crushed by them, and to celebrate progress without becoming complacent.

Give me a student's heart that remains curious, eager, and receptive throughout my life. Let me never become so set in my ways that I can't be molded by your hand or enriched by the insights of others.

Make me quick to say "I was wrong" and "teach me more." Replace my need to appear knowledgeable with a genuine desire to actually become wiser.

Thank you for your patience with me as I learn and grow. May I extend that same patience to myself and others.

Amen.