

### A. INTRODUCTION:

1. Not much is known about Hosea's life or background apart from the text that bears his name. Hosea's prophetic ministry was during the time of the divided kingdom of Israel during the years 753-722 BC. During this tumultuous period the nation of Israel was divided into the northern kingdom [Samaria], and the southern kingdom of Judah. Though both the north and south were mired in apostasy, the north was particularly decadent with God having sent the prophets Hosea, Jonah and Amos warning the northern kings that God would not continue to tolerate their faithless leadership and the people's wayward lifestyles. The Bible chronicles this era in 2 Kings Chapters 15-18, culminating in the fall of the northern kingdom to Assyria in 722 BC. The fall these three prophets predicted validated their calling by God and was accepted as the validated Word of God by the southern kingdom [Judah] priests and scribes who preserved their message. Judah would also fall to the Babylonians in 586 BC.
2. Historical Background – there are a number of relevant components:
  - a. Politics – David and Solomon inaugurated a period of peace and prosperity that was preserved by Uzziah of Judah (792-740 BC) and Jeroboam II of Israel (793-753 BC).
    - i. Israel had successfully repulsed the incursions of the Aramean's (2 Kings 14:25), and their trade and commerce in the region flourished. However, the financial benefits were increasingly limited to the wealthy priests, politicians and merchants, while the working class and peasant farmers suffered poverty, hunger, and oppression. This was not the role God had called leadership to establish.
    - ii. Leadership was intended to care for the needs of the people while the priests were to mediate the sacrificial covenant and the prophets to keep the leadership as well as the people directed toward God. Instead the leadership and the priests indulged self-interest and allowed idolatry to proliferate as the social glue of the theocracy deteriorated.
    - iii. During this time for most of the population, their love for YAHWEH grew cold.
  - b. Economics – Prosperity brought increasing confusion between serving God and the mistaken notion of nationalism. Faithful Jews became a smaller minority, with the majority being a polytheistic syncretism of the Law of Moses and Pagan Idolatry.
    - i. Israel as a Theocracy had declined, and as the love of God declined, the Pagan religious culture of the surrounding peoples grew stronger. Israel continued with sacrifices and offerings, but their love of God grew cold.
    - ii. Local shrines of worship to a variety of deities were absorbed as normative, as the nation's influence increased in the regional economy. The heart of the people was increasingly stolen away from the True God toward false gods.

- iii. The theme of a “remnant” of the faithful few, and God’s rejection of the faithless majority gained traction. The majority holding to a mistaken notion that their position of wealth and influence was evidence of their blessing in the land. In essence, they had become cultural Jews, rather than a community of faithful Jews.
  - c. Geography – the land of Canaan was surrounded by the Empires of the Assyrians to the North, the Egyptians to the South, and the Babylonians to the North East.
    - i. Treaties had been negotiated with these overlords who were content to allow a fair amount of autonomy to Israel and Judah provided they protected the trade routes and paid tribute. As their greed grew and they became more confident in their own strength, they became less interested in preserving their good relations with their more powerful regional overlords.
    - ii. Elsewhere in the world other events were developing of historic consequence. Rome was founded in 753 BC, while about this time Homer wrote his epic poems, The Iliad and The Odyssey, which helped to shape Classic Greek Culture.
  - d. Social oppression – of the populace was the result of Pagan greed and materialism by those in leadership.
    - i. The prophet Micah captured the dysfunction of the leadership aptly in chapter six of his book, as well as the Prophet Ezekiel in chapter 34.
    - ii. These prophets denounced these corrupt leaders who practiced treachery in money lending, denied fair appraisal in the courts of the land, and increasingly consolidated wealth, control, and authority in their hands. The working poor who made appeals to the courts were before judges who had already been bought, and in increasing numbers they were robbed and disposed.
    - iii. The delusion of the Jewish leadership became so great and their character so darkened that they stood in defiance of the great regional powers around them who ultimately crushed them.
3. The Sin Cycle – The monarchy was plagued by the repeated problem of compromising God’s rule for leadership... called the “Sin-Cycle.”
- a. Sin #1 – was of making foreign partnership/alliances – ostensibly to provide for their national security, but instead of God being in control of the process the wisdom of men prevailed. These alliances also allowed the importation of foreign wives and diplomats and their religious beliefs as well, which subverted faith in Yahweh.
  - b. Sin #2 – was of idolatry and greed – as they relied more and more on their own wisdom apart from God, their minds became increasingly darkened and debased. Their problem was not wealth per-se because God wanted them to prosper; instead

their problem was their love for and reliance upon their wealth to secure their future apart from God.

- c. Sin #3 – was of oppression of the poor – as the need for more and more took hold, the people for whom the leadership should have cared and watched over became the means for their own ends. The model for wealth nobility was Boaz [see Ruth].
- d. Sin #4 – was of the intentional public disenfranchisement and injustice in favor for the rich in the courts – to secure more and more wealth and power the leaders bribed the court system that was intended to be fair and impartial. As the courts became more and more a political tool, the nation became more and more corrupt.
- e. The result of the Sin-Cycle was a perversion of all God had intended when He called Israel to be His people.
  - i. Israel was to be a beacon of light to the world... to embody God's love and principles of hope, justice, mercy, etc.
  - ii. Jesus exposed and chastised the corrupt Jewish leaders of His day at the Temple when He told them they had made His Father's house into an illicit market place (John 2:16).
  - iii. The leaders had become corrupted... and as the Jewish leaders in Hosea's day were destroyed by the Assyrians, the Jewish leaders in Jesus' day were destroyed by the Romans.

### B. LITERARY FORM AND STRUCTURE:

1. Literary Form – Hosea employs an interesting combination of narrative and poetry in advancing his message. While not unusual in prophetic writings, the back and forth of advancing the story and fleshing out the emotional anguish through imagery is unique.
  - a. Chapter 1 is narrative – where the background of God's complaint against His people is mirrored in Hosea's marriage to an adulterous wife.
  - b. Chapter 2 is poetry – which develops God's emotional response... His hurt and anger against faithless Israel.
  - c. Chapter 3 is narrative – with Hosea's reconciliation with his estranged wife Gomer, mirroring God's hope of reconciliation with His people.
  - d. Chapters 4-14 are poetry – concluding God's message in strong emotional imagery.
2. Literary Story Development – everyone can relate to a loving husband or father whose wife or son has rejected him... yet because of the goodness of the husband/father, he persists in his overtures... hoping for reconciliation.
  - a. Chapters 1-3 = Hosea and Gomer exemplify God and Israel.
  - b. Chapters 4-13 = God's evidence and judgment against Israel.
  - c. Chapter 14 = call for repentance.

**3. Chiastic Structure – David Dorsey:**

**A Israel is God’s wayward wife – 1:1-3:5**

- God’s love of Israel; His care for her
- Israel is unfaithful and prefers the Ba-als
- Theme – is of the Exodus
- Message of hope – God will receive back His divorced wife and forgive her
- Keyword – is return

**B Condemnation of Israel’s spiritual prostitution and idolatry – 4:1-5:7**

**C Condemnation for political faithlessness, corruption, and empty sacrifices of love; yet God wants Israel back – 5:8-6:11a**

**X CENTER – Israel has not returned to YAHWEH, corruption of Israel’s leaders is complete – 6:11b-7:17**

**C’ Condemnation for political faithlessness, corruption, and empty sacrifices of love; yet God still wants her back – 8:1-9:7b**

**B’ Condemnation of Israel’s spiritual prostitution and idolatry – 9:7c-10:15**

**A’ Israel is God’s wayward son – 11:1-14:9**

- God has loved Israel like a son; His care for him
- Israel has been unfaithful to God, prefers idols
- Theme – Exodus
- Message of hope – God will receive back His orphaned son and forgive him
- Keyword – is return

**4. Redemptive Story Development:**

- Chapters 1-3 describes the “family life of God and Israel” – the simile of an unfaithful marriage of Israel as the wayward bride, and with God as the persistently welcoming and broken hearted husband.**
- Chapters 4-14 describe the resultant “sins of the nation” amid God’s passionate desire for the people to return to Him. This is a key element within the development of redemptive history... God is always watching for His people to return to Him, not unlike Jesus’ parable of the Prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32).**
  - God is often portrayed as broken hearted yet faithful husband/father in His love for His people.**
  - God will exercise justice against His people if necessary, but would prefer to show mercy if His people would respond to Him possible because His love is true.**
  - “Free will” and “personal responsibility” are evidenced in these prophetic accounts. It is necessary for people to respond to God to be reconciled.**

### C. LITERARY STYLE – several literary devices are employed to gain traction with the People:

1. **Legal Disposition** – both Micah and Hosea bear similarities of God making a public legal claim which includes the description of the failure of Israel in keeping the reasonable expectations of the covenant. These prophets list offending party's failures along with the prophet's laments, threats, accusations, exhortations, didactic form, precepts, and salvation oracles. To the informed reader knowing the background of the covenant, it would be hard not to side with God's argument.
2. **Categories of the Lawsuit Speech:**
  - a. **Evidence** – 2/3 of the writing states how the covenant contract has been broken.
  - b. **Curses [Penalty]** – 1/4 of the writing demonstrates the reasonableness of the judgment based on the penalty that was agreed upon for not keeping their portion of the covenant.
  - c. **Blessings [reward]** – 1/10 of the writing focuses upon the opportunity for restoration if the offending party properly responds.
  - d. **Covenant restoration** – is an open promise contingent upon the repentance of a remnant of Israel (Deut 4:30; 30:6, 8). God is offering this opportunity not just to the present generation, but to the future generations who chose to hold true to God.
3. **Word Play** – Hosea offers an intriguing writing that blends the genre of narrative and poetry, as well as including the literary devices of proverbs, parallelism, catchwords, irony, similes, metaphors, repetition, assonance, and dissonance is a superbly written literary piece. Often, as modern readers we fail to appreciate the inherent beauty and style the writers of Scripture employed to deliver God's message to His people.
4. **Four Metaphors of describing the Nation:**
  - a. **Lush grapes and early figs** – 9:10-17... are presented as a wonderful delicacy that is now subverted and shamefully wasted. Note the power of the emotions expressed in these terse lines... this is the power of poetry! Narrative could not carry this strong a message:
    - i. **Broad scope** – 9:10a “When I found Israel, it was like finding grapes in the desert [wilderness]” – this is an amazing surprise... something really wonderful.
    - ii. **More personal scope** – 9:10b – “When I saw your fathers, it was like seeing the early fruit on the fig tree” – this is a picture of the best of the best.
    - iii. **Spoilage** – 9:10c – “But when they came to Baal Peor, they consecrated themselves to that shameful idol” – this is a huge shock... how could you do this? This is about perverse Moabite Pagan sexual desecration... the Ba-al of Peor was a shocking representation of the fertility cult of Ba-al who was worshipped in the Moabite mountains. All manner of sexual sin was practiced

here in animalistic abandon. This is not the noble Moabite example of Ruth who was clearly a woman of great ethical character.

- iv. **Corruption – 9:10d – “and became as vile as the thing they loved” – total dismay... how have you come to this? The depravity was so vile it was reprehensible.**
- b. **A luxuriant vine – 10:1-10 [cr – Isaiah 5:1-2] - the image is of a once fertile and prosperous people who have been polluted and corrupted by syncretism [the merging of Pagan and Jewish faiths]:**
  - i. **10:1a – “Israel was a spreading vine” – luxuriant and marvelous to behold.**
  - ii. **10:1b – “he brought forth fruit for himself” – the picture here was not to share its bounty, but to hoard it.**
  - iii. **10:1c – “As his fruit increased” – it grew beyond reasonable expectations... this is a picture of grace. Instead of being a blessing to many, it became a means of promoting individual greed and passions in the context of a Pagan religion. Consider the description in Exodus 32:1-7... where after a long description of what worship is to look like after the giving of the Law, Moses comes down from Sinai to find the people dancing wildly and prostrating themselves to a Gold Calf representation of Ba-al.**
  - iv. **10:1d – “he built more altars” – these altars were to the wrong god... this is perversion.**
  - v. **10:1e – “as his land prospered” – as God promised it would, this is another picture of grace.**
  - vi. **10:1f – “he adorned his sacred stones” – these were stones carved to demonstrate all manner of genitilia and sex acts... in the most debased perversions.**
- c. **A trained heifer – 10:11-15... note the image presented here as the habits of doing what is evil is “trusting in your own way” as opposed to obedience to God knowing all these blessings were from Him. This is the spirit of rebellion which is deeply ingrained in the heart of the wicked:**
  - i. **10:11a – “Ephraim is a trained heifer that loves to thresh” – the same animals were used to plow, till and thresh. Plowing and tilling are hard work. Threshing is easy work and the animal gets to eat the grain as it threshes. In other words, Israel wanted all the benefits God provided, but on their terms.**
  - ii. **10:11b-c – “But I will come over her fair neck with a yoke; I will harness Ephraim, Judah will plow, Jacob will harrow for himself” – instead of voluntary compliance out of love, faithless Israel must be compelled. An interesting New Testament parallel is Philippians 2:9-11 – “Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the**

name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” The picture here is those who love Jesus will gladly and humbly bow before their King, but those who do not love Him will be compelled to do so. Either way... they will bow.

- iii. 10:12 – “Sow with a view to righteousness, Reap in accordance with kindness; Break up your fallow ground, For it is time to seek the LORD Until He comes to rain righteousness on you” – as the trained heifer plows to break up the ground so it can be planted with the hope of reaping a harvest... the rain was a gift from God, we do the work in its season with the expectation that God will bring the rain. But the rain was useless unless our work was done.
  - iv. 10:13 – “You have plowed wickedness, you have reaped injustice, You have eaten the fruit of lies. Because you have trusted in your way, in your numerous warriors” – this is a picture of reaping what you sow.
  - v. 10:14 – “Therefore a tumult will arise among your people, And all your fortresses will be destroyed, As Shalman destroyed Beth-Arbel on the day of battle, When mothers were dashed in pieces with their children” – this was a somber reminder that should have made the people pay attention.
  - vi. 10:15 – “Thus it will be done to you at Bethel because of your great wickedness. At dawn the king of Israel will be completely cut off” – Bethel was an ancient holy city on a rocky hilltop with several springs of excellent fresh water. For God’s people Bethel has been a place of blessing, but it was also misused by the Pagans for their worship of idols. The picture is that even in the place of blessing, God’s justice will be done.
- d. A loved son – 11:1-14:8... listen to the pain of the Father... it is an image of perverted innocence and the abandonment of the Source of Life. Israel & Judah had all the benefits of being Sons of God, but they never learned to respond to the love of God as their Father:
- i. 11:1 – “When Israel was a youth I loved him, And out of Egypt I called My son” – this is a picture of deliverance.
  - ii. 11:2 – “The more they called them, The more they went from them; They kept sacrificing to the Baals And burning incense to idols” – God’s people were more accustomed to hearing the call of worldly pleasure and dependence on worthless things.
  - iii. 11:3 – “Yet, it is I who taught Ephraim to walk, I took them in My arms; But they did not know that I healed them” – this is not a picture of being merely ignorant. God’s people should have known that it was God looking over them, instead of loving God, they ignored Him.

### D. THE COVENANT LANGUAGE OF GOD'S LOVE:

1. The Three Aspects of God's Love that He expresses for humanity and His people. It is important to see these terms as an all-inclusive description of God's Love:
  - a. *Ahavah* – which is a “spontaneous response of love that develops into a commitment”... adoption is a picture of this sort of love.
  - b. *Hessed* – which is “Loyal Love” which when offered it is never revoked. It is an “all-in” emotional response from which an unconditional covenant is made. A healthy parent's love of their child is a picture of this love.
  - c. *Racham* – which is “compassionate love” which is intense and all-consuming in its nature. A mother's love for her newborn baby is a picture of this love.
2. Additional Hebrew terms that express aspects of love:
  - a. *Zanah* – means “unfaithful love” – a picture of this is adultery, prostitution, and promiscuity.
  - b. *Shub* – means to “return” – a picture of this is a repentant woman/child returning to her husband/father.
  - c. *Azab* – means “abandon” – a picture of this is intense love-making in marriage.
  - d. *Ahabah* – means to “care deeply” – a picture of this is a parent who is deeply concerned for their child.
  - e. *Yada'* – means to “know, acknowledge or experience” – this is active knowledge based upon ongoing personal experience. To *yada* God is Good, or the *yada* God is Love – is to have personal experience of this reality. This is theology lived out of our ongoing relational life with God, not an intellectual theology received out of a book.
3. Poetic Language Utilization:
  - a. Egypt – is the often the land of foreign captivity, but it was also a refuge during harsh times such as when Abraham and later Jacob took refuge in Egypt.
  - b. Assyria – is the brutal conqueror that had little regard for the people they conquered. Once in their grip, there is not much hope... but God can do anything such as having the Medes-Persian Empire [who were quite noble and treated their conquests admirably], conquer the Assyrians and not only allow Judah to return to Jerusalem, but sponsored the reconstruction of Jerusalem's walls and Temple.

E. THEOLOGICAL THEMES – The primary thematic development is of God's “Loyal Love” [Hessed] to the wayward nation of Israel. The analogy of Hosea married to a wayward wife is the vehicle employed to drive home God's message.

1. Reward for the faithful and punishment for the faithless – The life of Hosea and Gomer is not merely a story of relational trouble and emotional pain; it is a parable of an object lesson of God's compassion for the helpless poor people being victimized by the powerful and the

wealthy. The story presents leaders who misuse their power and influence for the personal benefit. Being progressively ground into poverty and despair, the people became ignorant of God, and finally numb to God. Because of God's compassion for the poor, His justice against the faithless rulers must be served. Hosea experienced God's emotions of love, frustration, and desire for reconciliation.

- a. The marriage covenant of Hosea and Gomer is reflective of the vassal covenant between God and Israel.
  - b. Knowing her morals are questionable, Hosea loves and marries Gomer.
  - c. Gomer commits adultery and Israel commits idolatry. Adultery breaks the marriage covenant just as idolatry breaks the Sinai covenant against the worship of other gods.
  - d. Both Gomer and Israel ignore the appeal of love and support offered. Hosea had sent food and support to Gomer, who had fallen into slavery; Israel would soon likewise fall into slavery.
  - e. The call for repentance [*Shub* – to turn back] – Hosea redeems Gomer, God calls for repentance.
  - f. Grace and redemption are offered... but the wicked stubbornly refuse it, and ultimately have to pay the price for their sinful refusal. The essence of loyal love is loving the unlovely and respecting their choices and the consequences that follow with them.
2. Curses and Blessings – The Heritage of the Children's Names in Hosea and the Scripture implications of these names for Israel are clear... first is the curse because of their failure, and second is the blessing of redemption. Even in His righteous judgment God is looking toward redemption. It is this reversal of fortunes which gives the righteous remnant of God's people hope to endure the temporary pain of judgment looking forward to future blessings.
- a. *Jezreel* – means "God sows"
    - i. Curse: 1:4 – The Valley of Jezreel is where king Jehu assassinated king Joram... this prophecy shows that Jehu will die at Jezreel also. As Israel faded as a regional power, the internal corruption of her leaders preceded her demise as a nation.
    - ii. Blessing: 2:22-23 – "God sows" becomes a symbol of fertility, prosperity, and the unification of the tribes.
  - b. *Lo-Ruhamah* – means "no compassion" or "not pitied"
    - i. Curse: 1:6-7 – God announces that He no longer has pity for Israel, but He continues to have pity for Judah. Judah should have taken note that military action would not save them, only God's grace... "I will deliver them by the Lord their God; and will not deliver them by bow, sword, horses, or horsemen." The message to Judah... trust in God and fulfill your commitments to the covenant.

- ii. **Blessing: 2:19** – here “without compassion” is replaced with a renewal of the covenant and pledge of compassion... “I will betroth you forever... in love and compassion.”
- c. **Lo-Ammi** – means “not my people”
  - i. **Curse:** The covenant is broken with Israel, but there is still hope for Judah. The three names demonstrate a linear degradation of God’s love for Israel that followed their degradation as a people of God.
  - ii. **Blessing: 2:23** – the “not my people” becomes “you are my people.” This is an invitation into redemption.
- d. **Human responsibility** – there was personal responsibility for the breaking of the covenant:
  - i. Israel’s unfaithfulness had consequences just as Gomer’s unfaithfulness did – 2:2b... “she is not my wife and I am not her husband.”
  - ii. God’s faithfulness to Israel had run its course just as Hosea’s had for Gomer – 2:8... “she does not know that it was I who gave her grain, wine & oil.” [But she should have known]
- e. **Blessings and curses play out throughout God’s Covenant with Israel** – God doesn’t forget His promises, and He doesn’t forget the conditional responsibilities:
  - i. **Old Covenant** – Hosea contains a number of blessings and curses that are intentionally reminiscent of the Sinai Covenant... note Deuteronomy 30:1-4 – When all these blessings and curses I have set before you come upon you and you take them to heart wherever the LORD your God disperses you among the nations, and when you and your children return to the LORD your God and obey him with all your heart and with all your soul according to everything I command you today, then the LORD your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you and gather you again from all the nations where he scattered you. Even if you have been banished to the most distant land under the heavens, from there the LORD your God will gather you and bring you back.
    1. **Hosea’s calling was to remind Israel of the problem of breaking the covenant.**
    2. **God’s anger at Israel would abate and His love prevail even through the difficulties they would face as a result of their unfaithfulness and obedience.**
    3. **In Hosea as with most prophetic messages, the blessings are eschatological [for a time in the future]; while the curses are imminent for those who are responsible. They are also transitory, and will be rescinded when a new generation rises up. Israel would be scattered and destroyed, but Judah would be preserved.**

- ii. **New Covenant – to demonstrate the superiority of the New Covenant over the Old Covenant, and the extraordinary superiority of Jesus’ mediation of the New Covenant in His blood over the Priesthood mediation of the Old Covenant in the blood of animals – Jesus’ ministry is inaugurated with the Sermon on the Mount which began with the Beatitudes... all blessings! Matthew 5:3-12... note that it is written mostly in poetry, and that the final line references the association to the prophets of old:**

Mt 5:3 “Blessed are the poor in spirit,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Mt 5:4 Blessed are those who mourn,  
for they will be comforted.

Mt 5:5 Blessed are the meek,  
for they will inherit the earth.

Mt 5:6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,  
for they will be filled.

Mt 5:7 Blessed are the merciful,  
for they will be shown mercy.

Mt 5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart,  
for they will see God.

Mt 5:9 Blessed are the peacemakers,  
for they will be called sons of God.

Mt 5:10 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Mt 5:11 “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.

Mt 5:12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

- iii. **In this elegant poem, Jesus states clearly what matters most to God... “Spiritual character” is central to the Kingdom of God, and its transformational qualities are available for all through Messiah Jesus.**

**3. Apostasy – is at the heart of Hosea’s prophecy:**

- a. **Hosea’s relationship with Gomer – Gomer’s infidelities [multiple] and Hosea’s desire to receive her back are remarkable... no man would do such a thing, only God would be so gracious.**
- b. **Israel is the prostitute – spiritual fornication is as serious to God as physical fornication is serious to man and wife. It is betrayal in the most intimate and basic form.**
- c. **Israel is the kingdom characterized by unrighteousness – spiritual rebellion, a lack of love, and apostasy were so prevalent that it returned the nation back into the**

wilderness in route to slavery in Assyria... a reversal of Exodus. See 2:2, 5; 4:1-3; 5:3; 6:4; 0:1, 10; 11:2; 13:6.

4. **Consequences – The Old Covenant was founded on a reciprocal commitment... God would honor His agreement, but His people had to honor theirs. The problem with the Old Covenant is that the Law called for a strict conformation of action and this standard had the ability to convict when people fell short. However, it lacked the redemptive Grace of the New Covenant which provided the supernatural power to transform individuals. There is no doubt that Israel had broken their covenant with God as they had confirmed at Sinai. Which had been reaffirmed when they were about to enter the Promised Land, as recorded in Deuteronomy:**
  - a. **Deut 21:18-21** – If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who does not obey his father and mother and will not listen to them when they discipline him, his father and mother shall take hold of him and bring him to the elders at the gate of his town. They shall say to the elders, “This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious. He will not obey us. He is a profligate and a drunkard.” Then all the men of his town shall stone him to death. You must purge the evil from among you. All Israel will hear of it and be afraid.
  - b. **Deut 26:16-19** – The LORD your God commands you this day to follow these decrees and laws; carefully observe them with all your heart and with all your soul. You have declared this day that the LORD is your God and that you will walk in his ways, that you will keep his decrees, commands and laws, and that you will obey him. And the LORD has declared this day that you are his people, his treasured possession as he promised, and that you are to keep all his commands. He has declared that he will set you in praise, fame and honor high above all the nations he has made and that you will be a people holy to the LORD your God, as he promised.
  - c. **Deut 27:9-13** – Then Moses and the priests, who are Levites, said to all Israel, “Be silent, O Israel, and listen! You have now become the people of the LORD your God. Obey the LORD your God and follow his commands and decrees that I give you today.” On the same day Moses commanded the people: When you have crossed the Jordan, these tribes shall stand on Mount Gerizim to bless the people: Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph and Benjamin. And these tribes shall stand on Mount Ebal to pronounce curses: Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan and Naphtali.
  - d. **Deut 29:1** – **after reciting all of the requirements of the Law and the resulting blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience, they renewed their Covenant** – These are the terms of the covenant the LORD commanded Moses to make with the Israelites in Moab, in addition to the covenant he had made with them at Horeb.
5. **Hope – The hope of the nation was realized when they entered the Promised Land and seized their conditional inheritance of “Blessings in the Land.” This hope was lost through their long apostasy in the Land. God’s judgment was a bitter pill to swallow, but along with it God**

provided a renewed hope that they would one day return when they repented and were restored first to God, and second to their inheritance.

- a. **Hosea 14:1** – “Return O Israel to the Lord your God.” **Even at the precipice, God was confirming that not only does He require obedience and justice, but He also loves His people and offers mercy if they would only return to Him.**
  - b. **Hosea 4:1-9** – **the prophet’s central complaint is that the leaders and their people did not know God:** Hear the word of the LORD, you Israelites, because the LORD has a charge to bring against you who live in the land: There is no faithfulness, no love, no acknowledgment of God in the land. There is only cursing, lying and murder, stealing and adultery; they break all bounds, and bloodshed follows bloodshed. Because of this the land mourns, and all who live in it waste away; the beasts of the field and the birds of the air and the fish of the sea are dying. But let no man bring a charge, let no man accuse another, for your people are like those who bring charges against a priest. You stumble day and night, and the prophets stumble with you. So I will destroy your mother— my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also reject you as my priests; because you have ignored the law of your God, I also will ignore your children. The more the priests increased, the more they sinned against me; they exchanged their Glory for something disgraceful. They feed on the sins of my people and relish their wickedness. And it will be: Like people, like priests. I will punish both of them for their ways and repay them for their deeds.
- 6. Summary – faith, hope, and love are the glue that holds God’s people together. Note the difference in the mechanics of the Old Covenant and the New Covenant:**
- a. **The mechanics of the Old Covenant – when faith is compromised and love is lost, hope is renewed in the crucible of pain and suffering. Hope amid desperation drives us back to faith and love.**
  - b. **The mechanics of the New Covenant – when faith is expressed in submission to the Grace offered through Christ, the Holy Spirit indwells each believer and renews their hope in the inner being of each person through the transformational experience of love... through which the character and priorities of our Lord Jesus are formed in the heart and mind of the believer.**
  - c. **Both provide a means of living in the present on broken earth, with an eye toward a future where God’s rule on earth will be established.**