

Their cities and villages will be burned and plundered. There will be many thousands slain, thousands of others taken captive and deported to a far away land. Their invaders will be the cruel, blood-thirsty Assyrians who destroyed Beth-arbel (very likely the modern Kirbeth Irbid, about six miles southwest of Magdala in Galilee). Their king will be "Shalman" who is to be identified as the Shalmaneser II of Kings 17:3-6. Not even women and innocent children will be spared.

v. 15 SO SHALL BETH-EL DO UNTO YOU BECAUSE OF YOUR GREAT WICKEDNESS . . . And all this destruction and blood-letting is a consequence of Israel's stubborn rebellion against a merciful God. Their rebellion is manifested most openly at Bethel where the temple and altar to the golden-calf is located and where the nation made pilgrimage constantly to bow down before its idols. All this will bring sudden, swift ("at daybreak") destruction of the ruling monarch and of the nation. Israel will perish suddenly! She will be taken away quickly—there will be no long, extended expiration or wasting away. Her oblivion will come rapidly and completely!

### QUIZ

1. How does Hosea intend Israel to "sow righteousness?"
2. How is "fallow ground" to be broken up?
3. To what extent did Israel "plow" wickedness?
4. What were the consequences of plowing wickedness?
5. Who is "Shalman" and what did he do to Israel?
6. Where is Beth-arbel?
7. How long did it take for Israel to disappear from history?

### RECOGNIZING GOD'S COMPASSION REMONSTRATING—

TEXT: 11:1-9

- 1 When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.
- 2 The more the prophets called them, the more they went from them: they sacrificed unto the Baalim, and burned incense to graven images.
- 3 Yet I taught Ephraim to walk; I took them on my arms; but they knew not that I healed them.

- 4 I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love; and I was to them as they that lift up the yoke on their jaws; and I laid food before them.
- 5 They shall not return into the land of Egypt; but the Assyrian shall be their king, because they refused to return to me.
- 6 And the sword shall fall upon their cities, and shall consume their bars, and devour them, because of their own counsels.
- 7 And my people are bent on backsliding from me: though they call them to him that is on high, none at all will exalt him.
- 8 How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I cast thee off, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zebouim? my heart is turned within me, my compassions are kindled together.
- 9 I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee; and I will not come in wrath.

### QUERIES

- a. Who is the "son" whom God called out of Egypt?
- b. Who is the prophet speaking of in v. 7, "him that is on high?"
- c. What does God's nature (v. 9) have to do with withholding wrath?

### PARAPHRASE

When Israel was in its infancy as a nation I loved him and protected and delivered him from Egyptian bondage. And how did Israel repay Me? Time after time, as I sent My prophets with messages of My love and care, Israel rejected them. In fact, he hated the very sight of these well-meaning warners, preferring Baalim and carved images to their Creator and Redeemer. Yet, as a father patiently teaches his child to walk, takes him by his arms, carefully leads him until he has learned to walk safely; so I lovingly took Israel by his arms and taught him to walk in My ways; but they refused to acknowledge that I, Jehovah, was their "healer." I drew them to Me gently like men guiding and helping one another with ropes; I bound them to me only with bands of love; I eased all their burdens like a farmer pushes back the yoke upon his oxen so they may eat their food in comfort; I even fed them manna from heaven, food for which they did not work. No, they shall not return to Egypt—their destiny is far more terrible than that. The blood-thirsty Assyrians will be their taskmasters because they deliberately refused to return to My counsel. War and destruction will swirl through their cities; their enemies will crash through their gates, breaking the

cross-beams holding them shut, and trap them in their own fortresses. *They have chosen to follow their own counsel.* My people are so fastened to their backsliding ways they are, as it were, impaled upon apostasy, and they cannot get loose. Although the prophets continually call them upward to God, none of the people rise to the upward call and return to God's ways. How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? shall I surrender thee, O Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? Shall I set thee as Zebaiim—as those blackened cities of the plain that were destroyed with Sodom and Gomorrah? My heart is in turmoil; My heart is moved to its depths! You deserve, and I could justly execute, My fierce anger, but I am not going to utterly destroy you and completely withdraw My covenant promises. No, I am infinitely faithful, loving and patient. I am able to do what no man can do. I am going to ultimately execute justice and at the same time justify by My grace, those who believe and trust Me. I am going to punish sin and have mercy on penitent sinners when I fulfill My covenant.

### SUMMARY

Hosea shows how the people of Israel repaid the Lord for all the proofs of His love—with ingratitude and unfaithfulness. Israel deserved total obliteration but God, because of His love and faithfulness, will perform a work that man cannot even imagine—He will both execute His justice and justify those who believe.

### COMMENT

v. 1 WHEN ISRAEL WAS A CHILD, THEN I LOVED HIM, AND CALLED MY SON OUT OF EGYPT. This section of Hosea is one of the most beautiful sections of the entire Old Testament. When Hosea touches upon the love of God, he plunges us into an ocean whose depths have never been fathomed. God's love is all-embracing, all-inviting, all supporting, all-supplying. And, as Hosea so graphically indicates, God's matchless love underlies every one of His divine warnings. When such love is spurned it only makes more terrible the fearful storms of judgment when they break. Hosea had been brought into fellowship with such love through tragedy in his own home, through which tragedy, the tragedy of wounded love, there had come to him a sympathetic understanding of the Divine heart of God. The verse before us is quoted in Matthew 2:15. It is very evident that Hosea's primary reference is to Israel's deliverance from bondage in Egypt under the leadership of Moses (cf. Ex. 4:22-23). God, through the prophet, is appealing to Israel to remember its Heavenly Father's love demonstrated

in the past. The inspired apostle Matthew quotes Hosea and applies it to Christ's sojourn in Egypt when He was a babe in the arms of Mary. It is also possible that Hosea intended to predict the future deliverance of the covenant people from the clutches of heathen captivity (which Hosea has already typified by the use of the name of Egypt, 8:13). In any case, we have here one of the myriad-events of Israel's history which typically prophesies an event in the life of the true Israel, the true Son, the Messiah. We quote on this verse from Keil:

"The development and guidance of Israel as the people of God all pointed to Christ . . . the relation which the Lord of heaven and earth established and sustained with that nation, was a preparation for the union of God with humanity, and paved the way for the incarnation of His Son, by the fact that Israel was trained to be a vessel of divine grace. All essential factors in the history of Israel point to this as their end, and thereby become types and material prophecies of the life of Him in whom the reconciliation of man to God was to be realized, and the union of God with the human race to be developed into a personal unity."

One need only be familiar with the Epistle to the Hebrews and other New Testament references to the typical relation of Israel's history to the Messiah and His church to see that this is true!

God's relationship to Israel from her infancy through her maturity is vividly portrayed by Ezekiel (Ezek. 16:1ff).

v. 2 THE MORE THE PROPHETS CALLED THEM, THE MORE THEY WENT FROM THEM . . . A more obstinate people could not be found. Not even the pagan Ninevites in Jonah's day were this obdurate! Jesus found many of the Jews in His earthly ministry equally as unyielding (cf. Matt. 11:20-30; 12:38-42). A literal translation of this phrase might read, ". . . the more they went away from their (the prophet's) faces." In other words, the more the prophets preached to the people, the more the people hated the very sight of the prophets. The people could not stand righteousness and goodness because they loved evil (cf. John 3:18-21). Their "bent" for sinning is expressed in verse 7 below.

v. 3 YET I TAUGHT EPHRAIM TO WALK . . . The infinite kindness and patience of the Heavenly Father is likened to the tender love of an earthly parent teaching the babe to walk. Moses referred to the Father's care, ". . . in the wilderness the Lord thy God bare thee, as a man doth bear his son" (Deut. 1:31). The "everlasting

arms" of God support His covenant people in all ages and dispensations (cf. Deut. 33:27; Psa. 18:35-36; Isa. 41:10; 46:4). He healed all their sorrows and wounds incurred in the bondage of Egypt by bringing them prosperity and peace. But they did not reciprocate.

v. 4 I DREW THEM WITH CORDS OF A MAN, WITH BANDS OF LOVE . . . God draws with love—He does not drive or force obedience. Even the "new commandment" of Jesus, the command to love one another, receives its prompting from Jesus' own example of love towards those whom He commands to love (John 13:34-35; 15:12-17). "Cords of a man" is evidently a phrase intended to convey much the same meaning as our modern "tied to her apron strings." Lange describes them: ". . . such as those with which men, especially children, would be led, opposed to ropes, with which beasts are tied." God not only draws with love—He also binds men to Himself by the force of love. It was "the love of Christ" which *constrained* the apostle Paul (cf. II Cor. 5:14). It is only through being bound by the "bond of peace" that we are able to maintain the unity of the Spirit. The "peace" referred to, of course, is the peace Christ accomplished between God and man through His loving sacrifice—so it is the love of Christ, after all, that binds us to Him. Time after time the saints of the Old Testament had the love of God demonstrated to them. God eased the yoke from off their jaws. As a merciful farmer would push the yoke back off the cheeks of his oxen in order that they might eat without discomfort, so God relieved one burden after another for the children of Israel. Not only that, He fed them with manna from heaven and caused them to prosper when they did not deserve it. When one thinks about it, this is the proto-type of the Prodigal Son immortalized in the parable told by Jesus (cf. Lk. 15:11ff). It is the same experience many an earthly father has had. A father woos his son by love; he seeks to bind his son to him by acts of love (even when disciplining); the father relieves every burden from the son it is humanly possible for him to relieve; the father gives to the son even when the son does not deserve it. And so often the son reciprocates with self-willed rebellion.

v. 5 THEY SHALL NOT RETURN . . . INTO EGYPT . . . BUT . . . ASSYRIAN SHALL BE THEIR KING . . . There is no contradiction between this verse and Hosea 8:13! In 8:13 Hosea is using the land of Egypt to typify the bondage which Israel was about to suffer in her imminent captivity. In 11:5 Hosea states unequivocally that that captivity will take place in Assyria. Thus the present verse must indicate that some of the people of Hosea's day had suggested a return to political

paternalism with Egypt. Some felt that they might woo Egypt into helping them against Assyria. And being a satellite of Egypt would be better than facing possible military confrontation with Assyria. But Hosea tells them plainly that they will be ruled by the terrifying Assyrians. And the reason is stated simply. Because they would not repent of their self-willed idolatry and return to worshipping and serving Jehovah. There are no humanistic, sociological, psychological, economic, cyclic-historical explanations offered by the preacher of God. It was simply that the people of God had broken their covenant relationship with Him—they did not obey His word.

v. 6 AND THE SWORD SHALL FALL UPON THEIR CITIES . . . The word translated "fall" means literally "to circulate." The swords of the Assyrian soldiers would make the round of the cities of Israel. "Bars" or the large crossbeam-bolts used to bolt their huge city gates would pose no problem to the Assyrians—they would use their war machines and break through the gates. All of this is to come upon Israel "because of their own counsels." They trusted in their own wisdom rather than give heed to the counsel of God (cf. Psa. 127:1; Prov. 29:8; Eccl. 9:13-18). No matter how rich or powerful a nation may become it does not afford security. Why? Because this universe is ruled and operated on a basis of moral law. God created and now sustains the universe and every event within it by principles of justice and righteousness. Any individual or nation that chooses to rebel against these principles must be prepared to suffer the inevitable consequences. It makes no difference how well educated, technologically advanced, economically solvent a people may be, when they trust in their own counsels to the exclusion of God's counsel (the Bible), they dash themselves to pieces upon the immutable sovereignty of God's moral laws.

v. 7 AND MY PEOPLE ARE BENT ON BACKSLIDING FROM ME . . . The word "bent" is literally "fastened upon," or "impaled" upon apostasy as something is impaled upon a stake, so that it cannot get loose. The people of Israel were "transfixed," or "hypnotized," as it were, by sin, and they could not seem to give a thought to anything else! They were fascinated by the thrill of it—by its deadliness. They were deceived by sin (cf. Heb. 3:13). How much this is like so many people today. There is not a person living that has not been fascinated or deceived by some form of sin or another at one time in his life! Sin is like that! Man, without the word of God in his heart, is like that! (cf. Deut. 6:1-6; Psa. 119:11). Although God sent His servants, the prophets, to call the people upward toward God, it seemed as if not one person in the whole nation listened to their preaching.

v. 8-9 HOW SHALL I GIVE THEE UP, EPHRAIM? . . . MY HEART IS TURNED WITHIN ME . . . I WILL NOT EXECUTE THE FIERCENESS OF MINE ANGER . . . Admah and Zeboiim were the cities of the plain that were destroyed when Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. In light of Israel's deliberate choice to defy God's moral reign, there is only one thing to do. By all that is just and right, God may give them up, abandon them. This is what man would do. But God is not man (cf. I Sam. 15:29; Num. 23:19; Mal. 3:6). There was something holding Jehovah back from executing His judgment to the uttermost. Three times God repeats, "I will not . . . I will not . . . I will not." He cannot utterly abandon them, although they deserve it. And what was staying the hand of God—what kept Him from destroying Israel completely? The answer comes, "My heart is turned within me . . . My compassions are kindled together." It was in the nature of God, not in anything that Israel had done. The omniscient God looked down the corridors of time and saw possibilities in a remnant of Israel that men would be unable to see. He saw what this remnant would be—this "son" whom He had called out of Egypt and nursed and patiently fed. Because of what God is, He sees every human being and their potentialities and possibilities, and in spite of their many backslidings, He is still longsuffering, not willing that any should perish (II Pet. 3:9). The secret of God's mercy is found in the words, "My heart is turned within Me." That is a very expressive word. Turned about, or turned over, literally; but in use it is the word that describes upheaval, turmoil. Listen. God says My heart is in turmoil; My heart is moved to its depths, My heart! Again, "My compassions are kindled together," and the word "compassion" there does not mean sorrow or pity, but *solace*. G. Campbell Morgan paraphrases thus: "My compassions are in spasm, deeply affected." We are in the presence here of the perfect love of God—a love that is not the mere sentimental outgoing of an emotional nature, evanescent and passing; but love that becomes an agony; love that becomes a tragedy.

How it is that the perfect, immutable, holy God could first pronounce judgment upon Israel and then say, "I will not?" We take the liberty of quoting from G. Campbell Morgan's book, "Hosea, The Heart and Holiness of God," published by Revell:

"Here, all mere intellectuality breaks down; here is something very strange . . . He says I will not give you up; what is the reason? Because of His heart and His compassions? Yes, but go on. 'I am God, and not man,' and I am 'the Holy One in the midst of thee.' There is no lowering of

the standard of moral requirement. The Holy One can be compassionate and remain holy because He is God, and not man. Things are possible to Him that are not possible to man.

"That is as far as we get in Hosea. It is a long way, but it leaves us asking questions; and filled with wonder, we do not understand it . . . A wonder and a mystery of righteousness and compassion are seen working together . . . When God, in spite of sin, says, How can I give you up? My heart is stirred, My compassions are stirred, but I am holy; how can I give you up? and yet says, I will not give you up, I will not, I will not, we are in the presence of some possibility wholly of God. It must have been a great word for trembling and troubled hearts even then.

"But our Bible does not end in Hosea. The name Hosea meant salvation . . . There came One in the fulness of time, whose Name was Jehovah and Hosea: Jesus . . . we find out at last in Jesus, how God can be just, and the Justifier of the sinning soul.

"This way of accomplishment Hosea did not see. In communion with God he had learned facts about the Divine Nature which seemed to be conflicting, and he delivered his message and uttered the words; but at last He came, Who is the Brightness of the Father's glory and the express Image of His Person, and in Him I see how righteousness and peace meet together, and God can be just and the Justifier.

"Through Him the claims of justice which are against my soul are all met. Through Him the glory of holiness is maintained; for His redemption of the human soul is not a pity that agrees to ignore sin; but a power that cancels it and sets free from its dominion. Through Him the loved one is regained, restored, renewed, and all the lights that flash and gleam upon the prophetic page, astonishing my soul, come into focused unity in Jesus. God says of you, of me, 'How can I give thee up? I will not . . . I will not . . . I will not.'

"But how? 'I am God and not man, I am the Holy One.' Through Christ He has made the way by which sinning souls can be conformed to His image, His likeness, His will. The Gospel is gleaming in Hosea. It is shining in full radiance in Christ."

This is the very essence of the gospel! The good news is that God is both just and the Justifier (Rom. 3:21-26). In other words, God



keeps His word to punish sin (this He did in His Son, Jesus Christ, and we participated in it vicariously) and He at the same time forgives the sinner who, by faith, acknowledges and accepts and acts upon Christ's death in his place. Christ became sin for us so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (cf. II Cor. 5:14-21). Christ died for us all. He became our substitute, our ransom; therefore we all "died" in Him.

What God did in reality and spiritually in Christ, He did typically and temporally with Israel. The remnant of Israel, saved by the justifying mercy of God as it exercised its faith and responded to this mercy, typified all the covenant people of God (from all nations) in the Messianic age. Salvation is still by the grace and mercy of God to all who will respond by an exercise of faith. But that faith must be exercised in conformity to God's revealed plan found now, for all nations and races, in the New Testament.

### QUIZ

1. Where is Hosea 11:1 repeated in the New Testament?
2. How is Hosea 11:1 a prophecy connected to the Messiah?
3. Why did the people of Israel hate the sight of the prophets?
4. What is the meaning of the phrase "cords of a man?"
5. Why is the behavior of the Israelites like the Prodigal Son?
6. What reasons are given by Hosea for the imminent judgment of impenitent Israel?
7. How deeply involved in sin and backsliding was this nation?
8. How could God say in one breath He was going to punish Israel and then say He would not give them up?
9. How is God able to be both just and the Justifier of the penitent?

### REMONSTRATING— SEE JUDAH'S UNFAITHFULNESS

TEXT: 11:10-12

- 10 They shall walk after Jehovah, who will roar like a lion; for he will roar, and the children shall come trembling from the west.
- 11 They shall come trembling as a bird out of Egypt, and as a dove out of the land of Assyria; and I will make them to dwell in their houses, saith Jehovah.
- 12 Ephraim compasseth me about with falsehood, and the house of Israel with deceit; but Judah yet ruleth with God, and is faithful with the Holy One.

## QUERIES

- a. When will Jehovah "roar" and why will the children then come?
- b. Did any of the children of Israel go into captivity to Egypt?
- c. Why does God point Israel to Judah for an example of faithfulness?

## PARAPHRASE

When the Lord turns His pity towards the covenant people once more and utters His loud, far-reaching call, the covenant people will come from all quarters of the earth, swiftly, and God will fulfill His covenant and give them the Messianic blessings which He has promised. Ephraim has surrounded me with hypocrisy *and attacks Me on every side with deceit*, for while claiming to be My people, they are idolators. And Judah is also unbridled and unruly towards Me.

## SUMMARY

God is going to fulfill His covenant and give a faithful remnant the Messianic blessings in spite of the fact that most of both Israel and Judah are unfaithful.

## COMMENT

v. 10 THEY SHALL WALK AFTER JEHOVAH, WHO WILL ROAR LIKE A LION . . . The emphasis in this verse is on Jehovah's roaring! The phrase is repeated to indicate that Jehovah's call will be the cause of the people's coming to walk after Him. To "walk after Jehovah" means to be converted—to trust, obey and worship Jehovah (cf. Deut. 13:5; I Kings 14:8). The Lord will do His roaring from "Zion (cf. *our comments* on Joel 3:16-17; Amos 1:2), which is, of course a prophecy of the sending forth of the gospel from Jerusalem to all those who will hear and become sons of the covenant in the Messianic age. This verse, then, is Messianic in its fulfillment, as we shall see by its context.

v. 11 THEY SHALL COME . . . AND I WILL MAKE THEM TO DWELL . . . They will come from the east and the west (Egypt and Assyria). Keil says, "out of all quarters of the globe," (cf. Isa. 11:11). We wish to quote from Lange here:

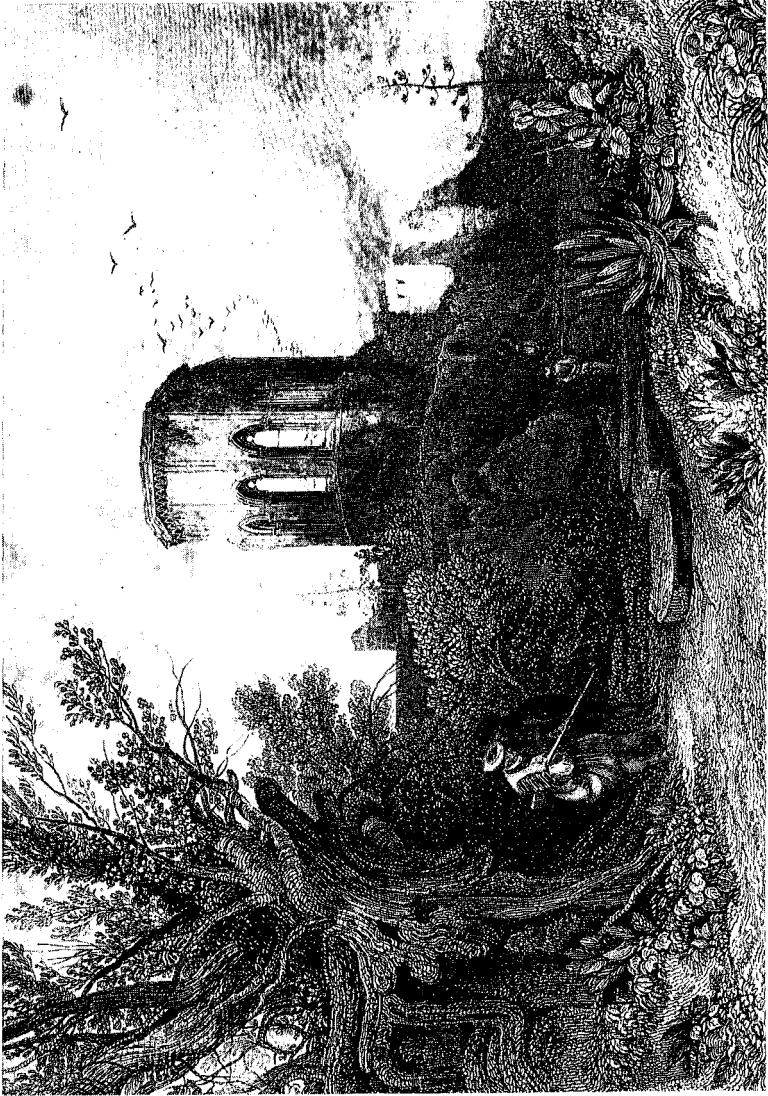
"A return to Jehovah is then announced as the fruit of this compassion, and the removal of the state of subjection to punishment by a restoration to the inheritance they had trifled away is promised as its manifestation . . .

"As to the fulfillment of this promise, see the remarks on chapters 1 and 2. It may suffice to repeat here that we are not to hold to any fulfillment which would contradict the actual course of God's revelation. *Hence we must not think of a future return of the external Israel into their own land from Assyria*, if it were only from the consideration that Assyria exists no longer, and Israel is no longer in bondage to such a nation, and we cannot take the one (Israel, the Holy Land, the return) as literal, and the other (Assyria, captivity) as figurative. We must rather say, from the stand-point of the fulfillment of the Old Testament, i.e., from the stand-point of the New Testament, and in accordance with the actual course of events: *the compassionate mercy of God towards his faithless people*, which the Prophet sees win the victory over wrath, *has been revealed in Christ*—but still as being far greater he sees it; what is clear to him is only the *skia* (shadow) of that which in Christ has actually occurred, and what is still going on in the forgiveness of sin and deliverance from its curse through free grace." (Italics and parenthesis ours).

This is as definitely a Messianic passage from Hosea as is chapters 1 and 2. Keil says, "The fulfillment takes place in the last days, when Israel as a nation shall enter the kingdom of God."

v. 12 EPHRAIM COMPASSETH ME ABOUT WITH FALSEHOOD . . . BUT JUDAH YET RULETH . . . This verse, in the Hebrew Bible, is verse 1 of the 12th chapter of Hosea. It was made to be verse 12 of the 11th chapter only in the English versions. The emphasis of the verse is the unfaithfulness of both northern and southern kingdoms contrasted with God's faithfulness. Israel was full of hypocrisy. She claimed to belong to Jehovah, pretended to worship Jehovah, but turned right into wrong and worshipped idols. Calvin wrote, "The Israelites had acted unfaithfully towards God, and resorted to deceits . . . just as a man might surround his enemy with a great army, so had they gathered together innumerable frauds, with which they attacked God on every side." Like an unfaithful wife Israel still demands the Lord's protection and support, while her every profession of love is a lie! Judah is no better! The word *bipbil* as it is in the Hebrew text here means "to cause to ramble about . . . to be unbridled or unruly, to rove unrestrained." Judah runs loose, unbridled, following the dictates of her own unrestrained wantonness. Both seem

MINOR PROPHETS

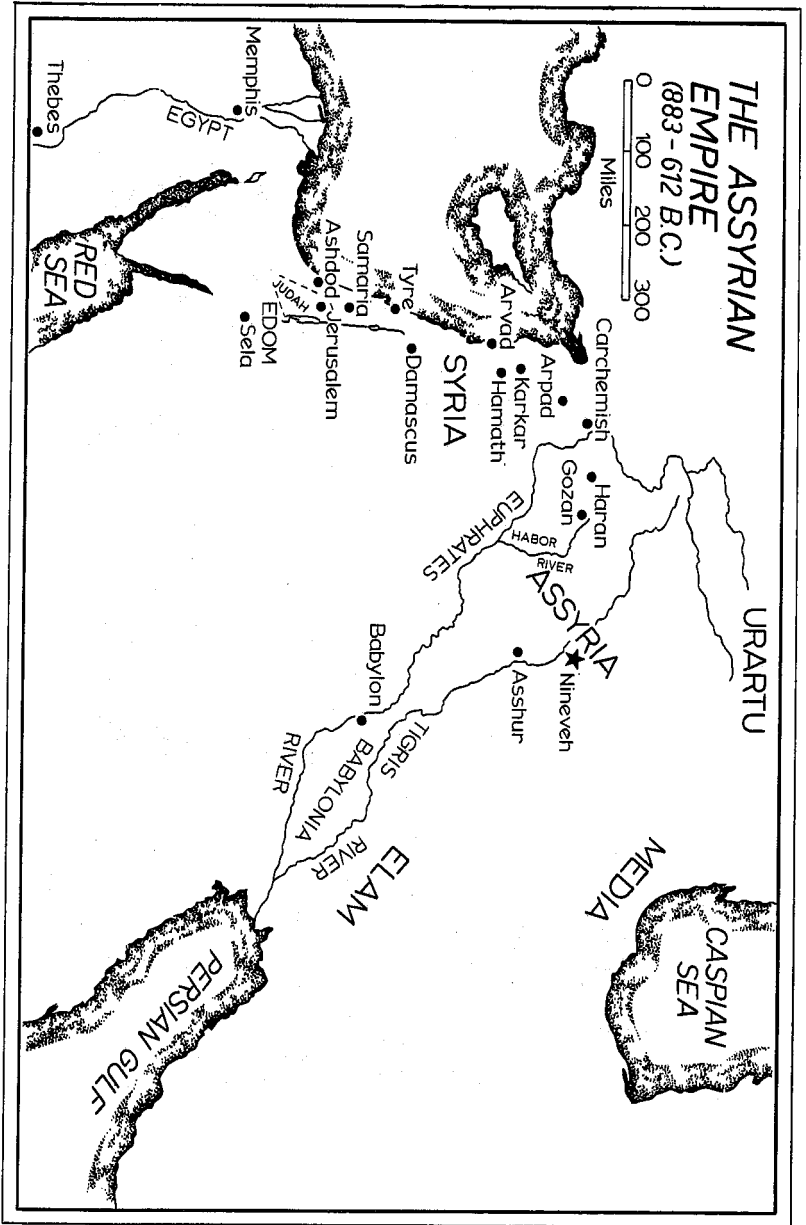


After a drawing by Mr. Brunsford.

Engraved by E. Phipps.

SAMARIA.

MINOR PROPHETS



unconcerned that it is the covenant of the ever Holy, Faithful One they are breaking (cf. Lev. 19:2; 21:8; Isa. 6:3; Num. 23:19; I Sam. 15:29). Jehovah does not change. He will keep His word—His threats as well as His promises!

### QUIZ

1. What does "walking after Jehovah" mean?
2. Why do we say this passage is a Messianic passage?
3. What is wrong with the English version of verse 12? Two things!

### LOVE REBUKING

### REQUITTING— EPHRAIM HAS PROVOKED

TEXT: 12:1-6

- 1 Ephraim feedeth on wind, and followeth after the east wind: he continually multiplieth lies and desolation; and they make a covenant with Assyria, and oil is carried into Egypt.
- 2 Jehovah hath also a controversy with Judah, and will punish Jacob according to his ways; according to his doings will he recompense him.
- 3 In the womb he took his brother by the heel; and in his manhood he had power with God:
- 4 yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed; he wept, and made supplication unto him: he found him at Beth-el, and there he spake with us,
- 5 even Jehovah, the God of hosts; Jehovah is his memorial name.
- 6 Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep kindness and justice, and wait for thy God continually.

### QUERIES

- a. When did Israel make a covenant with Assyria?
- b. Why refer to Jacob's birth and manhood?
- c. What is Jehovah's memorial name?

### PARAPHRASE

Israel is fattening itself for the slaughter by vainly seeking to sustain itself on deceitful military alliances with Assyria and Egypt. Judah, too, will reap the destruction it has sown by sinning against