

over the house of the Lord, ¹
because they have broken my covenant
and sinned against my law.
² Israel cries to me, saying:
'My God, we know (*or, are devoted to*) you.'
³ But Israel has rejected what is good;
therefore the enemy will pursue him. ²

b Ephraim, politically distraught and religiously bemused 8:4-14

1 The fate of the calf of Samaria 8:4-7

⁴ They set up kings, but did not consult me,
They set up princes, but without my knowledge.
With their silver and gold they made idols (*or, images*)
for their ³ own undoing. ⁴
⁵ I have ⁵ spurned your calf, O Samaria, ⁶
I am furious toward you!
[How long will it be
until they give up idols?] ⁷

⁶ An Israelite artisan has fashioned an idol.
It is not a god.
The (*golden*) calf of Samaria
will be shattered into splinters (*or, will go up in flames*).
⁷ They have sown the wind,
and they will reap the whirlwind.
The standing grain will not develop,
thus giving no flour (*or, meal*).
Even if it were to yield
foreign enemies would devour it.

2 Israel swallowed up among the nations. 8:8-10

⁸ Israel is swallowed up. ⁸
Among the nations they are already
as useless as a broken pot.
⁹ For they have gone up to Assyria
as stubborn as a wild ass wandering alone.

1 Some scholars feel the stichs should be translated: "Set the horn to your lips, like a herald (*making a proclamation*) against the house of the Lord."

2 A possible emendation: "they pursue delusion."

3 Literally: "his."

4 During 253 years Israel had 18 kings from 10 different families, all families coming to an end by violent death.

5 Hebrew: "He has."

6 Grammatically it could be translated: "Your calf has rejected you, O Samaria." LXX has an imperative. "Spurn your calf!"

7 Hebrew uncertain. So: LXX. Hebrew: "for from Israel." Some scholars feel this is a later observation inserted into the text, hence the brackets.

8 In Hebrew there is a play on words. In verse 7 "devour" and in verse 8 "swallowed up."

Ephraim has tried to buy allies.⁹
10 Though they hire allies among the nations,
I will soon bring them back,¹⁰
and they will cease¹¹ (*as a nation*) for a brief time;
halted from anointing¹² a king and princes.

3 *Ephraim's many altars and many cities 8:11-14*

11 When Ephraim made many altars to take away sins
they became to him altars for sinning.¹³
12 Were I to write my laws for him innumerable times
these would be regarded as being strange (*or, alien*).
13 Even though they love sacrifice¹⁴
they sacrifice flesh and eat it.¹⁵
but the Lord does not accept them.

Now he will remember their guilt
and punish their sins!

They will return to Egypt.

[And among the Assyrians
they will eat unclean food.]¹⁶

14 For Israel has forgotten his maker
and built palaces;
and Judah repeatedly increased the number of fortified cities;
but I will set his cities on fire
and it will consume their fortresses.

<CHAPTER 9>

3 *Ephraim's idolatry and its punishment 9:1-17*

a *The penalties of exile for Ephraim 9:1-6*

1 Do not rejoice, O Israel!

Do not celebrate¹⁷ like the nations,
for you have strayed,¹⁸ forsaking your God.

You have enjoyed a prostitute's hire
on every threshing floor.¹⁹

2 The threshing floor and wine press will not feed or nourish them,²⁰
and the hope of new wine will fail them.

9 MT: "Ephraim gave love gifts." A few scholars emend to read: "And to Egypt they have given love gifts."

10 So: LXX. Some scholars emend to read "I will scatter them" or "I will shatter them."

11 Hebrew uncertain. So: LXX. Hebrew "begin". A possible translation might be "they will diminish for a time."

12 So LXX. Hebrew: "burden." Possibly: "and being unable to anoint a king and princes."

13 There is a word play: Stich 1: "take away sinning" Literally: "unsinning." Stich 2 "sinning."

14 Emended. Hebrew uncertain.

15 Hebrew uncertain. Possibly: "They simply think of the sacrifice as flesh to eat."

16 Added by LXX. Possibly introduced into the LXX text from 9:3.

17 So: LXX. μηδε ευφραϊνου Hebrew: "to exultation."

18 Literally: "played the harlot."

19 Literally: "on every threshing floor of grain."

20 An alternate translation: "will not befriend them."

3 They will not reside in the land of the Lord;
but Ephraim will return to Egypt,
and those who are in Assyria will eat unclean food.

4 They will not pour wine as a libation to the Lord,
nor will their sacrifices please him.
Their bread²¹ will be like the bread of mourners,
so that all who eat of it will be unclean,
for their bread will be solely to stay their hunger.
It can not be offered (*as a sacrifice*) in the house of the Lord.

5 What will you do about appointed feast days
and on the day of the feast of the Lord?

6 Now take note! They are going to Assyria.²²
Egypt will gather them.²³
Memphis²⁴ will be their burial place.
Their silver treasures will be overgrown with nettles
and thorns will flourish where their houses once stood.

b The depth of Israel's corruption 9:7-9

7 The days of punishment have come,
the days of reprisal (*or, reckoning*).
Israel will know it! (*or, Let Israel know this!*)
You will say, 'The prophet is a fool,
the inspired seer²⁵ has become insane;'
because of the greatness of your evil
and the extent of your hatred.
8 The prophet is Ephraim's watchman
over the people of God;²⁶
yet along the way there are snares
(*like those that are placed by a trapper of birds*).
and fierce hatred in the house of his God.
9 They have grievously corrupted themselves,
as was done in the days of Gibeah.²⁷
he will remember their guilt
he will punish their sins.

21 So: emended. Hebrew: "to them." Literally: "Something the mourner's bread will be theirs" i.e. unclean.

22 So: emended. Hebrew: "from destruction."

23 Possibly: "hold them fast." cf. 8:10.

24 The capital city of lower Egypt a few miles south of present day Cairo.

25 Literally: "man of the spirit."

26 Hebrew uncertain. Possibly: "The prophet is Ephraim's watchman with my God." or "The prophet is Ephraim's watchmen. The people are my God."

27 Cf. Judges 19-21.

c *The harlot spirit and its source in Baal-peor 9:10-17*

10 When I first found Israel it was
like finding grapes in the wilderness;
like the first fruit on the fig tree
at the time that it produced it's first figs.
I saw your fathers.
But when they came to Baal-peor,²⁸
they consecrated themselves to Baal,
and became as detestable as the thing they loved.²⁹
11 Ephraim's greatness (*or, honor*)³⁰ will vanish (*or, fly away*) like a bird---
no birth, nor pregnancy, nor copulation!
12 Even if they did beget children,
I would cause them to be bereaved because no children would survive.
Woe to them ---
when I turn my eyes away from them!
13 Ephraim's sons, as I have seen, are destined to fall as victims for prey.³¹
Ephraim must lead out his sons to certain slaughter.
(*or, Ephraim I see as guilty people,*
their children are given as prey.)
14 Give them, O Lord ---
what will you give?
Give them a womb that miscarries
and inability to nurse their babies (*or, to lactate*).

15 All their evil began in Gilgal;³²
There I began to disown them.
Because of their wicked deeds
I will drive them out of my house:
I will not love them any more,
for all their princes (*or, leaders*) are rebels.

16 Ephraim is stricken,³³
it's root is withered
and can produce no fruit.
Even though they beget children,
I will slay their darling offspring.
17 My God will disown them,

28 The name means: "Lord of Peor (opening)." Cf. Numbers 25:1-5

29 Hebrew uncertain.

30 Literally: "glory."

31 Hebrew uncertain. So emended to compare with LXX εἰς θηραν. Some have tried to read the word as a reference to Tyre.

32 Gilgal means "circle" or "wheel." A specific moment is uncertain. Gilgal was where the monarchy was instituted: I Samuel 11:15. Baal worship flourished there during the time of Hosea. Cf. 4:15; 12:11.

33 The Targum reads "their crown." I. e. the crown of a tree.

because they have not obeyed him.³⁴
They will become wanderers among the nations.

<CHAPTER 10>

4 *The fate of Israel's king, the calf of Bethel* 10:1-8

1 Israel is a luxuriant³⁵ vine
that yields its fruit.³⁶

The more plentiful the fruit became
the more altars were built.

As the land became bountiful
its cult pillars abounded.³⁷

2 Their heart is deceitful.³⁸
Now they must face their guilt.³⁹

The Lord⁴⁰ will break down their altars
and smash their sacred pillars.

3 For now they will say:⁴¹
'We have no king,
since we do not revere the Lord,
and an (*earthly*) king, what could he do for us?'

4 They utter mere words.
With empty oaths they make alliances;⁴²
while litigation springs up like poisonous weeds⁴³
in the furrows of the field.

5 The inhabitants of Samaria tremble in fear
for the calf⁴⁴ of Bethaven.⁴⁵

Its people will mourn for it
and its idolatrous priests will wail⁴⁶
because its glory has departed from it.⁴⁷

6 Yes, it shall, itself be carried off to Assyria,

34 Literally: "listened to his voice."

35 Some scholars read the root word in Hebrew as "degenerate."

36 So: emended. Hebrew: "fruit it places for itself" LXX: εὐθηνῶν "comely is its fruit."

37 Cf. Hosea 3:4. The concept is that of making the sacred cult pillars ever more beautiful.

38 Literally: "smooth."

39 LXX: ἀφῶσιθησοντα "they will be desolated."

40 Hebrew: "he."

41 Verses 3 & 4 seem to break the connection between verses 2 & 5. They certainly describe the state of perplexity and the lack of resources of Israel.

42 Literally: "swearing falsely in making a covenant."

43 Literally: "justice breaks out like poisonous weeds."

44 So: LXX & Syriac. Hebrew: "calves."

45 Bethaven means: "house of loathingness (*or, vanity*)."

Cf. 4:15.

46 So emended. Hebrew: "exalt." Another possible translation: "and its idolatrous priests who used to rejoice over them."

47 Hebrew unclear. Literally: "Its people will mourn over it; its idol priests for it. They will exult over its glory because it has gone from it into exile." Emended: "Its people will mourn for it; its idol priest will be distressed over it; They will wait for its glory because its glory has gone from it into exile."

to be offered as a tribute to the great king.⁴⁸
Ephraim will be disgraced
and Israel will be ashamed of his idol.⁴⁹

7 Samaria's monarch will disappear⁵⁰
like a chip floating (*or, flotsam*) on the surface of the water.
8 The high shrines of Aven,⁵¹ the sin of Israel,
will be totally destroyed.
Thorns and thistles will grow up
on the site of their altars;
and they will call out to the mountains, 'Cover us'
and to the hills, 'fall on us.'

5 How Ephraim kicked over the traces 10:9-15

9 Ever since the days of Gibeah,⁵² you have sinned, O Israel!
These things have continued.

(*or, And there you will remain defiant.*)

Will not war overtake them in Gibeah?

[I will punish them in my wrath.]⁵³

10 I will come⁵⁴ against the wayward people to punish them;
and nations will muster armies against them
when they are being punished⁵⁵ for their double sins.

11 Ephraim was a docile heifer
that loved to thresh,
and I spared her sleek neck;⁵⁶
but I will make Ephraim plow the ground.

Judah also must plow.

Jacob must harrow for himself.⁵⁷

12 Sow righteousness for yourselves;
reap the fruit⁵⁸ of constant love.
Break up your unplowed (*or, fallow*) ground;
for it is time to seek the Lord,
so that his justice can rain down⁵⁹ on you.

48 So emended. Hebrew: "a king that will contend." LXX; εν δοματι. Some translate the Hebrew to read: "king Jared."

49 So emended. Hebrew: "counsel" Possibly the counsel they followed.

50 A slight emendation is made to fit the Hebrew poetry. The MT is asyndetical.

51 The name means "wickedness." It is a contemptuous name applied to Bethel.

52 Cf. Hosea 5:8. Judges 19:1-30 Hebrew uncertain.

53 Possibly added by later scholars.

54 Hebrew uncertain. Emended to compare with the LXX. Hebrew: "in my desire."

55 So: LXX. Hebrew: "bind". "when they are destroyed" is emended to read "in order to punish."

56 Literally: "I passed over the comeliness of her neck."

57 The Hebrew may think of a progression. Ephraim must advance, plowing ground that has never been tilled. Judah continues with the tilling. Jacob does the final working of the ground, moving slowly. Cf. TAN.

58 So: LXX. Hebrew: "according to."

59 Hebrew uncertain. Some scholars emend to read "teach."

13 You have cultivated (*or, plowed*) wickedness. ⁶⁰
 You have reaped perversity (*or, injustice*).
 You have eaten the fruit of falsehood.
 Because you have trusted in your own power, ⁶¹
 and in the great size of your army;
 14 the turmoil (*or, din*) of war will rise in your land ⁶²
 and all your fortresses will be ravaged,
 just as Shalman ⁶³ destroyed Betharbel ⁶⁴ on the day of battle ---
 when mothers were dashed in pieces with their children. ⁶⁵
 15 That is what your fate will be, O house of Israel; ⁶⁶
 because of your horrible wickedness.
 At dawn ⁶⁷ the king of Israel will die. ⁶⁸

<CHAPTER 11>

C The love of God 11:1-11

1 Training of the child Israel 11:1-4

1 When Israel was young, I loved him
 and called him out of Egypt as my son
 (*or, From the time he left Egypt*
I have called him my son).
 2 The more I ⁶⁹ called them,
 the farther they went on their own way; ⁷⁰
 They kept sacrificing to the Baalim
 and burning incense to idols.
 3 Yet it was I who pampered and taught Ephraim to walk,
 I took them up in my ⁷¹ arms;
 but they ignored knowing that it was I who healed them.
 4 I led them with the cords of human kindness; ⁷²
 with the bands of love,
 and I became to them as one ⁷³
 who lifted them as little children to my cheek.

60 LXX presents this as a rhetorical question.

61 So: LXX. Literally: "chariots." Hebrew: "way."

62 Literally: "among your people."

63 Meaning: "A god (Shulamu) is chief." An abbreviation of Shalmanezzer. Or: Salman, the king of Moab who would invade Gilead in 740 B. C. E.

64 Meaning: "House of god's ambush." A town destroyed by Shalman (*or, Shalmanezzer*).

65 Hebrew uncertain.

66 So: LXX. Hebrew: "O Bethel."

67 Some scholars emend to read "in the storm" reading ρ[Ξβ for ρξΞβ.

68 Literally: "be utterly cut off."

69 So: LXX. Hebrew: "they."

70 Literally: "from then" LXX: καθως κατεκαλεσα ουτους, ουτως απωχοντο εκ προσωπου μου. The meaning of portions verses 2-7 are uncertain.

71 So: LXX, Syriac & Vulgate. Hebrew: "his."

72 Hebrew: "man."

73 LXX: "I became to them as one who takes off."

and I bent down to feed them.⁷⁴

2 *Israel's indocility 11:5-7*

5 They will return to the land of Egypt,
or the Assyrian will be their king,
because they have refused to return to me.
6 The sword rages in their cities,⁷⁵
destroying their oracle (*or, prattling*) priests,
and ending their schemes (*or, designs*).⁷⁶
7 My people persist in rebelling against me;⁷⁷
so the yoke is designated for them
(*or, so they deserve the yoke*)
and no one will remove it.⁷⁸

3 *I am God and not man 11:8-9*

8 How can I give you up, O Ephraim?
How can I surrender you, O Israel?
How can I make you like Admah?⁷⁹
How can I treat you like Zoboim?⁸⁰
(I have a change of heart
and my compassion is aroused.)⁸¹
9 I will not give vent to my fierce anger,
nor will I destroy (*or, devastate*) Ephraim again;
for I am God and not a mortal,
the Holy One in your midst;
and I will not come in wrath (*or, for destruction*).⁸²

4 *Israel gathered home 11:10-11*

10 They will go after the Lord,⁸³
when he roars like a lion;
yes, he will roar,
and his children will come trembling from the west;
11 they will flutter from Egypt eagerly, like birds;

74 Several emendations of verse 4 have been suggested, none of which is generally accepted. The most generally accepted emendation at this time is: "And I became to them as a guardian [*Literally: 'rearer of a child'*] and I bent down to them and fed them."

75 So: emended. Literally: "skins."

76 Hebrew uncertain. So: emended.

77 Hebrew unclear. Literally: "Now my people is suspended to my turning."

78 LXX: *καὶ ὁ Θεὸς ἐπὶ τὰ τιμὰ αὐτοῦ θυμῷ θησεται*. A slight emendation. "And God is angry with his precious ones, and will not exult them (*or, will not rear them*)."

79 The name means "red earth."

80 The name means "hyena." Admah and Zoboim were cities of the plain that perished with Sodom and Gomorra Deut. 29:23.

81 Possibly an "aside" that was later inserted. "Aroused" literally: "grows warm and tender."

82 Hebrew uncertain. So: emended. Hebrew: "into the city."

83 It would be more smooth if this line ended the previous verse.

and from the land of Assyria like pigeons;
and I will resettle them in their homes,⁸⁴ declares the Lord.

D Ephraim's wickedness and doom 11:12-13-16

1 The fundamental falsehood of Ephraim 11:12-12:1 [H12:1-2]

12[H12:1] Ephraim has surrounded me with lies (*or, treachery*).
and the house of Israel with deceit.
but Judah stands firmly with God,⁸⁵
and is faithful to the Holy One.⁸⁶

<CHAPTER 12>

1[H12:2] Ephraim herds the wind
and chases the east wind all day,
(*or, Ephraim is like a shepherd who herds daily
whose flesh is the wind.*)
Many are the lies and violence.⁸⁷
At one time they make a treaty with Assyria,
and then they do business with (*or, carry tribute*) to Egypt.

2 A judgment upon Jacob 12:2-6 [H12:3-7]

2[H12:3] The Lord has an accusation against Judah.
He is determined to punish Jacob for his conduct,
and will repay him based on his deeds.
3[H12:4] Even in the womb Jacob took⁸⁸ his brother by the heel,
and in his adulthood he contended with God.⁸⁹
4[H12:5] He contended with the angel and triumphed (*or, prevailed*),⁹⁰
weeping and seeking favors (*or, mercy*).
At Bethel⁹¹ he met God,
and God communed with him (*or, God spoke to him*).⁹²
5[H12:6] The Lord, the God of hosts,
the Lord is his name.⁹³

6[H12:7] "So you, however, must return to our God,
continually practicing love (*or, kindness*)⁹⁴ and justice,
and constantly trust your God to act.

3 Ephraim, crafty trader and inveterate sinner 12:7-14 [H12:8-15]

84 So: LXX. απο κατα στησω.

85 Emended to compare with LXX. Hebrew: "roams with." Syriac: "but Judah is a people holy and faithful."

86 Hebrew unclear.

87 Hebrew uncertain. LXX: ματαα = "vanity, futility." That which is done in Ephraim is either useless or destructive.

88 Hebrew: βθχ "to over reach" or "to supplant."

89 Cf. Genesis 25:26; 32:28.

90 Some Hebrew manuscripts add: "piling up treachery and havoc."

91 The name means: "house of God." Cf. Genesis 28:13-15; 35:10-15.

92 So: LXX & Syriac. Hebrew: "us."

93 Literally: "memorial."

94 Literally: "royalty."

a Ephraim's confidence in her wealth 12:7-9 [H12:8-10]

7 [H12:8] A merchant (*or, a Canaanite*) who uses dishonest scales,
loves to defraud.⁹⁵
8 [H12:9] Ephraim has said, 'Ah, I have become rich,
I have made a fortune for myself';
and all his wealth can never offset⁹⁶
the guilt he has incurred.⁹⁷
9 [H12:10] I, the Lord have been your God
(*who has led you*) from the land of Egypt;
I will again have you live in tents,⁹⁸
as in times past for the appointed festivals.⁹⁹

b The work of the prophets for Ephraim 12:10-14 [H12:11-15]

10 [H12:11] I spoke to the prophets;
it was I who granted them¹⁰⁰ visions,
and spoke parables through the prophets
who pronounced destruction.¹⁰¹
11 [H12:12] There is iniquity (*or, falsehood*) in Gilead.¹⁰²
they will surely come to nothing.¹⁰³
In Gilgal¹⁰⁴ they will sacrifice bulls (*or, they sacrifice bull idols*).
Their altars also will be like stone heaps,
on the furrows of the field.
(*or, In Gilead there was iniquity,
yes, they became vain.
In Gilgal they sacrificed to demons
and their altars became heaps
on the furrows of the field.*)

12 [H12:13] [Jacob fled to the fields of Aram.¹⁰⁵
There Israel labored to gain a wife,

95 The Hebrew word for "dishonest scales." By changing the order of two consonants one gets $\tau\eta\epsilon$ meaning "defraud" hence almost a play on words.

96 Hebrew obscure. Emended to be similar to LXX.

97 LXX: "all his gains will not be sufficient for the guilt he has incurred." Hebrew uncertain.

98 Cf. II Kings 13:5.

99 Hebrew unclear. Literally: "fixed season." A possible translation.

100 Literally: "multiplied."

101 Hebrew uncertain. Possibly: "and will pronounce destruction through the prophets."

102 The name means: "heap of testimony."

103 Hebrew uncertain.

104 The name means: "circle of stones."

105 Hebrew literally: "fields." Aram means "high, exalted" in Syriac. It was located in northwest Mesopotamia also called Paddan-aram in Genesis 25, 28, 31, 33, 35,46.

and he herded sheep to earn a wife for himself.]¹⁰⁶

13 [H12:15] By a prophet the Lord brought Israel up from Egypt,
and by a prophet they were preserved.

14 [H12:15] Ephraim has caused exasperation;¹⁰⁷
so the Lord will punish him for his crimes
and will repay him for his disgrace.¹⁰⁸

<CHAPTER 13>

106 This verse in brackets [] appears to be out of context. It would be better in combination with verses 4 - 6. Cf. Genesis 29:1-20.

107 In Hebrew poetry it seems that a portion of a line is missing, thus destroying the rhythmic form. No scholar has suggested words that are generally accepted as an emendation.

108 The meaning of this and the succeeding verse (13:1) are uncertain.