

THE BOOK OF HOSEA
Lesson 21, Chapter 12

A good way to frame Hosea chapter 12 is as Ephraim/Israel being depicted as a people who have forgotten who they are. They were set-apart as God's covenant people, which not only came with the greatest of privileges but also with serious obligations and responsibilities. This memory loss happened as a result of walking away from the Torah they were given at Mt. Sinai, and in its place adopting a hybrid religion that mixed Baal worship with Yehoveh worship. This same thought was written down by Yeshua's brother James (Jacob, actually).

CJB James 1:22-25 ***²² Don't deceive yourselves by only hearing what the Word says, but do it! ²³ For whoever hears the Word but doesn't do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror, ²⁴ who looks at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. ²⁵ But if a person looks closely into the perfect Torah, which gives freedom, and continues, becoming not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work it requires, then he will be blessed in what he does.***

We only dealt with the first verse of chapter 12 last time, so before we move to verse 2 we'll re-read this short chapter.

RE-READ HOSEA CHAPTER 12 all

Let's briefly review verse 1. First, the way this verse is usually translated in nearly every Bible version has major problems. In fact, it is my estimation that the rather traditional mindset of what verse 1 means is well off the mark, even though in a strict, literal word-for-word translation those interpretations are intellectually honest. As we have seen in earlier lessons, because of the often cryptic literary construction of the Book of Hosea, full of arcane metaphors and expressions that are relevant primarily to the 8th century B.C., a thought-for-thought approach needs to be employed or we'll find ourselves trying to pound the meaning into a Christian doctrinal mold that was in no way intended by the author. Rather, verse 1 ought to be taken to mean something along the lines of this:

And Israel is devoted with respect to El, and with respect to angels is loyal.

The gist of this better way to understand verse 1 is that Hosea is scolding Israel for their practice of angel worship... just one more of several ways Israel perverted their worship of God. You can get more details about why the ancient Hebrew words used in this passage takes us in this direction by reviewing last week's lesson. In the end, Hosea's accusation is that Israel venerated an angel that went by the name El, or Bethel or the Angel of Bethel, and approached this angel as though he was God. Contextually this thought-for-thought meaning fits well with what is spoken of beginning in verse 4 when the Patriarch Jacob's life and his encounters with angels becomes the subject. The idea of this narrative is to draw a stark contrast between faithful Jacob versus the now seriously back-slidden nation he spawned (Israel). Jacob encountered angels but didn't worship them as God; in fact, in one instance, he triumphed over an angel and demanded a blessing for his victory. However, when Jacob's descendants of the Northern Kingdom encountered angels, it seems that they actually worshipped some of them (also meaning that at least one of these angels accepted their worship, indicating that this was a disobedient angel). One particular angel that bore the name Bethel is mentioned and this improper worship of angels was just one more prohibited thing that Israel did that provoked Yehoveh.

In verse 2 Israel is said to be pursuing the wind from the east... in Hebrew ***ruach haqqadim***. In the way of thinking of Hosea's era, the east wind was a very hot, dry wind that was terribly uncomfortable and often destructive. The term ***ruach*** (wind) by itself is used often in the Bible as a metaphor for foolishness and folly. So, it is in the sense of foolish and destructive that we are to understand the use of the term "east wind". The idea that Israel is chasing after this east wind comes from Israel's determined effort to secure an alliance with a foreign nation to help them in their on-and-off wars with Judah. They are supposed to seek God for rescue when they're in trouble, and certainly not from pagan gentiles. In fact, it was a basic premise of the Mosaic Covenant that if Israel would respond to Yehoveh by obeying the Torah then in return Yehoveh would be their protector from virtually all dangers. This obedience meant that they were not to enter into another covenant that didn't involve God (making a covenant...in the form of a treaty... is what a weaker nation does when it agrees to an alliance, and thus protection, from a stronger nation).

Israel was foolish in their thoughts and actions because what they were attempting was virtually impossible. This impossibility is expressed in the thought of chasing the wind because chasing the wind is an illusion. We can never touch wind, let alone catch it. This passage, therefore, paints Israel as persistently stupid.

In the 2nd half of verse 2 nearly every English Bible translation says that Israel made a covenant with Assyria, but such translations miss the point. The word used doesn't translate to Assyria, but rather to Ashur. Ashur is the national god of Assyria. So, the idea is that in Yehoveh's eyes Israel committed treason against Him and against the covenant that He had made with Israel, in favor of making a new covenant with a pagan god named Ashur. Even though Israel would have argued otherwise, the Lord saw Israel as having abandoned Him and the Covenant of Moses and instead turning to Baal, making a covenant of protection with him. This highlights the utter folly of any denomination within Judeo-Christianity believing they can rewrite or re-purpose Holy Scripture in order to create a new religious order that serves their particular mindset or agenda, and then fully expecting that God not only accepts it but applauds them for it. Ephraim/Israel (as I have regularly pointed out) did this precise thing; but it was not their intention to become wicked, nor did they think they had done wrong. They deceived themselves into believing that they had the liberty to remake their ancient Hebrew faith, as defined by the Torah, into something that was more modern and more suitable to their current circumstances and desires. Every manner of rationalization for this immoral behavior was offered, no doubt coming from their religious elite, and the people... like lemmings... followed them over the cliff. Thus, while making the religious leadership the most culpable, God still saw the common people as guilty as well. This is why, earlier in Hosea, God makes it clear that Israel had in their possession the written Torah to consult for truth and righteousness, but chose instead to embrace the doctrines of their newly formed hybridized religion; so, they decided to accept whatever their leaders told them was truth and righteousness because they seemed to be benefiting from it. Let those with ears not only hear, but also take action to repent and seek God by returning to His Torah and the moral law code contained within it even if it means losing friends and family over your decision. Christ, Himself, said it would likely come to this for those who follow Him.

CJB Luke 14:25-27 ***²⁵ Large crowds were traveling along with Yeshua. Turning, he said to them, ²⁶ "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father, his mother, his wife, his children, his brothers and his sisters, yes, and his own life besides, he cannot be my talmid. ²⁷ Whoever does not carry his own execution-stake and come after me cannot be my talmid.***

When this verse speaks of hate it carries an ancient understanding that doesn't mean like it sounds it means to modern Western ears. In ancient times love and hate were wrapped up in political terms, meant as words that speak of devotion and allegiance or the lack thereof, often applied to a relationship between a king and his people. So, to love was to be a devoted and obedient follower and to hate was to **not** be devoted and obedient. In this New Testament passage in Luke, Yeshua was saying that if one wants to be a Worshipper of Yehoveh and a disciple of Jesus, then He and His Father must be the focus of their first and greatest devotion and loyalty. If this devotion to Father and Son meant less loyalty (or even a dissolving of loyalty) to parents or family (no doubt because the new Believer has been told he or she cannot be loyal to God as Savior and also to them), then so be it.

This leads us to a crucial question we all must face... every person who is considering adopting and putting into practice the faith of the Bible. Are we truly devoted to God and to His Son? Or are we more devoted to our denomination, to our Pastor or Rabbi, and to our congregation friends or even to family traditions and demands? Are we truly obedient to God's Holy Scriptures? Or are we more obedient to the manmade doctrines and customs and celebrations of our chosen religious organization? Western Christianity generally paints a picture of trust in God as being easy and nothing but benefit on every level. But in reality Christ says to count the cost before you decide, because there **will** be a cost. Are you adhering to a faith and a church or synagogue in which you are asked to suffer no discernable cost? Then that means there might be a problem. Yeshua's cost was the Cross. He says our cost is to be essentially the same.

The final words of this verse that speak of sending oil (olive oil) to Egypt is meant as saying that Ephraim/Israel is attempting to woo Egypt as an ally in case Assyria doesn't want their allegiance. That is, Israel was trying to keep its options open. That might be a sound political policy for a nation in most cases;

but not when that nation's existence is based on a covenant between them and God. The God of the Bible is a God of exclusivity.

Verse 3 is problematic because we once again find mention of Judah. Judah simply doesn't fit. This entire prophecy is directed towards Ephraim/Israel, and not towards Judah, so it seems most likely that this is a gloss added some years later by a prophet in Judah who saw how accurate Hosea's prophecy of Israel turned out to be, and became worried as he saw Judah descending into the same morass and deception that Ephraim succumbed to. Thus, he added these words of warning to his Judean brethren. There is no way to be 100% certain about this. Either way, it does no harm. In the grand scheme of things, what we can notice is that the name of Jacob is employed here as a synonym for Israel. The name Jacob is used in a couple of different ways in the Bible. It can be used to refer to the Patriarch Jacob as an individual, or it can be used as an alternate name for the nation of Israel.

This verse speaks of a controversy or a grievance or a dispute God has against Israel. The Hebrew word used is *riv*, and *riv* is usually reserved for a legal proceeding. So, to help us understand through our 21st century lenses what this is speaking about, we need to think of it as a lawsuit. Yehoveh is figuratively bringing a legal proceeding against Ephraim/Israel for their crimes against Him. He is putting Israel on trial. God is both the plaintiff and the judge.

So, in verse 4 Hosea reaches back to long before the Covenant of Moses, before there ever was a nation of Israel, and interjects the life and career of Jacob as an example of the relationship between Israel and God that He had intended. Why do this? Probably to remind Ephraim who they were, since they seemed to have forgotten their history, their reason for existence, and their purpose in this world. To do this God begins with reminding Israel where they got their name. Thus, in the first half of verse 4 Jacob is spoken of when he was still in his mother's womb, and in the second half of when he had grown into an adult. The first half hearkens back to a statement made in the Torah, in Genesis 25.

CJB Genesis 25:22-26 ***22 The children fought with each other inside her so much that she said, "If it's going to be like this, why go on living?" So she went to inquire of ADONAI, 23 who answered her, "There are two nations in your womb.***

From birth they will be two rival peoples. One of these peoples will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger." 24 When the time for her delivery came, there were twins in her womb. 25 The first to come out was reddish and covered all over with hair, like a coat; so they named him 'Esav [completely formed, that is, having hair already]. 26 Then his brother emerged, with his hand holding 'Esav's heel, so he was called Ya'akov [he catches by the heel, he supplants]. Yitz'chak was sixty years old when she bore them.

Jacob's name is interesting and is actually somewhat of a play on words. As Esau was emerging through the birth canal, Jacob is said to have reached up and grabbed Esau's **aqeb**... his heel. As a result, Jacob was given the name Ya-acob (**aqeb** and **aqob** are spelled the same in Hebrew, only the vocal pronunciations are different). This is why some translators say Jacob's name means heel catcher. However, in time what it came to mean is "he will cheat". Even though it can be a little challenging to grasp the meaning of Jacob's name, no one would intentionally name their child "he will cheat". So, for Jacob's parents the name certainly meant something else more honorable. Because this birth of the twins Jacob and Esau occurred perhaps around 1600 to 1700 B.C., before the Hebrew language had fully formed and separated from the other Semitic languages, very likely this name was taken from an earlier and more established Semitic language; a name that has actually been found written on ancient pottery shards. It is **Yahkub-il** that means "may God protect". In other words, even though Jacob's birth name at the time he was given it probably meant "may God protect", the traditional story of his birth and then later what happened between he and his brother Esau, eventually resulted in a different meaning to his name being applied later on that best reflected a couple of key events in Jacob's life. As Genesis 27:36 demonstrates, Jacob was going to cheat his brother with the result being, one could say, that Jacob would supplant Esau as the firstborn thus receiving all the blessings that come with that firstborn status.

CJB Genesis 27:36 'Esav said, "His name, Ya'akov [he supplants], really suits him- because he has supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright, and here, now he has taken away my blessing!" Then he asked, "Haven't you saved a blessing for me?"

All that said, nothing in Hosea calls Jacob a cheater. Rather it simply recalls the tradition of Jacob grabbing the heel of his twin brother Esau as they were being born. So we must be careful not to color this as somehow disparaging Jacob; quite the opposite is actually happening.

The second key event in Jacob's life that is mentioned in the 4th verse is provided in detail in Genesis 32, and it regards his contact with an angel. Before we discuss this passage, let's read the story in Genesis 32.

CJB Genesis 32:23-33 ***²³ He got up that night, took his two wives, his two slave-girls, and his eleven children, and forded the Yabok. ²⁴ He took them and sent them across the stream, then sent his possessions across; ²⁵ and Ya'akov was left alone. Then some man wrestled with him until daybreak. ²⁶ When he saw that he did not defeat Ya'akov, he struck Ya'akov's hip socket, so that his hip was dislocated while wrestling with him. ²⁷ The man said, "Let me go, because it's daybreak." But Ya'akov replied, "I won't let you go unless you bless me." ²⁸ The man asked, "What is your name?" and he answered, "Ya'akov." ²⁹ Then the man said, "From now on, you will no longer be called Ya'akov, but Isra'el; because you have shown your strength to both God and men and have prevailed." ³⁰ Ya'akov asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he answered, "Why are you asking about my name?" and blessed him there. ³¹ Ya'akov called the place P'ni-El [face of God], "Because I have seen God face to face, yet my life is spared." ³² As the sun rose upon him he went on past P'ni-El, limping at the hip. ³³ This is why, to this day, the people of Isra'el do not eat the thigh muscle that passes along the hip socket- because the man struck Ya'akov's hip at its socket.***

Please think back to how we opened today's lesson about the better way to translate the 1st verse of Hosea chapter 12, as having to do with angel worship. Hebrew versions of Hosea 12:4 will sometimes say that Jacob strove with a "divine being". That is, rather than translating the Hebrew word **elohim** as "God" (as nearly all English versions tend to do whenever the word appears in the Bible), they understand from Genesis 32 that it wasn't God in the flesh per se that Jacob wrestled with. When we read Genesis 32 through our modern eyes it can be confusing because the Hebrew word used to describe who Jacob wrestled with is **ish**, which means a male... a man... flesh and blood. And yet, the context makes

no sense if this was a regular human being because Jacob understood this "man" to be something different ("because I have seen God face to face..."). Further, the Hebrew words used to describe this being in later parts of this Genesis passage are **El** and **elohim**. The reality is that the words **El** and **elohim** are at times synonymous terms that can at one moment speak of God the Creator (the God of Israel), the next speak of beings with superhuman abilities and power, and another time of angels. Here is what we must attempt to understand (and yes, it is challenging). Jacob was trying to make sense of this weird wrestling match; but he was dealing with something that was beyond his experience and of his intellectual grasp. Beyond any known words or vocabulary. So, he only had common terms at his disposal to try to communicate what he saw, what occurred, and who this being was. As we learn from other parts of Jacob's life (such as when he went to Mesopotamia to find a wife and then lived there for a couple of decades with his father-in-law) the spiritual world was a mystery to him and so he took many things he heard and saw in terms of the spiritual world as it was comprehended by most Middle Eastern people, no matter their precise religion or nationality. It was a spiritual world of demons and angels and divine beings of all sorts, and of many gods. Things were not so cut and dried... black or white... easily labeled... as modern Christianity at times tries to define them... trying to remove as much mystery as possible from the Bible in order to create concrete answers.

We must also take note that as the Old Testament Prophets tend to do when referring to Scripture, they at times paraphrase or merely allude to a well-known past event but don't actually quote a specific Scripture passage. That is the case here as Hosea isn't intending to quote Scripture but rather is only trying to remind Israel of 2 events that were known to them; their remembrance handed down through the generations by means of their traditions. So Hosea says that 1) Jacob won the battle, and 2) that he wept as he pled with this angel. Yet, the idea that Jacob won a contest with this divine being as reported isn't supported in the Torah as Genesis 32 doesn't speak of a winner and a loser; in fact, the battle only ended when the divine being dislocated Jacob's hip. Nor does the Genesis account make any mention of Jacob weeping. Even more, in verse 5 of Hosea 12, Hosea specifically identifies this divine being not as a man, and certainly not as God, nor as some generic divine being, but rather as an angel (a **malach**). We must pay close attention to the insertion of the word **malach** (angel) in this verse

because it has everything to do with Hosea's complaint of Israel worshipping a specific angel, thus angering God.

Continuing in verse 5, notice that Hosea says that it was at Bethel where later this angel would "speak with us". Pause for a second and ponder what is being said. Hosea was connecting this angel to Jacob in Jacob's era (the one Jacob wrestled with), but at the end of this verse says that this same angel "spoke to us" at Bethel... that is, this angel... this *malach*... spoke to the people of Israel during Hosea's era. Clearly, God's Prophet Hosea didn't think this being Jacob wrestled and was now speaking with the people of Israel at Bethel was actually God Himself. Nor did Hosea cast this angel as a special manifestation of God called The Angel of the Lord (*malach Yehoveh*). And by the way: virtually every competent English and Hebrew Bible version reads this same way, so it's not as though there are different thoughts on how to interpret this verse. It's a matter of taking it for what it says rather than trying to apply modern Christian thinking to an ancient Hebrew event that of itself has little clarity. I want to quote Gruber because I think after all this that I've told you, he gets to the bottom line.

Indeed, the prophet's point is that the problem is not that long ago Jacob revered an angel over who he, Jacob, had prevailed, but (rather) that his descendants still rely on that same angel and thereby compromise their loyalty to the God of Israel.

I think this understanding of angel worship by Israel is well vindicated with what is said in the next 2 verses, verses 6 and 7. I'll read them together.

CJB Hosea 12:6-7 ⁶ Adonai ELOHEI-Tzva'ot; ADONAI is his name! ⁷ So you, return to your God; hold fast to grace and justice; and always put your hope in your God.

The KJV and most other English Bible translations say it slightly differently.

KJV Hosea 12:5-6 ⁵ Even the LORD God of hosts; the LORD is his memorial. ⁶ Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually.

Truly any of these translations blatantly leave out words and/or change words to suit their denominational beliefs. For instance, notice how the word "even" appears at the beginning of the KJV. This is translating the Hebrew "**wa**" or "**va**" and in modern English it more means "but"... as in "however". "Even" is a very old 15th century word that we don't use today as it meant then. But notice in the CJB the elimination of any word to start the sentence that translates "**va**". Here is the more literal translation of verse 6.

But as for Yehoveh, the God of Hosts, Yehoveh is His name.

As we've already discussed, Israel has been worshipping an angel that went by the name of El or Bethel or the angel of Bethel. Well, El, Bethel and the angel of Bethel are NOT God's name and therefore cannot be God! God's formal name is Yehoveh; that's how we can know who it is... by His name.

CJB Exodus 6:3 I appeared to Avraham, Yitz'chak and Ya'akov as El Shaddai, although I did not make myself known to them by my name, Yud-Heh-Vav-Heh ...

In other words, Israel you've been worshipping a real being (an angel) but he certainly is not God, so stop it! Instead return to your actual God, return to the true ways and definitions of truth and justice (as found in the Torah), and quit putting hope in a powerful angel and instead put your hope in the only God there is... the only One that can protect you and rescue you... Yehoveh. At the risk of sounding offensive (which I truly don't mean to be) I'll put this forward into modern application. Church, Synagogue, stop it! Stop worshipping Pastors and Rabbis, and stop putting your hope in the manmade doctrines they may believe and teach. The real, God ordained definitions of grace and justice (the indispensable foundation of our faith) are found in one place alone: the Torah. You can go to it and read it for yourself; you don't have to rely on what someone in leadership tells you it says. What we hear so often today from the pulpit and bema as truth is not necessarily God's truth at all; but rather a reflection of human desires and agendas and social trends that are overlayed upon God's truth.

It's important to grasp that Hosea is not suggesting to Israel that if they repent and return to God that anything is going to change for them in the short term. The die is cast, their destruction will not be slowed or reversed. But there is an inherent implication that a remnant of Israel will live on. Even though individual Israelites will be born, and suffer tragedies and death, some will survive and spawn the next generation. Assyria will attack, kill thousands of Israelites, besiege their cities and starve many to death, but some will remain alive and endure the exile. Their hope lies not in an immediate national restoration, but rather it lies in an End Times future when God will act to bring the Land of Israel back under control of the Hebrews, and the scattered tribes will return home... no doubt in much diminished numbers. I think what ought to be seen is that it is the modern-day Hebrews who ought to be overjoyed that such a prophesied time seems to have finally come. And if it *is* happening (as it appears to be) then it also means that we have crossed the horizon into the End Times.

Verses 8 and 9 ought not to be separate verses at all because they express a single thought.

CJB Hosea 12:8-9 ⁸ "A huckster keeps false scales, and he loves to cheat. ⁹ Efrayim says, 'I have gotten so rich! I have made me a fortune! And in all my profits no one will find anything wrong or sinful.'

Other Bible versions might say a merchant or a trader instead of a huckster. What the Hebrew actually says though, is a Canaanite. Canaanite is a sarcastic nickname that is hurled at the Northern Kingdom. It was at first the name for the coastal region of Phoenicia where they gained fame as traveling merchants, and especially so by sea. However, among the Israelites the hated Canaanites were stereotyped as dishonest businessmen who cheated and lied in order to make a profit. Unfortunately, Israel has become the very thing they hate, and so all God sees in His own people are the Canaanite merchants dressed up in Hebrew garb.

It was a common way for a dishonest merchant to make extra profit by using false scales. There are numerous wisdom sayings in the Bible against the use of false scales to defraud people. The Law of Moses specifically legislates against such a thing.

CJB Deuteronomy 25:13-16 ***¹³ "You are not to have in your pack two sets of weights, one heavy, the other light. ¹⁴ You are not to have in your house two sets of measures, one big, the other small. ¹⁵ You are to have a correct and fair weight, and you are to have a correct and fair measure, so that you will prolong your days in the land ADONAI your God is giving you. ¹⁶ For all who do such things, all who deal dishonestly, are detestable to ADONAI your God.***

While not a capital crime, obviously such intentional dishonesty in the marketplace ranks high in God's eyes as how NOT to love your neighbor. Yet in this thievery Ephraim rejoices. They think they are clever and have insulated themselves from troubles by making themselves wealthy through their dishonesty. They have essentially oppressed others, but now oppression is headed their way. All they have gained is worthless and is about to become the property of an enemy. They are blind to their own doom. Such terrible behavior reveals their sinful hearts; what they thought was hidden and trivial is laid bare. Let's get a little technical for a minute to reveal something that is otherwise hidden when Hosea 12:9 is translated into English.

In the Hebrew, there is a hierarchy of crimes from the least to the worst. We find this principle throughout the Law of Moses and generally a crime's seriousness can be expressed by the severity of the penalty for that crime. So, the common Christian mantra that a sin is a sin is a sin... from stealing a loaf of bread to murder every sin is all the same to God... this is the furthest thing from biblical truth. In Hebrew the scale of the seriousness of a crime (starting with the least crime) is *hete*, then *pesa*, and finally the worst crime is called *avon*. Generally in English these are rendered, in order, sin, transgression and then iniquity. What this passage in Hosea tells us is that God sees Israel's dishonesty as *avon*... iniquity... the worst. Maybe to draw a comparison to something most of us are familiar with we could say it this way: Israel thought of their own clever dishonesty as a misdemeanor; but God judged it as a felony.

In verse 10 Yehoveh continues to remind Israel of just who He is, and that it is He that Israel should have trusted and not the gods of the pagans. He is the God who rescued Israel from Egypt and led them through the wilderness to the Promised Land; the land from which God is now ejecting them because of their unfaithfulness to the Covenant of Moses. What was, for many years, a wealthy

nation will be stripped of their abundance and made as nomads living in tents... just as they were when they fled the Pharaoh. To put it in modern terms, their standard of living is going to suffer greatly. Nomads have no land, no nation, no place to call their own. They live constantly mobile having only the most minimal of possessions. They will fall from living in the rich neighborhood to being the homeless.

God says that they will return to like it was when they lived in the days of the appointed time (*moed* in Hebrew). Appointed times are the festivals and holy days; but this verse specifically speaks of only one appointed time. No doubt this is referring to Sukkot, The Feast of Tabernacles, because it connects to living in temporary shelters (tents) and because Sukkot is considered as the grandest of all the biblical feasts. In fact, Sukkot was designed to cause Israel to remember the time when they lived in tents, wandering with no place to call their own. This reversal of fortune is just part of the reversal of Israel's Redemption History.

Moving to verse 11; while the CJB translation is not word-for-word, it very adeptly captures the thought being communicated. Israel can offer no excuse for their behavior, and should not be surprised by the judgment falling upon them, because God has warned them through the agency of Prophets of what will happen to them if they abandon Him in favor of pagan gods. In fact, the meaning is that these prophetic revelations were abundant and not few. Many prophets were employed and spoke similar, consistent messages of warning and rebuke to Israel over the decades. Therefore, the people's misbehavior is by informed choice...willful and intentional... and not by accident. It's like the exasperated parent that tells his child that he's told him a hundred times to not do something, but the child ignored the instruction and did it anyway.

Believers...gentile or Jew... the words of the Prophets (Old and New Testaments) weren't put into the Bible for casual viewing. They are pertinent for us of the 21st century, just as they were pertinent to the Hebrews of the Bible eras. Those words are more than a record of history past for an ancient people; they are also a preview of our future (a future that may already be upon us to some degree). The crimes of the Israelites are the same as the crimes of the Church and Synagogue. And just like the Israelites of old, Church and Synagogue deny it. When the Prophets speak, they are speaking to worshippers of the God of Israel,

not to pagans. And just like Israel, Church and Synagogue have re-shaped, re-purposed, and hybridized the faith of the Bible into something that I doubt Jesus would even recognize. God's message is a simple one: repent and return to the pure word before it's too late. Return to the moral law code He gave to Moses and believe Christ when He said that He did not come to abolish the Torah and the Prophets, and that not the slightest change to those commands, nor our obligation to obey them, would happen until Heaven and Earth pass away. Let go of the secular and pagan religious customs and traditions that have infiltrated and perverted our worship and our practices. Otherwise, we will experience God's judgment instead of His mercy.

We'll conclude Hosea chapter 12 and begin chapter 13 next time.