

HOSEA 10 vs 1

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¹ **Israel** / the 10 northern tribes, recipients of all the nationalistic birthright promises given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob... from among them would come **in the later days: a great commonwealth of nations; and a great nation**... both described: at the center of the earth. 300 years earlier, the LORD told King David: I will appoint a place for My people Israel and will plant them that **they may live in their own place**, and not be molested again; nor will the evil afflict them anymore – **2 Samuel 7**; it was a future place, where Israel is not to be disturbed; that is ultimately where they are going; but first... they visit Assyria.



But for now, Hosea tells us...

Israel is an empty vine / KJV, Webster's

Israel is a luxuriant vine / NASB, RSV, ESV, JPS Tanakh

Israel is a spreading vine / NIV

Israel is a wanton vine / Moffett

Israel is an unpruned vine / Darby, Jerome

Israel is a goodly vine / LXX

Israel is a boqeq vine / Hebrew

Israel is a spoiled vine / Targum

Others say: **prosperous, lush, fertile, overgrown vine**. Some argue: **Empty** in the English version is wrong – most likely they are roman scholars. The challenge of translations always depends on being consistent and in context with what follows.

These moments, pausing to consider the various interpretations, I am reminded of prophecy when Daniel describes a vile person coming... and says, a little horn... as if this one is a flea or gnat of an individual; and then we remember: an angelic being is speaking. From the perspective of eternity: it will be some puny guy, like flicking a flea; but from the perspective of earth: it will probably be some enormous fat-headed politician prancing around the global stage.

But back to Israel, whether or not he is: empty, luxuriant, spreading, wanton, or overgrown... what we know from Hosea is that the guy has problems... and the LORD will teach him a big lesson... still going on today.

Israel... he produces fruit for himself / what? Israel was blessed so they would be a blessing to the world; **from the rising to the setting of the sun, the Name of the Lord will be great among all nations.**

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he produces fruit for himself / what's Israel's problem? **As his fruit increased, so his altars increased** – altars to Baal; so they were no different than those in the West who have turned their backs on the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob... who gave us the power to prosper and gain wealth; but with the lawless who have seized the reins of government and like fools, think there is no God. Well, He will, at His choosing, teach the geniuses in the West and the whole damn world one big lesson.



Take a good look at this picture of the **Arch of Baal** that captivated those of the northern kingdom. Ask yourself which adjective best describes **Israel**: **prosperous, lush, fertile, overgrown, spreading**. Some argue: **Empty** is wrong. I won't argue with the obvious:

Israel is an empty vine,

he produces fruit to himself, as his fruit increased, so his altars of Baal increased / the richer they became, the more idols they grabbed. That turned out to be a fruitless venture, didn't it? The Baal community looks a little bleak. As the maxim goes: hindsight is always: 20,20.

according to the goodness of his land, they made good pillars / hmm? Not to argue with Hosea, but I'd say, they made **great** pillars... the finest, enormous pillars; but I notice, they don't even have one grocery store; it don't make sense, does it? It looks like the Lord took care of this community long ago.

² **Their heart is divided; now they will be found faulty** / two-faced people have divided hearts; a vine is only valuable for its fruit; but Israel brought no fruit to perfection. Their hearts were divided. God is the Sovereign of the heart; He will have all, or none – Matthew Henry.

God gave 10 commandments – and no more... Moses reminded the people what to do that they live long and prosper in the land where they entered; or to ignore, and be cursed and removed from the land.

Commandment 2 violated

He will break down their altars, He will spoil their pillars.

³ **For now they say, We have no king** / for now... so things might change: in the theocratic days of the judges they called for a king, and the Lord gave them crazy Saul. This is what the religious leaders said when Jesus lived among us... well, they actually said, We have no king but Caesar; and things don't change much. Isn't it interesting? That is what the church world has now said... in their rush to ecumenism: We have no king but Caesar.

Every generation thinks they know best how to live their lives. The problem is: it isn't our life! What did we do to allow us to call it my own? Nothing. Life has been rented out to us; one day we will account to the Lord.

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For now they say, We have no king... / tomorrow it might change;

because we do not fear the LORD / Wow! That's not very smart. I thought Solomon, the smartest man in the world was once their king. He said: **the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom**; and fools despise wisdom and instruction -- **Proverbs 1**. Either they're reading some bad advice or smoking some bad stuff. Anyway, those brilliant geniuses need to go back to school;

as for a king, what can he do for us? / well He can kick their butts off His land, and teach them a lesson.

4 They spoke words / and some argue: **Empty words, swearing falsely in making a covenant** / with worthless pledges they make promises, much like we see now days among the leaders of nations, especially among our uncivil leaders in modern America; when they speak lies instead of truth. Thankfully the Lord will strongly deal with them:

Dr. Moffatt wrote: empty words, perjuries, treaties, what do they yield?

Punishing justice springs up, like poisonous weeds in a furrowed field.

5 The citizens of Samaria bemoan the Calf of Beth-Aven for it the worshipers mourn, and the bogus priests tremble, who once rejoiced over its glory, since it has departed / the House of Evil weeps, Hosea's irreverent name for their capital Beth-El that no longer means: House of God:



6 also carried to Assyria for a tribute to king Jareb / the Calf was carried away to Assyria; which means none of their artificial traditions and inventive idols saved any of their sorry asses:

Ephraim will be disgraced, **Israel** will be ashamed of its own counsel / synonyms for the same foolish, faithless people supposed to be ruled and greatly blessed of God.

7 As for Samaria and her king, they are cut off as the foam upon the water / like a twig floating away downstream; which is about as short lived as anything.

8 The high places of Aven where Israel sinned will be destroyed: thorn and thistle will grow on their many altars / only what is painful and prickly will grow on their high places of evil; and to Baal, they will cry out to the mountains **“Cover us”** and to the hills, **“Fall on us.”** / and we might wonder, when did that happen? Initially, 2500 years ago, but it was just a rehearsal. These verses will be fulfilled when Messiah comes, and the rulers of the earth, its moguls, all its 4 & 5-star generals, its wealthy, its mighty, and all its slave and free, they will uselessly say to the mountains and rocks, **Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne**... and from the wrath of the Lamb -- **Revelation 6**.

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⁹ O **Israel**, you have sinned since the days of Gibeah: there they stood against the children of sin: at the battle in Gibeah, but you did **not** overtake them.

¹⁰ When I desire, I will discipline them; gathering nations against them, to shackle them for their double sin.

¹¹ **Ephraim** is as a cow that is taught, and loves to tread out the corn; but I spared her fair neck *the yoke*:

I will harness **Ephraim**; **Judah** will plow, and Jacob will break up his clods.

¹² Sow rightness for yourselves, reap a harvest in mercy; break up your fallow ground:

It is time to seek the LORD, until He comes and rains righteousness on you / it is always time to seek the LORD.

¹³ You plowed evil, you reaped sin; you ate the fruit of lies: because you trusted in your way, in your many mighty men / you depended on your own strength; though the Lord said, I am the Way.

¹⁴ So, a storm will arise among your people; and all your fortresses will be destroyed, as Shalman destroyed Beth-arbel in the day of battle: when mothers were dashed in pieces with their children.

¹⁵ So at Bethel, because of your great evil, it will be done to you: in a morning, the king of Israel will be utterly cut off. the 3 faithless shepherds_ will finally be dealt with Zechariah 11