

THE BOOK OF HOSEA
Lesson 15, Chapters 8 and 9

Last week the divine words of Hosea 8:12 ignited a talk on the irreplaceable value of The Law of Moses for Israel, and for Judeo-Christianity, as well as its impact on the entire human population of the Earth. And also, why it is logical that such a moral law code could only have been given to us from outside the bounds of the finite, and that for humanity to ignore or even attempt to abrogate it is the most fatal of follies. We need no further evidence of what occurs when that attempted abrogation happens that a horizon-to- horizon chaos and confusion that has engulfed our planet, including the modern Church. It brings on a confusion of right and wrong, good and evil, that has even filtered down to the most basic of all human attributes: gender. But more to the matter at hand, and as it states in verse 12:

^{CJB} Hosea 8:12 *I write him so many things from my Torah, yet he considers them foreign.*

Here we learn that Ephraim/Israel is, in God's eyes, without excuse. Hosea knew, as did Israel know, of a written form of all that God gave to His Mediator, Moses, on Mt. Sinai. So, while it is true that so much of what the Torah teaches was handed down mouth to ear over the centuries, it wasn't because there was no written document to refer to, but rather because since copying that enormous document was painstaking and so it took a long time to make even a single copy. As a natural consequence, there were few in existence. Of course, it would have been the monarchy and the priesthood that possessed them. And yet, because of intentional disregard, and giving in to the inherent evil inclination of the fallen human mind, the many things God commanded Israel from the Torah had become to be considered as "not for them". These many things had, in but a few generations, become "foreign" to the very people to whom it was given; either obsolete and countermanded or sloughed-off and seen as for another people. Sound familiar? It is a bedrock principle, and is shouted from pulpits worldwide, that the Torah that contains the Law of Moses is obsolete, or it was countermanded by the advent of Yeshua, or it is for another people (the Jews). As recorded in Matthew chapter 5, Christ emphasized to the thousands who heard His Sermon on the Mount that He didn't change even the tiniest of the

commandments, and that until Heaven and Earth passed away nothing about the Torah or the Prophets would change; yet, the Church (to this very day) vehemently denies it. As a result, the institutional Church has found itself in an untenable place that all but the fewest have yet to recognize; it no longer has a written and objective moral law code. The Church took a path to make God's moral code subjective and individually tailored. Ephraim/Israel paid a terrible price for such a mindset. What may be in store for those of us...our brothers and sisters in the Lord... who insist on following that same illogical, non-biblical, disobedient path? I think the Bible is clear on it; God doesn't accept their worship.

Open your Bible as we re-read the final 2 verses of Hosea chapter 8.

RE-READ HOSEA CHAPTER 8: 13, 14

There have been numerous attempts to translate this verse. We've read the CJB attempt; here's a couple of others.

KJV Hosea 8:13 They sacrifice flesh for the sacrifices of mine offerings, and eat it; but the LORD accepteth them not; now will he remember their iniquity, and visit their sins: they shall return to Egypt.

RSV Hosea 8:13 They love sacrifice; they sacrifice flesh and eat it; but the LORD has no delight in them. Now he will remember their iniquity, and punish their sins; they shall return to Egypt.

Really, most Bible versions interpret those words within a similar thought pattern. Frankly, the first half of the verse makes little sense when translated that way. They are all made to smack of the Lord simply not liking the concept of a sacrificial system at all (which, of course, has been the rather standard Christian philosophy since the late 3rd century). But if we remove that erroneous assumption, then an altogether different meaning surfaces. A meaning that ties together with the Torah commands that God has just upbraided Israel for not obeying. A better meaning, as cited by Gruber, is this: "When they present to Me generous sacrifices, which they burn before me, let them eat meat. Yehoveh does not want them". In the Torah, most eating of meat was tied to the act of

sacrificing. And, whereas according to the Law of Moses sacrifices for sin (and there were 5 categories of sacrifices, only 2 of which directly dealt with sin) usually did not allow the layperson presenting them to eat any portion of the sacrificed meat animal, and instead required that all was either burned up on the altar (as a means of giving it to God) or some was burned up and the rest eaten by priests, Yehoveh is saying that Israel's attempted sacrifices to Him are so perverted and wrong-minded that He doesn't want them at all; for all the good it does the person may as well just go ahead and eat **all** the meat himself. Allow me to use a more modern application that while not a precise equivalent, it is closely associated and with the same effect. It is this: don't bother to tithe your money to your synagogue or church if you don't do it with the right mindset or understanding of what it is you're doing. Or, if you're not quite sure exactly who or what you believe in. Or if the institution you are thinking of tithing to is unworthy of it from God's moral law code perspective, because perhaps they don't teach or practice the biblical truth.

It is rare that I teach on tithing because it so greatly bothers me that our Judeo-Christian religious institutions tend to hold their hands out at every opportunity and have (to my thinking) regularly perverted the intent and practice of tithing. I'll briefly comment on it. First, do NOT give if you don't want to give with a generous heart and open hand. If it feels like it's something you are coerced to do, however unwillingly, then don't. Second, are you a Believer? If yes, then tithing is your God-commanded obligation to Him. If no, then it isn't. Yet, if the idea of love shown to God as obedience isn't your motive for giving, then you may as well keep your money and use it for yourself. Third, blindly giving without knowing to who and what you are giving is not a good idea. The number of Christians who have no idea of where their money is actually going, is enormous. For instance: I personally know of financially thriving Christian organizations that speak of supporting Christianity in Israel in hopes of getting funds (and are quite successful at it), but in fact are only fronts for anti-Israel, anti-Jewish, anti-Zionist activities. Then there are the emotional and never-ending pleas from TV evangelists (and sometimes local pastors) for more money that are often followed by promises of riches and God's blessings if you will sufficiently respond. In other words, the attempt is to purchase God's favor. That is not what sacrifices were for (even though that is exactly what the pagans used them for, and what Israel had devolved into believing), nor is that what

tithing is about. Finally, how much should you give? The meaning of tithe is one-tenth. So, the rather standard Christian model of asking for 10% of your income is biblical. Yet, even that is only partly so. In the moral law code God gave to Israel, 10% was the minimum. There were a number of types of sacrifices with many of them (such as Firstfruits offerings) demanding a much higher portion to be set apart for God and for support of His earthly institution. So, there you have it. It isn't complicated. But it is serious. Tithing willingly, joyfully, is part of our faith and is expected by God. It is not a Tradition nor a doctrine; it is His divine ordinance. I cannot promise you material rewards even if you do it in the proper manner and mindset I have just told you. But, I can promise you a closer more intimate relationship with The Father, and you can have an expectation of God's shalom falling upon you regardless of your personal circumstances, if you obey and do. Let's move on.

It is interesting that, when interpreted properly, we see that God is attacking Ephraim/Israel's system of sacrificing. That is, Israel had resorted to creating a systemized, mechanical approach to sacrificing with a quid pro quo expectation. For many years prior to around 745 B.C., it had seemed to work quite well for them. They were a prosperous nation and generally at peace with their neighbors. And yet because the giving and sacrificing was by an unrepentant people, Yehoveh did not accept those gifts and sacrifices so it would have been better for them to have not sacrificed at all. Israel had come to mentally tie together their religious system with their prosperity, and they had badly miscalculated. Very rapidly, their system suddenly quit producing the same results. So, what was their response? Rather than revert to their God-given faith, or questioning why circumstances were changing for the worse, they doubled-down on that same system. A modern-day proverb is that the definition of insanity is to keep doing the same things but expecting different results.

And, by the way, in the CJB when we see the word "Adonai" as not accepting those sacrifices, and in other versions more typically it is "The Lord", in fact that is not what it says. It says "Yehoveh"... God's formal name. This is but one of the nearly 6,000 times in the Old Testament that this name exchange occurs in our English Bibles. It is important that we know God's name, and that we use God's name when identifying Him. It is who He is. If He didn't want us to know His

name He wouldn't have given it; and His inspired writers would not have used it. What's in a name? In Yehoveh's case...everything.

That last half of verse 13 is:

CJB Hosea 8:13 *...Now he will recall their crimes and punish their sins- they will return to Egypt.*

What we have here is God following through with the threat of a curse on Israel, issued long ago, should they sufficiently violate His covenant with them.

CJB Deuteronomy 28:64-69 *⁶⁴ ADONAI will scatter you among all peoples from one end of the earth to the other, and there you will serve other gods, made of wood and stone, which neither you nor your ancestors have known. ⁶⁵ Among these nations you will not find repose, and there will be no rest for the sole of your foot; rather ADONAI will give you there anguish of heart, dimness of eyes and apathy of spirit. ⁶⁶ Your life will hang in doubt before you; you will be afraid night and day and have no assurance that you will stay alive. ⁶⁷ In the morning you will say, 'Oh, how I wish it were evening!' and in the evening you will say, 'Oh, how I wish it were morning!'- because of the fear overwhelming your heart and the sights your eyes will see. ⁶⁸ Finally, ADONAI will bring you back in ships to Egypt, the place of which I said to you, 'You will never ever see it again'; and there you will try to sell yourselves as slaves to your enemies, but no one will buy you." ⁶⁹ These are the words of the covenant which ADONAI ordered Moshe to make with the people of Isra'el in the land of Mo'av, in addition to the covenant which he made with them in Horev.*

Here we have an occasion of a double meaning of what it means to go back to Egypt. Israel literally did try, at first, to run to Egypt for help before turning to Assyria. But, later, even though Assyria didn't scatter them to Egypt, the term "Egypt" also has the meaning of going back into a condition of misery, captivity and oppression at the hand of gentiles as they once suffered in the land of Egypt before God, through Moses, rescued them.

The final verse of chapter 8 explains the "why" of the previous verse. The Lord is going to punish Israel in these ways because they forgot their maker. Clearly

context demands that any mention of Judah can only be an insertion at the hand of a future editor, probably sometime after the fall of Judah to Babylon. Hosea is entirely a message to Ephraim/Israel, and not to Judah. Further, what Israel built was not "palaces" but rather it was temples. This message is about religious matters, not housing. The Hebrew word is *hekal*. While there are instances that it can legitimately be used to speak of a king's palace, the context here is of temples. Who did Israel build temples to? I'm sure if you asked any Israelite he would have said "to God". And I'm equally sure he would have been sincere about it. But the mere fact that any Israelite would have built a temple was automatically a violation of Torah. There was to be one Temple only, it was already in existence, in Jerusalem. But even more, the God they envisioned was one in their own image, and not that of the Bible, despite what they may have decided to call Him.

When this verse speaks of Israel having "forgotten" their maker, it doesn't mean to forget in the sense of "where did I put my car keys?" The word is *shakach*, and it more means to set something aside or to ignore with neglect. It also carries with it the notion of something (in this case a relationship) slowly withering away. So over time Israel's relationship with God withered away as they progressively ignored God's Torah, and neglected to obey His commandments. Believers; you may have convinced yourself that you have a relationship with God, but if you are not in His Word and praying and being obedient to His commandments, your relationship with God is pure fantasy. I can speak from experience. As a younger man, who knew who Jesus was my entire life, and who was raised in a solid Christian home, I had somehow rationalized that my wrong beliefs and bad choices and how I lived my life as an adult didn't have to reflect my knowledge that Jesus existed and that He was the Son of God. All those rules in the Bible were, to me, not applicable because they were for an ancient people. Instead, Christ had given me liberty. Liberty for what? To me, anything I wanted to do. Looking back, it was because I wanted to live my life a certain way without any fetters. To have spent the time with The Father, and to have obeyed Him, would most definitely have cramped my style. But, denying all this was a pretty easy thing to do because as I looked around at others who called themselves Christians only some were much better. It took a tragedy in my life before the Lord finally got my attention enough that I was willing to face what I had become, and to change. Even then, it was a process. A painful, but worthwhile, process.

We still see this same God-pattern described here in Hosea as concerns the people of Israel. They aren't ready to change, and so tragedy is about to strike. And then, after the tragedy and the recognition of their culpability, there will be a long journey back... a painful journey... that is needed before God accepts back into the fold.

In the last few words of chapter 8 God makes the most explicit threat yet; He is going to destroy their strongholds (that is, their walled cities) with fire. This will be accomplished on His behalf by Assyria. That which Israel believes will save them (their fortresses and alliances), won't. In the Bible fire is always used for 1 of 2 things: purification or destruction. When God is said to be sending fire, it is meant as sending His destructive wrath.

As we conclude this chapter and move in to chapter 9, it is important that we notice that all these woes that God is pronouncing upon Israel represent Covenant curses. Pursuit by enemies, destruction, judgment by fire, crop failures, losing the results of one's efforts and labors to an enemy, the end of nationhood, and then returning to Egypt (to captivity) all reflect specific punishments for specific violations precisely as written down in the Torah.

Let's move on to chapter 9.

READ HOSEA CHAPTER 9 all

The first 6 verses of chapter 9 take us from merry making to mourning for Ephraim/Israel. Israel has a completely false notion about their security; they have no awareness that they have deeply offended Yehoveh... for decades... to the extent that judgment is about to pounce upon them. In fact, I'll point out in a few verses that without doubt the main merry making activity that is being depicted is at festival time; and it is precisely two festivals, a spring feast and a fall feast... that are the occasions.

Verses 1 - 4 deal directly with the self-assuredness of Israel that their abundance and festival joy have no end in sight. But God assures them that the festivals will end if no other reason than they simply will not have the abundance of grain and wine in order to celebrate them. In the first verse, the mention of not

exulting like other nations do (other nations by definition meaning gentile nations) is meant in the sense of the emotions and happiness that all the nations experience during their own religious festivities. The other nations' exuberance is not to be matched by Israel (like it used to be) because they won't be having much to be exuberant about.

The theme woven into all of Hosea using various metaphors and illustrations is of whoring or harlotry. That is, just as Gomer was the sexually unfaithful wife of Hosea, so is Israel the unfaithful wife of Yehoveh (and remember... wife is just a metaphor and we should never take this literally). In our current festival context, the unfaithfulness speaks of the typical activities of fertility celebrations. Israel dealt with Yehoveh as though He were Baal. The pagans (and now the Israelites) expected their god to respond to their religious activities by providing fertility for the crops, the animals and for their women. Israel only added to their sin by setting Baal and Yehoveh side-by-side, respecting them both. Equally as egregious, Israel used many different temples as the locations for their festivities. Sin compounded upon sin all the while oblivious to it.

The first festival described could be **Bikkurim** (Firstfruits) when the barley harvest was celebrated, or it could also be **Shavuot** (Pentecost) when the wheat harvest was celebrated. The second festival could only have been the fall feast of **Sukkot**. Part of the usual celebration of all of these festivals is wine drinking. But... drunkenness is not to be tolerated. Drinking wine absolutely was to help relax and give people a good feeling...a nice buzz. Getting drunk was going overboard. In Hosea the concern about drunkenness is how it leads to illicit sexual activity: men buying the favors of prostitutes and women providing that service.

The mention of the threshing floor is an interesting one. Threshing floors were more than for winnowing grain; they were large, well compacted flat places that also served for community gatherings and partying. So, it was also on the threshing floors where celebration that could devolve into prostitution and adultery took place. This was described in another Bible book in a scene that took place centuries earlier.

CJB Ruth 3:1-8 *Na'omi her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, I should be seeking security for you; so that things will go well with you. ² Now there's Bo'az our relative- you were with his girls. He's going to be winnowing barley tonight at the threshing-floor. ³ So bathe, anoint yourself, put on your good clothes, and go down to the threshing-floor; but don't reveal your presence to the man until he's finished eating and drinking. ⁴ Then, when he lies down, take note of where he's lying; later, go in, uncover his feet, and lie down. He will tell you what to do." ⁵ She responded, "I will do everything you tell me." ⁶ She went down to the threshing-floor and did everything as her mother-in-law had instructed her. ⁷ After Bo'az was through eating and drinking and was feeling good, he went to lie down at the end of the pile of grain. She stole in, uncovered his feet and lay down. ⁸ In the middle of the night the man was startled and turned over, and- there was a woman lying at his feet!*

So, here at the threshing floor is where Ruth met Boaz. After celebrating the harvest by means of eating his fill and drinking wine until he was sleepy, the field owner Boaz dozes off only to wake and find an attractive young woman at his feet. He was startled, to say the least, as this was anything but expected. Fast forward a few hundred years and to the territory of the Northern Kingdom, and the situation is no longer so innocent. A man would intentionally drink until He was drunk, fall asleep next to the threshing floor, and not be at all surprised to awake and find a woman... likely a prostitute... sleeping there next to him. This was the common pagan way of celebrating fertility, and it had transferred into the way Israel celebrated God's Feasts! No wonder the feasts now get prominent mention to begin Hosea chapter 9 for Israel had perverted those as well.

Verse 2 explains that as a consequence of this whoring, that which is prepared on the threshing floor (grain for bread) and that which is prepared in a press (olive oil) will not be produced in sufficient quantity to feed them any longer. And, new wine (meaning the product of the most recent batch of grapes) will be too little and of inferior quality. What is happening here is further enforcement of the terms of the Covenant of Moses. God will deprive Israel of the things that drive their economy and give them daily sustenance. This deprivation will be the result of a combination of crop failure and their enemy confiscating what little is produced. But the serious nature of consequence for their unfaithfulness takes an even greater step in verse 3.

In verse 3 Yehoveh says that they have lost their privilege of living in the Promised Land. The Promised Land was never "their" land; it was always Yehoveh's. In fact, the term here is actually "Yehoveh's land", which (by the way) is synonymous with "Yehoveh's house". Just as it is completely logical that not only does Synagogue and Church, but also our entire planet, buckles and staggers towards chaos because of disregarding God's moral law code, so it is only logical that Israel will suffer and be ejected from the Promised Land for the same reason.

CJB Deuteronomy 11:16-17 ***¹⁶ But be careful not to let yourselves be seduced, so that you turn aside, serving other gods and worshipping them. ¹⁷ If you do, the anger of ADONAI will blaze up against you. He will shut up the sky, so that there will be no rain. The ground will not yield its produce, and you will quickly pass away from the good land ADONAI is giving you.***

There is a sense in the first part of chapter 9 that highlights the misbehavior of individuals, as opposed to the misbehavior of Israel's monarchy and priesthood that dominated the first 8 chapters. So, there is a balance presented that says that while religious and political leadership might be leading the charge towards paganism and wickedness against God, individuals also remain culpable for their own misbehavior and sin.

The last part of verse 3 speaks of eating unclean food in Assyria. As concerns Israel, once exiled from the land there is no such thing for them as the possibility of eating kosher. Food grown, raised, and eaten outside of the Promised Land is, by its very nature, unclean. Thus, the entire time the people of Ephraim/Israel are gone from the land renders them ritually unclean.

CJB Ezekiel 4:13 ***ADONAI said, "This is how the people of Isra'el will eat their food- unclean- in the nations where I am driving them."***

Merging into verse 4, it seems that this is expanding on the idea that when Israel is sent to live in other lands they will not be able to carry out sacrificial worship, no matter how desirous of it they might become. It is because their

circumstances (circumstances God has orchestrated) will not allow it. The verse begins by speaking of "pouring out" the wine offering. The better term than "pouring out" is libation. Libation is the religious technical term that refers to that part of every sacrificial offering that involved adding a libation offering (sometimes translated as drink offering). Sacrifices consisted of three parts: the meat, the grain (the *minchah*), and the wine in varying quantities and order and exactly what each part could be used for and by whom. By saying the wine can't be poured out (the libation offering can't be made), then it inherently means sacrifices can't be properly made, rendering them useless. And since atoning for sins will be the most immediate and critical concern for these Israelites, it means that no atonement will be possible for them. The effects of being kicked out of the Promised Land are far more extensive than being forced to live somewhere else, under some other government. These Israelites shall remain, indefinitely, in a state of sin and ritual defilement. To understand the gravity of this situation, Believers, imagine your state prior to you becoming a Believer. Assuming you understand what this means... and it means much more than whether you go to Heaven or Hell... think of it as though God said to you: "Sorry, but your means of atonement (trust in Jesus), and thus peace with Me, is not currently available for you". God has determined to block you from redemption and there is no path around it. This is what is about to happen to the entire population of Ephraim/Israel and it would remain that way not for months or years but rather for centuries. Extrapolate that to understanding that, using the same model and pattern, since the advent of Yeshua, anyone not trusting in Him prior to their death will remain in their sins and apart from God not for months, years or even centuries, but for all eternity. Permanently blocked from redemption and no way around it.

Expanding upon why those sacrifices will not be acceptable to God, the next part of verse 4 says that for Israel, those intended sacrificial offerings will be to God as it is with people eating a food of mourning. Anyone who eats a food of mourning becomes defiled. So, God is not about to accept a defiled sacrifice because it would defile Him. This thought of a food of mourning, *lechem onim* in Hebrew, likely comes from the Law of Moses.

CJB **Deuteronomy 26:12-14** ***12 "After you have separated a tenth of the crops yielded in the third year, the year of separating a tenth, and have given it to the***

Levi, the foreigner, the orphan and the widow, so that they can have enough food to satisfy them while staying with you; ¹³ you are to say, in the presence of ADONAI your God, 'I have rid my house of the things set aside for God and given them to the Levi, the foreigner, the orphan and the widow, in keeping with every one of the mitzvot you gave me. I haven't disobeyed any of your mitzvot or forgotten them.

¹⁴ I haven't eaten any of this food when mourning, I haven't put any of it aside when unclean, nor have I given any of it for the dead. I have listened to what ADONAI my God has said, and I have done everything you ordered me to do.

Mourners, because they have come in contact with, or have come too close to the presence of, the dead were ritually barred from the Temple sanctuary and any of its activities because of the danger of transmitting their uncleanness to the holy precinct. So, what can Israel do with the bread (the grain offering) that was usually prepared to go along with their sacrifices? God says Israel will use it to satisfy their own hunger because it not suitable for any other purpose. Like the meat offering He refuses to accept, so it is for the grain (the bread) offering. Saying "it will not come into the house of Adonai" here is referring to the Temple, where sacrifices were to take place. Remember: for more than a century after Israel was exiled, the Temple was still standing and functioning in Jerusalem, because Judah was still intact. So, a kind of parallel meaning is that even though you (Israel) might change your minds and behaviors, the Temple will be closed to you. The severity of what is about to happen to Israel is being further spelled out. A severity that can go right over the heads of modern Christians, but it certainly would not to the Israelite and Judahite hearers and readers of Hosea's prophecy; if they had believed it, they would have been horrified.

In verse 5, after explaining the impossible circumstances Israel is going to find themselves in, Yehoveh poses a semi-rhetorical question. When the **moedim** (the appointed times) of feasts roll around, where do you suppose all of this leaves you? Then there is specific mention of "the feast of the Lord". Or, more literally, **chag Yehoveh**... the feast of Yehoveh. There are 3 biblical feasts of the **chag** kind. They are also known as pilgrimage feasts because all Israelites are expected to make a journey to the Temple for each of those 3: Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits (Pentecost), and the Feast of Tabernacles. In Hosea's era, the "feast of Yehoveh" and the Feast of Tabernacles (**Sukkot**) were parallel terms. To be clear: the real question is "what will you do when it is time to celebrate **Sukkot**?" While

for Christianity the Passover series of feasts is kind of the granddaddy of all the feasts, for Israel it was Sukkot. It was the final feast of the yearly 7-feast cycle, and especially the final day of the 7-day Feast of Tabernacles was the greatest of them all. This is why this feast in particular is mentioned.

Maybe the best word to sum up the theme of verse 6 is futility. The idea of it is this: being exiled is a foregone conclusion. There is no way to avoid it, so all thoughts from here on out ought to be how to prepare for it, and to start to mentally process this exile's many ramifications. What is this odd mention of Egypt and Memphis? At this time, Memphis was the capital of Egypt. In today's terms, it is located about 13 miles south of Cairo. Egyptian legend is that this place was first settled by Menes about 3000 B.C., and that he is the founder of the 1st Egyptian dynasty. Thus, all the following Egyptian dynasties are numbered with Menes as the starting point. Memphis was widely known for its amazing necropolis (city of the dead). For many Israelites, they still considered Egypt as a viable option (a more attractive option) to flee to in case Assyria indeed did invade them. God is saying that many Israelites might choose to take that option, but in the end the Egyptian place of the dead will be where their bones will rest; and that is certainly not a place of honor.

The next mention of the loss of their "precious treasures of silver" is referring to what Israel has purchased with money. And in the case of this agrarian society, lands and fields were where most of their money was invested. Thus, the next words essentially tell Israel what will become of their investments and the hard labor that made them into fields that produced. A good English rendering is probably this: "Weed will inherit them, and thorns their homes." So, the idea is that should they choose to abandon those fields and rush to Egypt, the land will go back to its primal state. The Hebrew word used for weeds isn't really the generic term for an unwanted pest of a plant like it appears to us. The word is **qimmos** and it is a particular species of plant that all Israelite farmers were (unhappily) familiar with.

In the end, two types of futility are highlighted. The futility of trying to escape from the Assyrian invasion and the destruction it will bring with it, and the futility of all their hard work of having saved for and purchased fields, laboring in those

fields to finally make them productive and profitable, only to wind up leaving them to an enemy that didn't work to get them.

We'll stop here and pick up at verse 7 next time.